

FEDERAL SENATE

OF BRAZIL

MANAGEMENT REVIEW



2ª edição

HOME

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OF LIFE**

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credits

The Federal Senate is invited to join the UN Advisory Council to support the development of a document management system

In the 1990s, there was great interest in standardizing legislative information in Europe. In 1998, the world's leading computer network standardization organization, the World Wide Web Consortium, created a new language called Extensible Markup Language (XML). The purpose of this mechanism was to facilitate the exchange of data over the internet.

LexML (lex, law, in Latin, and ML from the English expression Markup Language) is a joint initiative of countries belonging to the Roman-German legal system, which sought to establish open standards for the exchange of identification and structuring of legislative and legal information.



In Brazil, the Legislative and Legal Information Network — LexML-BR — was an initiative of the IT Control Community. Its implementation has been led by the Brazilian Senate since its launch in 2009. Inspired by the Italian web portal Norme In Rete, the Brazilian project gathers in a single location laws, decrees, court rulings, precedents, bills of law and documents related to the three branches of government in Brazil at the federal, state and municipal levels.

The Brazilian government has also innovated by disseminating doctrines and adapting the technology to identify and structure legal rules for the Brazilian legislative technique.

By gathering legislation, doctrine and case law in an organized manner, the web portal provides legislators and society with a wealth of information.

For instance, a Brazilian citizen located in any region of the country is able to access, in a national database on the web, the pieces of legislation drafted by their municipality, state or the federal government.

This mechanism provides other gains. The free software tools developed by the LexML project allow for the management of legal information. It makes possible to structure and identify each part of the modified text.



This is important both for the lawmaking procedure, since the discussion of legislative proposals always takes into account the stock of rules in force, as well as for the citizen, who is the holder of the right of access to information.

With nearly 5 million accesses, the LexML System's indexing technology makes available free of charge about 8 million documents anytime and anywhere.

On the day of its launch, the web portal had only 1.2 million documents.

Recently, the LexML Project started a new phase that will allow for the semi-automatic creation of all versions of a given norm in a timeline, making it possible to monitor its evolution over time.

By developing a system to identify and structure legal rules for Brazil, based on some European projects and by contributing directly to the evolution of the field, the Brazilian Federal Senate received an invitation from the United Nations High-Level Committee on Management to be part of its Advisory Council.

The Council will support the working group in the development of a communication tool between information systems to enable data communication among several institutions that produce legislative contents.



Italy, South Africa, Uruguay, Paraguay and the United States are also collaborators.

The tool aims at managing documents from the fifteen UN agencies and the UN General Assembly using the same approach currently implemented at the Brazilian Senate to structure and identify legal rules. It will also make possible to manage information and improve the transparency of the process to prepare the UN normative documents.



LEX ML

João Lima, one of the LexML creators and a Senate servant, explains the importance of the web portal for Brazil and the United Nations.

"The invitation of the United Nations is by itself a recognition of the technology developed by the Senate Data Processing Center (Prodasen) for the legislative field. We have invested years of constant research and development in Legimatics for the Senate. Despite small, the LexML Project team achieved a degree of excellence whose results are now being shared with other institutions, not only in Brazil but also abroad. Being a part of this team both motivates us and makes possible an even greater improvement of the services we provide to the Senate in a specific way and to other institutions that are concerned with the management their stock of rules."



FOTO: MARCOS OLIVEIRA | AGENCIA SENADO



Senate launches Siga Brasil Painéis [Follow Brazil Information Boards], which facilitates consultations on the Union's Budget

The transparency of public actions is an essential factor in the dialogue between the State and the citizens. This is how they can be sure their taxes are being used correctly and assess whether their elected leaders are complying in the correct way with what was defined during their campaign.

This was the context in which the Federal Senate of Brazil developed the information system that would soon become an important tool for the empowerment of society in its dialogue with the government in matters related to budget and finance.

This system is called Siga Brasil [Follow Brazil], which integrates in a single database the information contained in several federal systems of public budget management. Therefore, it is possible to any individual, through the internet, to have a broad and easy access to several databases on federal public plans and budgets. The system was used exclusively

by Senate and House budget analysts until 2004, when it was made available to the entire society.

