

Transforming Parliaments webinar series: Methodologies for assessing the digital maturity of parliaments



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Key takeaways

Resources:

- [Video of the webinar](#)
- [Transforming Parliaments webinar series](#)

A core challenge facing parliamentary IT leaders is: how do you know whether you are investing in the right digital initiatives? And how do you explain to stakeholders why you are prioritizing one project over another?

Most parliaments face a familiar scenario: dozens of project proposals are generated within the parliament each year, all competing for limited resources. Without a clear framework for evaluation, IT portfolios would become what Ludovic Delepine of the Directorate-General for Information Technologies and Cybersecurity (DG ITEC) at the European Parliament, and coordinator of the IPU Centre for Innovation in Parliament (CIP) IT Governance Hub, called “wish lists, exciting but totally disconnected” from each other. The result? Technology investments that do not fully align with strategic priorities, and difficulties securing resources for the initiatives that matter most.

This webinar, organized by the IPU CIP on 5 November 2025, explored how parliaments can use structured digital maturity assessments to address this challenge. The answer is not about implementing more technology, but understanding where you are today, deciding where you want to go and having a credible route to get there.

Two tools, one mission

The webinar introduced two complementary approaches, designed for different contexts but sharing the same underlying principle: parliaments need objective ways to measure digital capability and strategically plan their digital transformation.

IMAT: The comprehensive framework

The IT Maturity Assessment Tool (IMAT) was developed by the European Parliament and is promoted through the CIP IT Governance Hub. It can be thought of as a systematic way to audit a parliament’s entire IT operation across four dimensions:

- **Digital strategy** – Does your Parliament have a clear vision for where technology supports your mission, validated by your governance structure?
- **Key processes** – Are your IT planning, portfolio management, user support services and enterprise architecture working coherently?
- **Digital transformation** – Do you have clear strategic drivers and organizational priorities?
- **IT efficiency** – Can you measure and optimize performance across your technology operations?

IMAT allows parliaments to assess maturity across four levels. A parliament might be at “initial” (and have some foundational elements, but they are scattered), “defined” (processes are documented but not consistent across the organization), “managed” (processes and metrics are standardized), or “optimized” (the organization is continuously measuring and improving). The IMAT assessment is conducted through a digital platform as part of the CIP IT Governance Hub that lets you benchmark against peer parliaments and access supporting documentation.

DMA: The self-assessment compass

The Digital Maturity Assessment toolkit from the IPU CIP takes a lighter approach. Rather than a comprehensive audit, it is designed as a self-assessment – a process that teams in parliament can work through relatively quickly to understand their current position and identify areas for improvement. Implemented as a simple Excel spreadsheet with automated scoring, it covers six key categories drawn from the Digital Maturity Index introduced in the IPU’s World e-Parliament Report. It has been described by one parliament as a “compass” for digital transformation – useful for understanding where your Parliament stands and determining which direction to head.

How assessment works in practice: Two examples

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Finding the connection between value and technology

When staff at the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina conducted an IMAT assessment, they discovered something revealing. They had been focused primarily on IT infrastructure and service delivery – the operational side of technology. But they had not fully grasped how IT governance connects technology investments to institutional value.

The assessment did several things at once. It benchmarked their IT capabilities against international standards. It identified specific strengths and development areas. But, perhaps most importantly, it gave them credible evidence they could use when approaching development partners for support. Sometimes the barrier to modernization is not about knowing what to do – but about having the right argument to justify investment.

Three priority work areas emerged from the assessment: implementing a genuine digital strategy with measurable key performance indicators, strengthening IT planning and portfolio management, and developing a modern enterprise architecture. The process also led to the identification of opportunities to expand digital processes (e-signatures, workflows) and launch AI pilots. Rather than trying to do everything at once, the Parliamentary Assembly now has a structured roadmap. The staff are planning to reassess the situation in two or three years to document progress – with the aim of moving from “initial” to “defined” digital maturity by 2029.

