



## MEP Online

# The use of Online Tools by the Polish Members of the European Parliament

### *Executive summary*

#### Main conclusions

- Polish Members of the European Parliament **are divided between those who actively and often use many online communication tools and those who almost never use them.** This is a tendency independent of age and political affiliation. Some Members, even though they possess certain **online communication channels, do not use them actively and do not benefit from many functions available online.**
- **The majority of the Members,** even though they possess different online communication channels, **do not use them to reply online to questions asked directly by citizens.** Only **9 Members actually replied to the questions asked** to them from fictional accounts in the name of the “Mysterious Citizen”. Their communication is not, therefore, a two-way communication.
- All Members, with one exception, **have their own websites. The difference between them lies in the frequency of updating the latter.** Almost two third (32) of the Members do this at least a couple of times a week.
- **The majority of the Members (33) devotes the posts on their websites mainly to subjects concerning the European Union.** However, over a dozen concentrates on Polish affairs.
- **21 of 50<sup>1</sup> Members have their own Fanpage on Facebook. However, only 14 of them actively use it** and involve citizens. The number of fans of these profiles is not high in most cases (only 7 Members have more than 1000 fans).
- **16 Members use Twitter (10 of them do this regularly), and 17 have a blog.**
- In a parallel manner to the relatively low activity of Members online, it can also be said that citizens are not politically and socially active. The low activity of the majority of the politicians does not encourage them to change this.
- The low online activity of the Polish MEPs can be the result of a **lack of conviction that online communication is needed** and because of a false opinion that no one will use this kind of communication. As a consequence, they extremely **rarely professionalise** their online communication which becomes an obligation of low significance for the members of the office.

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<sup>1</sup> The research was done in autumn 2011, therefore, before the beginning of the new Polish Member Arkadiusz Bratkowski's term of office. In addition, his presence in the Parliament is too short to draw similar conclusions with the other Members.



IPA research was conducted between November 2011 and January 2012. Initial conclusions were presented in the report “MEP online. The use of online tools by the Polish Members of the European Parliament”, available at [www.isp.org.pl](http://www.isp.org.pl). The complete report will be published in spring 2012.

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