In the past, Brazilian society, mainly - but even government agencies - had difficulties in obtaining simple information, such as revenue collection, the implementation of expenditures as well as of parliamentary amendments themselves, since this kind of information was sparse.

On the Siga Brasil website, there is also a quite interactive and relatively user-friendly tool called Siga Brasil Painéis [Follow Brazil Information Boards]. For some people, it would be the second generation of Siga Brasil. Using a different kind of technology, Siga Brasil Painéis is composed of graphical and interactive interfaces that allow plurennial analysis and search by key words in the database of Siga Brasil. Thus, it is possible to carry out searches and reports with almost all data available in the system.

The Siga Brasil Painéis is divided into three parts: Painei Cidadão [Citizen Information Board] - Where it is possible to search for Union budget expenditures by subject, in a simple and intuitive way, without the need to know the budgetary classifications; Painei de Emendas [Amendments Information Board] - aimed especially at the execution of imposing amendments by parliamentarians and benches; and Painei Especialista [Experts Information Board] - For a more experienced public with some knowledge of the budget.



[*ACCESS THE VIDEO](#)

[*TURN ON ENGLISH SUBTITLES](#)

The Senate's general budget consultant, Ana Cláudia, who can be seen in the picture below, besides her team, to their left, explains briefly how the tool works.



“Just enter the topic you are interested in researching, for example day-care centers or the housing program Minha Casa Minha Vida [My House My Life]. And the result appears on the screen. The big difference is that the citizen does not need to know the budgetary classifications, which are required in the research using the expert’s information board.”

Siga Brasil was prominently featured in the UN e-Parliament report in 2008 and received the Prêmio Brasil de Tecnologia da Informação e Comunicações [Brazil Information and Communication Technology Award] in 2007. It was also presented at the World e-Parliament Conference 2009, held in Washington, D.C., at an event hosted by the United Nations, the United States House of Representatives and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which brings together the global parliamentary community.

In addition to being awarded and recognized internationally, other countries have taken Siga Brasil as an example. One of them was Serbia, which has developed and already launched a similar system with the help of servants of the Brazilian Senate.

In the portal, it is also possible to watch a series of videos on the Easy Budget Project, with the purpose of observing in a didactic way the Public Budget in Brazil. It should be noted that the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) adapted this project to apply it to Angola's public budget.

Siga Brasil can be found on the budget portal of the Federal Senate website, which provides, in addition to the simplified interface that makes citizens access easier, a monthly bulletin called Fiscal Monitor, which publishes didactic information, with a graphical interface, to monitor the situation of public accounts in the federal government, in partnership with the Chamber of Deputies.

All these tools found in the system which allow great mobility, can be accessed from tablets and smartphones, in one place, which is the portal of the public budget on the Federal Senate’s website.

Retirees closer to the Senate

Leaving work after decades of dedication is not easy. For many, the work environment becomes a second home, where emotional ties and friendships are built.

Senate retirees have been called to participate in institutional activities, since they deserve all attention and respect for their devotion to the public services and to the country. During her term as Director-General, Mrs. Ilana Trombka realized the need for greater dialogue with retirees and pensioners. Her idea was to build an administration based on consensus, dialogue, empathy, and not on office policies. With this in mind, a number of actions were planned throughout the last two years to bring the retired servant closer to the Senate. Afterwards, some initiatives have been created with quite positive outcomes. These include:

- creation of institutional e-mail accounts for retired servants, which allowed for greater communication efficiency with the Senate;
- knowledge transfer as retirees work as learning facilitators;

- the arrangement of monthly gatherings to celebrate the month's birthdays. During these parties, the Senate Health Unit provides health-care services as well as annual updates of their personal records. In addition to these benefits, one of the most compelling reason to attend may be seeing old friends.



Imagem divulgação





Florian Madruga, who is retired and a former director of the Senate Printing Office, comments on his experience within the Senate and his relationship with the institution nowadays.