Indonesia: Combining national compliance with global benchmarking

The House of Representatives of Indonesia took a different approach. Rather than choosing between national or international assessment frameworks, they used both: the national SPBE Index (developed by Indonesia’s Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform) and the IPU Digital Maturity Assessment tool.

This combination revealed something interesting. The SPBE Index scored the Parliament at 4.22 out of 5, highlighting its strength in governance and public service delivery, but flagging gaps in ICT audit and strategic planning. The IPU toolkit showed 62% overall maturity, with strong digital governance and content but room for improvement in parliamentary systems and public engagement tools.

Rather than being confusing, the Parliament found the dual perspective helpful. The national framework ensures compliance with government-wide standards. The international toolkit provides global benchmarking and highlights opportunities for innovation that a compliance-only assessment might miss. The staff at the Parliament of Indonesia could see both what

they needed to do (governance alignment) and what they could aspire to (innovation and citizen engagement).

Indonesia's progress demonstrates what structured digital transformation looks like in practice. They have built robust IT infrastructure, implemented AI-driven solutions (including speech-to-text translation and parliamentary chatbots), and created digital platforms for MPs, staff and public engagement. But they are not resting on their laurels – they recognize that they need stronger AI policies, better open data availability, improved cybersecurity governance, and more standardized data formats across systems.

The value of assessment

Maturity assessment provides objective, measurable data about where your Parliament stands today. This becomes the baseline from where parliaments can create a framework for strategic planning.

The process opens up opportunities for peer learning. Parliaments can benchmark against others who face similar challenges and learn from their experience. This comparative perspective is invaluable when navigating similar obstacles. Perhaps most importantly, assessment generates the business case needed to secure resources, providing a compelling, data-driven argument.

Assessment establishes how progress will be measured. Parliaments cannot improve what they do not measure. Regular reassessment becomes a way of demonstrating that digital transformation is delivering value, creating a virtuous cycle of improvement and validation.

What matters: Five principles for success

Several insights emerged from listening to parliament leaders describe their digital transformation work:

- **Governance builds trust.** IT governance can be seen as a process-heavy overhead, but parliaments emphasized that good governance is about ensuring technology genuinely serves the institution's mission. It creates alignment between strategy and technology, clarity about who is accountable for decisions, and confidence that investments are building sustainable solutions rather than chasing trends.
- **Assessment provides tangible benchmarks.** Both IMAT and DMA translate vague concerns ("We're not sure if we're keeping up with digital transformation") into concrete, measurable evidence. This matters because it shifts conversations from opinions to data, helps secure resources and creates credible arguments for partnerships.
- **You learn by comparing, not competing.** These assessment tools allow parliaments to see how they compare to their peers in similar contexts – other legislatures facing similar constraints and opportunities. The goal is not league tables or competition, but identifying what is working elsewhere and learning from it, as well as finding collaboration partners.
- **Different frameworks reveal different insights.** Indonesia's experience shows why using multiple assessment approaches can be valuable. National compliance frameworks ensure alignment with government-wide standards. International benchmarks highlight innovation opportunities. Together, they paint a fuller picture.
- **Progress requires regular reassessment.** Digital maturity is not something you assess once and then forget about. Parliaments that are serious about transformation should plan to reassess every two or three years, to maintain momentum, document improvement and allow the roadmap to be adjusted as circumstances change.
- **Security is not separate, but foundational.** Both assessment tools embed cybersecurity and data protection throughout their frameworks. This is not an

afterthought but a recognition that sustainable digital transformation requires security to be built in from the beginning.

To learn more about the IMAT and the DMA toolkit contact us at innovation@ipu.org.

This document was prepared on the basis of the IPU webinar Transforming Parliaments: [*Methodologies for assessing the digital maturity of parliaments*](#), held on 5 November 2025. The webinar was jointly organized by the IT Governance Hub and the Parliamentary Data Science Hub. More information about the IPU's work on digital transformation and the Transforming Parliaments series can be found on the [IPU website](#).