



NATIONAL NETWORK
For The Right
Of Access To Information

MEDIA

Why should you support the law on Access to Information?

- Your support for this law will demonstrate your commitment to transparency and good governance in Lebanon.
- This law will strengthen your credibility amongst readers.
- This law will help journalists uncover the veil of secrecy within government.
- This law is an important tool for journalists who require government information for developing stories.
- This law falls within your obligation as a journalist to present the most accurate information to your readers.

How will this law enhance the quality of your reports?

- Investigative journalism techniques will be improved through the implementation of this law.
- Citizens' ability to obtain more credible information will increase their confidence in media objectivity.
- This law will provide the press with a steady stream of information on corruption and the abuse of power.
- Greater access to information will allow citizens to hold both executive government and elected officials accountable for their decisions.
- Increased trust in the media will result from journalists being able to access verifiable facts, no longer relying of speculative overtures.

How will this law help you contribute to advancing greater transparency between the government and the public?

- Enhanced access to information and media reporting will allow citizens to more effectively oversee government decision-making.
- All journalists, irrespective of political alliances and personal acquaintances, will have access to critical information about government decision making and will be able to share that information with their readers.
- Greater citizen awareness of the reasons for decisions, whether within government or parliament, can reduce misunderstandings and enhance popular support.
- This law will facilitate the role of the media as a watchdog on government institutions and a voice for popular concerns.

How will this law protect freedom of press?

- This law will give journalists the legal backing and protection needed to provide the public with an independent assessment of government performance.
- An unfettered press, that does not face legal penalties or prosecution for news reports that are critical of government, will have a strong incentive to use an access law.
- A culture of disclosure and documentation ensures that the media will uphold its duty and present reliable information to the public.
- Press freedom and access to information feed into the wider development objective of empowering people by giving them information that can help them gain control over their own lives. This empowerment supports participatory democracy, advancing citizens' capacity to engage in public debate and to hold the government accountable.

The National Network for the Right of Access to Information ("Network"), a multi-sectoral group comprising parliamentarians, ministries, private sector associations, professional syndicates and non-governmental organizations, seeks to enhance transparency and accountability and to strengthen the rule of law and civic participation in Lebanon through access to information and protection for individuals who report corruption ("whistleblower protection"). The Network was formed on April 11, 2008 upon the initiative of the Lebanese Parliamentarians against Corruption (LebPAC), the Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA), and Association pour la Défense des Droits et des Libertés (ADDL), in collaboration with the American Bar Association (ABA) Rule of Law Initiative in Lebanon.

For more information, see www.a2ilebanon.net, www.khabrouna.net.