"When the Directorate-General takes such an initiative to create the appropriate space for retired servants in a very welcoming and relaxed environment, where they can reconnect with their colleagues, this was really nice. I went through the experience and I enjoyed it a lot. Retired servants are a huge asset, since they have the experience of years spent working. They keep databases on their memories and are able to keep meeting Senate demands when called to cooperate with whatever the House needs to recover from their memory."

Once having restored their sense of belonging to the place where they spent a great deal of their lives, a notorious gain in quality of life and relationship with the institution is evident. Paulo Meira, director of the Human Resources Secretariat, comments on the repercussions of the meetings:

"Retirees have made very positive comments at each new gathering. They say this is a "new phase" with the current Senate administration; they feel honored and appreciated by the Directorate-General and the Senate. They feel part of the institution again. "



Initiatives to engage the whole family

Children often have questions about their parents’ job and workplace. Some children are aware of their parents’ occupation, while others do not understand why they spend time away from home. With that in mind, the Senate has endeavored over the past few years to enable servants to take their families to spend the day together in the parliament. In addition to arousing everyone’s curiosity, the intention is to promote interaction within the family by providing lots of fun and conveying important values for everyone.

One of the most traditional gatherings is held in October, the month when Children’s Day is celebrated in Brazil. The Directorate-General develops a number of civic and entertainment activities for both the children of Senate servants and outsourced personnel. On Children’s Day, both children and teenagers have the opportunity to visit the National Congress and learn more about the Brazilian Legislative Branch. They also have the opportunity to get to know their parents’ workplace.



Servant Fabrisia Garcia, who brought five-year-old son Davi, says that the little one already shows an interest in the parliament's matters.



"He has always wanted to know where deputies and senators work. I think that, because I work in the Senate and his father in the Chamber of Deputies, he is already pretty interested in this environment."

Other projects are also carried out throughout the year. This is the case of the projects for children promoted by the Senate Plant Nursery on environmental education and the school restaurant on cooking classes.

Some Senate servants take their children and grandchildren to the Senate plant nursery to learn about garbage recycling and composting, as well as preparing land for planting and listening to funny stories.

The activity seeks to bring children into direct contact with nature.

The Senate plant nursery is a sustainable building based on two premises: to produce plants for the creation and maintenance of the Senate gardens and to minimize the institution's carbon dioxide emissions.



Fotos: Maria Caspar/Videos de Internet

Camila Hummel, who works at the Center for Socio-Environmental Actions and guided the children in the activities, explains the initiative:



"The idea for this environmental education project, taking advantage of the school vacation, was for children to get in touch with nature. In order to learn about planting, recycling and the water cycle while engaging in fun, hands-on activities. "

Servant Dinamar Rocha, who took four-year-old daughter Ana Sofia, comments:



"It is a very interesting activity, both to become acquainted with the work developed by the Plant Nursery and to integrate our children into the practices of ecological reality. The pedagogical aspect of the work developed here is very important."



As for the cooking workshops, carried out in partnership with the school restaurant located at the Senate facilities, they have been relevant to awaken children’s interest in culinary processes and to draw attention to the importance of healthy eating, given that these classes stimulate appreciation for natural food and a variety of flavors.

And that’s not the end of it. There are also photography workshops for the teenage children of Senate servants.



Yara Gladys Wilhensdorf



Fabio Carvalho



The main idea for the workshop, in addition to teaching basic techniques of photography, is to bring servants and their families closer together, as parents oversee and search, together with their children, the best angles for pictures.

Servant João Rios, one of the photographers who accompanied the workshop, comments:

"The intent is to humanize the Senate. Colleagues with experience in photography will train and help the teenagers. We will go on a tour of the Senate and show the best spaces for pictures, together with basic ideas regarding composition."



According to servant André Leite, who works at the Legislative Advisory Office, this was an opportunity for son Davi to take a new look at the Senate.

"Davi likes to take pictures. I thought this was a good opportunity for him to get to know the Senate by taking pictures; this was a different approach."



