ACADEMY OF FINLAND

SEMANTIC PARLIAMENT: LINKED OPEN DATA SERVICE FOR STUDYING POLITICAL CULTURE

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Semantic Parliament (SEMPARL) is a consortium research project which creates a Linked Open Data (LOD) and research infrastructure and semantic portal "ParliamentSampo" on Finnish parliamentary data, and develops novel semantic computing technologies to study parliamentary politics and political culture. SEMPARL brings together researchers at the University of Helsinki (Helsinki Centre for Digital Humanities, HELDIG), University of Turku, and Aalto University, with complementary, multi-disciplinary expertise in language technology, political and media research, and semantic computing and web technologies, respectively. The project makes three major contributions.

First, it responds to the demand for an easy to use and "intelligent" access to the newly digitized Finnish parliamentary data by providing the data as a national LOD infrastructure and service for application developers, researchers, citizens, the government, and the media.

Second, the project studies long-term changes in the Finnish parliamentary and political culture, which experiences most recently the impact of new digital means of communication and interaction. Project use cases in political and language research

are pioneering studies in using the Finnish digital parliamentary data. They lay a solid ground for Digital Humanities (DH) research by developing and applying new methodologies for semantic analysis of political language, prosopographical research, and political network analysis.

Third, the new data service enriches semantically content in other related Finnish LOD services, such as Semantic Finlex and LawSampo for Finnish legislation and case law and BiographySampo for biographical data. The LOD-based solution, the large internationally enriched

national consortium behind the project, and the empirical research based on semantic web technologies will secure the availability, usefulness, interoperability, and sustainability of the ParliamentSampo service to be published.

Parliament of Finland at VPK House in 1907 (left) and project contact persons (right).

CONTACT: