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Using knowledge management to reform the Russian Criminal Procedural Codex

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Abstract

The SenseViewer Knowledge Management System (KMS) helps users retrieve and understand information fragments and their attributes by linking them to underlying arguments within their topic realm and exposing their context within source documents. This paper examines SenseViewer, its relationship to rapid knowledge construction, and its use to support the drafting and passage of a new Criminal Procedural Codex by the Russian DUMA. It considers what set of KM functions and tools facilitate the legislative process and dissemination of knowledge to the populace. SenseViewer illustrates a new generation of web-based e-government KMS.

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1. Introduction

Drafting and passage of legislation—making the rules of the game in society—stand as central concerns of democratic governments. This process is knowledge-intensive, involving written artifacts of previous cycles of the legislative process, popular and academic written sources and hearings, discussions, debates, contributions by knowledgeable experts, etc. Supporting the internal legislative process should involve applying knowledge management concepts and tools, including creating an appropriate repository of materials (for codification and retrieval) and a set of tools for stimulating and supporting knowledge creation and use [33]. Technical support

for knowledge management must go beyond “collaborative tools such as Lotus Notes, argumentation systems such as Issue-Based Information Systems (IBIS) and knowledge-based techniques” to encompass “complex support tools... e.g., for ordering and retrieval: indexing, categorising, semantic correspondences, definition of hyper-structures, fuzzy retrieval, case based search, etc.” [27, p. 276].

But a vision of electronic government (EG) involves not only the improvement of processes for legislators and their staffs, but increased communication with and participation by citizens [27]. The WWW now makes it possible to comprehensively address two core EG goals: providing “access to [the] administration’s information and knowledge to citizens and authorities,” and more specifically, “[m]aking laws, judicial decrees and administrative processes transparent to employees of authorities and, above all, to the citizens” [55, i]. It “implies a fundamental change

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