Fernando Sumpf/Comunicação Interna



Inclusion as a tool for social transformation

Braille printing

The Federal Senate is the world’s first parliament to maintain, in its facilities, a Braille printing system, which is a specific language for the visually impaired. The system was inaugurated in 1998 and is the only one of its kind carried out by a public printing office. In Brazil, there are more than 6.5 million visually impaired persons, out of which 582 thousand are blind and 6 million are partially sighted people.

With 35 published titles in braille, the Senate Office for Publishing and Publications publishes federal legislation — such as the Constitution, the Consumer Protection and Defense Code — and specific legal rules for the visually impaired. Senate publications cannot be donated to individuals, only to other public agencies. Brazil meets the demands of all 27 Brazilian states, in addition to foreign countries, such as Portugal.

Braille printing aims at promoting social inclusion, democratizing information and complying with the guidelines of the Brazilian Accessibility Law. The workforce to format, print, and review Braille printed materials is mostly comprised of visually impaired public servants.

Daniela Ferreira, a visually impaired reviser of Braille publications, shares about the importance of her job.

“It is rewarding to provide independence and, at the same time, knowledge and education to the visually impaired. This allows those of us who are visually impaired to access the same knowledge as a sighted person regarding the legislative and judiciary publications in our country. It also fosters Braille reading and writing.”



According to Fabrício Ferrão, director of the Senate Office for Publishing and Publications, this service is invaluable, as no other institution prints this type of material for public agencies.



"This unprecedented work is important as no other public printing office provides pieces of legislation in Braille. The Senate fulfills its social role by providing non-profit publications and making them accessible to several layers of society."

"We did not have any Braille copies. We will now have a section of Braille books in the library, available for students of the School of Education and for the Laboratory of Research on Education and Pedagogical Practices. We will also be able to plan and offer courses. An interesting channel opened and other people got to know about it and are already coming to us. This material is very empowering because of the social and educational issues involved."



The University of Brasília (UnB) was one of the institutions to receive 303 copies of 70 publications in Braille. UnB professor Bianca Córdova, who is also a Brazilian sign language expert and specializes in social inclusion of the visually impaired, expressed joy at being able to work with materials in Braille, something the university lacks.



Braille, also known as anaglyptography, is a relief writing system for the blind to read through touch. It was invented by Frenchman Louis Braille (1809-1852). Braille himself was blind.



The Federal Senate is increasingly committed to including persons with disabilities to its staff of interns and young apprentices

Internships can be a gateway to the first job. It provides direct contact with experienced professionals. One of the purposes of the Senate Internship Program is to promote integration of the academic and professional aspects of the intern's life, to supplement academic, cultural and human relationship development.

Since 2006, the Brazilian Senate has demonstrated its concern for accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities by creating the Standing Committee on Accessibility.

Through this Committee, the Senate plans and executes actions towards accessibility according to the legal rules for accessibility. One of such actions is the Inclusive Senate Program.

This program aims at including persons with disabilities into its staff and has internal goals, as set out in the Senate Accessibility Plan.

The Plan is a tool to promote the full and equal inclusion of persons with disabilities to ensure their rights are recognized and respected.

Within the Senate, 10% of job vacancies in each recruitment process are reserved for candidates with physical disabilities.

Nowadays the Federal Senate has 38 interns with some kind of disability out of 595 authorized internship posts, representing 6.3% of current hirings. In 2014, there were only three interns with some kind of disability.

The same applies to young apprentices. The implementation, in the Federal Senate, of the Young Apprentice Program is a concrete action to support citizenship, especially to support adolescent citizens who are in the stages of development and learning.

The Federal Senate has 200 vacancies for young apprentices with 140 of them fulfilled. Of these, 10% (ten percent) are reserved for youngsters with disabilities, as provided by the law, if there are such candidates in the recruitment process. The Senate currently has 2 (two) young apprentices with disabilities (PcD).



The Senate offers both interns and young apprentices with disabilities mechanisms for adaptation to the work environment, such as:

- Mobility: Common or adapted car for transportation of employees with disabilities;
- Real-time interpretation in Brazilian Sign Language and subtitles : Accessibility for people with hearing loss;
- Audio description: Accessibility for people with visual impairment;
- Materials in Braille: Publications in Braille
- Renovations and Construction Works: Restroom adaptation, construction of access ramps, reservation of parking spots etc.;
- Follow-up of the internship process: Meeting with the team or the supervisor for clarifications related to the disability (before or after the recruitment process);
- Visit to the internship location to check accessibility conditions;
- Support for the department to request the necessary adaptations or interventions;
- Educational Measures.

The number of persons with disabilities among interns and young apprentices has grown significantly in recent years. Between 2014 and 2018, the number of interns has grown 27.66%, while the share of those with some kind of disability increased over a thousand percent. In 2014, 3 interns with a disability were hired whereas 38 have been hired in 2018.

Interns

PcD

Total



Intern Ana Carolina, who works at the Office for Internships, shared about her relation with the institution:

“The internship at the Federal Senate has been very good for me, both personally and professionally, because it has provided the opportunity to learn and also to teach. My supervisors allow me to be proactive, believe in my potential and trust me with work demands, which makes me feel comfortable in the workplace.”



Liga do Bem [Goodwill League]: Together for a better world



In 2015, a group of Senate employees (active and retired) created volunteer group LIGA DO BEM (Goodwill League).

The group aims at motivating others to help in social causes and participate in charitable actions promoted by the Senate.

The league was born out of the idea of some servants in a meeting of the Manhã de Ideias [Morning of Ideas], a program that fosters direct communication between employees and the Senate administration. The League's initial project was the Natal Solidário [Solidary Christmas], in 2015, which launched a huge campaign for donation of baskets with basic food supplies to poor communities.

Patrícia Seixas, one of the coordinators of the group, shares about its importance:



"The Liga do Bem is important as it makes a difference in another person's life. It provides joy, love, warmth. It provides the opportunity, in the convenience of our workplace, where we spend most of our time, to help those in need. When we created the League, we thought of today's Super Heroes. After many actions accomplished, after seeing the glow in the eyes of children, adolescents, and the elderly, I can say that each one of us helped make dreams come true."



Since then, every year, the group of volunteers gets together for a number of social causes. In 2018, the League collected 100 kilograms of chocolate for the Easter Campaign, which were donated to impoverished children of the Federal District.



In another initiative, 382 headscarves, 3 hair plugs and 1 wig were donated to the Headscarves Campaign, in partnership with the Girls of Brazil Committee and the Women of Brazil Group. The donations were given to the Women’s Cancer Fighting Network at the Instituto Hospital de Base, the largest public hospital in the Federal District.

Wesley Gonçalves, a retired employee, is one the founders of the group and reports his experience as a volunteer.

“I’m deeply satisfied to see the engagement of people, communities and children regarding the materials and services we make available to them. The smiles, the tears, the gratitude make us all happy, improve us, honor us and ennoble us. It is funny how it gives me the strength to face life’s challenges. I believe these experiences of helping others have positively affected my relationship with my co-workers. We have learned to accept, to live harmoniously with our differences.”



In 2018, the Winter Clothes Campaign, carried out annually in the months preceding winter, collected one thousand items, which included winter clothes, blankets, shoes, blouses and underwear. The items were given to Banho do Bem (Goodwill Bath), a project to assist the homeless.



In the children’s month, celebrated in October in Brazil, the Goodwill League carries out a campaign to collect toys, clothes, shoes and other items for institutions in underprivileged regions of the city. In one of these places, school principal Livia Amorim pointed out that the school employees were distressed, as they did not know how to fund a Children’s Day party for the approximately 80 students of the institution.



“The Senate’s participation was essential. The school is very poor and we could not afford this party for the children. They dream of the toys. It is impossible to put in words what this initiative meant.”





For Christmas, the League has established a partnership with CORREIOS, the Brazilian state-owned company responsible for the national postal services.

Correios receives, annually, letters sent by poor children who study in public institutions of the Federal District and all over Brazil. The letters are sent to public agencies and people in general who want to be Santa Claus for those children.

The 2018 Campaign of the Solidary Christmas in the Federal Senate quickly gathered 521 Christmas Letters that were distributed to Senate employees. This initiative has attracted Senate employees the most. For this reason, Senate was awarded a tribute by Correios, for benefiting more than 800 poor children participating in the program.



Official Visits

We are convinced that cooperation among federal parliaments is essential to ensure democracy and law enforcement. With that understanding, parliaments are sharing more and more information across borders and countries.

International understanding, cross-border solidarity and the cooperation of parliamentary technical bodies are important elements for the consolidation of an international engagement. The exchange among parliaments provides participants with an overview of the administrative structure and procedures of legislative Houses around the world.

The Federal Senate hosted this year visits of two international delegations. In June, we received a delegation from the Republic of Paraguay, which wished to know the Senate's procurement and contracting system.

The most recent visit, from Israel's unicameral parliament, the Knesset, took place over two days in September and aimed at learning about the Brazilian Senate's experience in the areas of accessibility, security and gender policy.



Delegation of Paraguay

Paraguay is a key partner of Brazil in South America. The rapprochement with the country, as well as integration at the regional level, has been very beneficial for Brazil and has contributed to achieve the common objectives of economic and social development. Brazil and Paraguay are also partners in Mercosur, as both are full members and founders of this intergovernmental organization.

It was in this spirit of cooperation between our countries that the Federal Senate, represented by its Director-General, received this year the honorable visit of a delegation from the Republic of Paraguay, which included Angel Aquino, Advisor to the Paraguayan President Mário Abdo Benítez, to present the evolution of corporate management and the Senate's procurement and contracting system. Mr. Aquino praised the Senate's procurement and contracting system by highlighting the importance of integration between Brazil and Paraguay.

The Director-General stressed that the emphasis on planning has produced good results such as saving resources, reducing emergency contracting, reducing absences due to illnesses, sustainable management and more accessibility in the House.

Angel Aquino praised the Senate system by stressing the significance of integration between Brazil and Paraguay.



"We want to replicate in Paraguay this successful procurement and contracting model used in Brazil. I was impressed by the transparency of the Brazilian Federal Senate and its efficient procurement system".



Deputy Director-General of Procurement, Wanderley Rabelo, Director-General, Ilana Trombka, and Angel Aquino, Advisor to the Paraguayan president, during Ms. Trombka's presentation in the Senate.



Israel's Delegation



Due to the presence of a significant Jewish community in Brazil, estimated at more than 100 thousand people - the tenth largest in the world - and to relations between both countries, marked by cordiality and cooperation in several sectors, Brazil is especially relevant to Israel.

Celebrating this historic partnership, the Federal Senate and the Chamber of Deputies were pleased to receive, for the first time in our parliament, a delegation from the Israeli parliament, the Knesset. Senior Management servants, headed by Director-General Albert Sakharovich, were at the National Congress to learn a little about the actions on accessibility, security, gender policy and visitation developed by the two legislative Houses of Brazil. The purpose of the first meeting of the Senior Management of the Parliaments of Brazil and Israel was to promote the exchange of experiences in these areas.

The visit of the Israeli delegation was a retribution to a similar visit made in February this year by servants of the National Congress to Jerusalem, among them the General Directors of both legislative Houses.

The Brazilian representatives participated in an international debate during the Conference for Heads of Parliamentary Administration, which brought together 29 countries. On that occasion, they presented the initiatives adopted in the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies for the accessibility of people with disabilities, in addition to the socio-environmental and gender equity projects.



Participants of the Conference for Heads of Parliamentary Administration, held in Jerusalem.



During the visit of the Israeli delegation to Brasilia, the Federal Senate Director-General, Ilana Trombka, presented information on the bicameral system of the Brazilian parliament and on the organizational structure of the Senate. The director recalled that in the first two years of her administration, the main focus was to remodel the House's procurement and contracting systems, work that was praised by the country's supervisory and control bodies.

The Israelis also learned about the actions of the Senate in the struggle for women's rights and the defense of gender equality. The issue is a matter of concern to the parliaments of both countries. The meeting lasted two days, with technical visits and discussions about security and accessibility. At the end of the event, the delegation had a few hours of tourist activities around the main points of the Brazilian federal capital, such as the Cathedral of Brasilia and the official residence of the President of the Republic, all projects by the famous Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer.

One of the highlights of the visit was the tour to the top of the tower of Annex I of the Chamber of Deputies, a perfect spot for a panoramic view of the city at 100 meters high.

The Director-General of the Knesset, Albert Sakharovich, pointed out the importance of the meeting and the beauty of the city.



"I have no doubt that coming here was the right decision. This first meeting was important from a personal and work point of view.
About Brasilia, he said:
"It's a unique view. Different from any capital I've ever visited."



Israeli delegation visits the Cathedral of Brasilia.



Israeli delegation meets with the Director-General of the Federal Senate and servants who participated in the First Meeting of the Senior Management of the Parliaments of Israel and Brazil.




Israeli delegation visits the Federal Senate Plenary Hall.



Israeli delegation with security devices for ascent to the top of the annex I of the Chamber of Deputies.

Examples of best practices in the parliament

In a challenging economic scenario, organizations seek to invest more and more in human capital as one of their most important resources, while at the same time striving to rationalize and improve their processes. Get to know some good practices in the Federal Senate.



The adoption of
informational obelisks with
technical information

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Outsourcing and Services
contracting

ACCESS THE VIDEO

SGIDOC in action

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Technology applied
to contracts

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Sectorial meetings

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SENADO FEDERAL



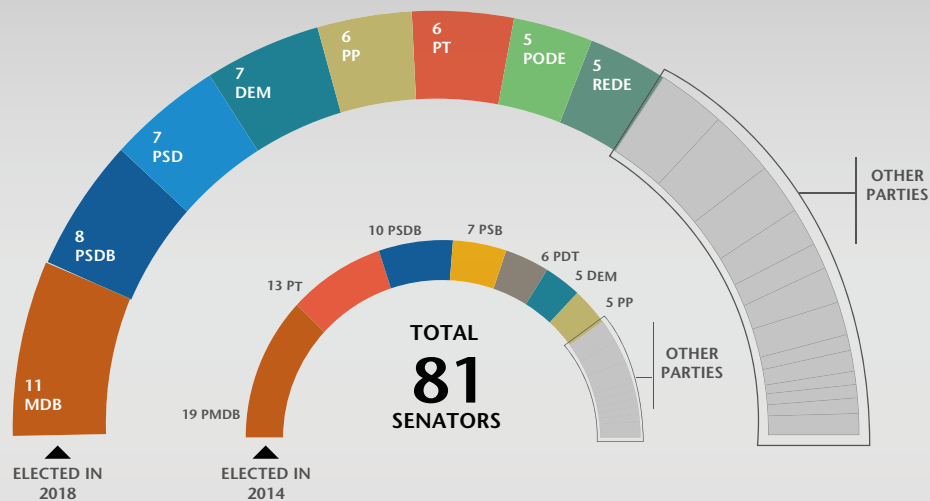
Structure of the Brazilian State

Brazil is a Presidential Federative Republic, formed by the Union, States, Federal District and municipalities, in which the exercise of power is attributed to distinct and independent bodies, submitted to a control system to ensure compliance with the laws and the Constitution.

The Union is divided into three branches, independent and harmonious among themselves. They are the Legislative, which makes laws; the Executive, that executes programs and renders public services; and the Judiciary, which resolves conflicts among citizens, entities and the state.

Brazil has a multi-party system, which means that it admits the legal formation of several parties. There are currently 35 political parties registered in the country. Of these, 15 have representativeness in the Federal Senate. However, the results of this year's general election indicate that the House will start the next legislative session with 21 parties.

Change in Senate Composition



The Federal Senate

The Federal Legislative Branch is bicameral. It is conducted by the National Congress, which is composed of the Chamber of Deputies and the Federal Senate.

Law-making function

The typical function of legislating refers to the edition of primary normative instruments, founded directly on the Federal Constitution, that can establish rights or create obligations.

The organized sequence of acts through which a normative proposition goes through to become a norm is called the legislative process. The legislative process includes the drafting of constitutional amendments; supplementary laws; ordinary laws; delegated laws; provisional presidential decrees; legislative decrees and resolutions.



Facade of the National Congress building at dusk.



Oversight function

Due to a republican principle, citizens — whether directly or through their elected representatives — are able to oversee the government to ensure proper application of public funds and respect for norms. According to the Federal Constitution, the Federal Senate, as a component of the National Congress, has the competence to oversee and control the acts of the Executive Branch.

By means of external control, the National Congress must carry out the accounting, financial, budgetary, operational and property oversight of the Union and governmental entities. To fulfill this function, the National Congress also counts on the support of the Federal Court of Accounts.

The Federal Constitution and the Standing Rules of the Federal Senate foresee several ways in which senators may carry out the oversight function. Here are some of them:

- Request information from federal ministers or chief officers of agencies directly subordinate to the Presidency of the Republic;
- Analyze accounts of the Presidency of the Republic;
- Supervise and control acts of the Executive Branch;
- Evaluate public policies;
- Set up Congressional Investigating Committees.



Arno Krieger / Senado

Rooftop of the National Congress building



Private competences of the Federal Senate

The Federal Senate has constitutionally foreseen private competences. Some of them are:

- Carry out legal proceedings and trial of the president and vice-president of the Republic for impeachable offenses, as well as of federal ministers and commanders of the Navy, the Army, and the Air Force for crimes of a similar nature related to the impeachable offenses;
- Approve previously, by secret ballot, after debate, the choice of, for example, justices of the Supreme Court, the attorney general of the Republic and heads of permanent diplomatic missions (ambassadors);
- Authorize international financial transactions, in the interest of the Union, the states, the Federal District and the municipalities;
- Establish, at the proposal of the president of the Republic, total limits for the consolidated debt of the Union, the states, the Federal District and the municipalities;
- Provide for limits and conditions for the granting of guarantees by the Union in foreign and domestic credit transactions;
- Suspend the execution, in whole or in part, of laws declared unconstitutional by a final decision of the Federal Supreme Court.



Three Powers Plaza





Arquiteto: Oscar Niemeyer

Members

Senators of the Republic, elected by majority vote to represent the states and the Federal District, perform the functions of the Federal Senate. Each state and the Federal District elect three senators for a term of eight years. The renewal of representativeness occurs every four years, alternately, by one and two thirds.

Each senator is elected with two substitutes. Unlike the Chamber of Deputies, whose members must be at least 21 years old, Senate candidates must be at least 35 years old.

Sessions

The National Congress has legislative terms that last four years. Each year represents an ordinary legislative session, which operates in two periods, from February 2 to July 17, and from August 1 to December 22. The first period can only close after the Budgetary Guidelines Bill has passed.

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SENADO FEDERAL



Bodies

To carry out its duties, the Senate is organized into collegiate bodies, the main of which are the plenary and the committees.

The meeting of all senators takes place in the plenary. It is the highest instance of deliberation. The works of the plenary are directed by the Board (Steering Committee), composed of the president, two vice-presidents, four secretaries and four alternate secretaries. All of them are elected for a two-year term.

Committees may be permanent or temporary. The permanent ones are defined in the Senate Internal Regulations, which establish their number, composition and thematic area. The temporary ones are defined in their respective act of creation. Among the specific duties of the committees, we highlight the competence to assess some propositions conclusively — without the plenary’s input — and to investigate certain facts within the scope of a congressional investigating committee.

Among other bodies of the Senate, we find party blocks, party leaderships, the office of internal affairs, the office of the ombudsman, the office of prosecution services, forums, councils, parliamentary fronts and groups.



Senate Plenary Hall

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Source: Internal Communication of the Federal Senate

Layout and Artwork: Thomás Côrtes

Translation: Federal Senate Translation and Interpretation Service

Photos: Senate Agency

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