

Draft OGP Policy Needs Significant Improvement

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The Open Government Partnership, a global transparency initiative jointly sponsored by US President Obama and Brazilian President Rousseff, must significantly improve its internal access to information policy to meet the standards it is advancing according to an analysis launched today by two specialist organisations, Access Info Europe and the Centre for Law and Democracy.

Two months after its launch in September 2011, when 46 countries pledged to work towards greater openness, the OGP is struggling with its own transparency rules according to the expert analysis submitted as part of a one-month public consultation that ends today.

“We welcome the recognition by the OGP that it should operate in a transparent manner,” said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of the Centre for Law and Democracy. *“However, the draft policy needs to be significantly developed if it is to achieve its objectives.”*

A key problem is the lack of detail in the policy, which has the result of leaving important matters to the discretion of the OGP. Other key problems include:

- » The failure of the policy to recognise the fundamental human right to information;
- » The significantly overbroad and discretionary regime of exceptions;
- » The failure of the draft Policy to put in place a system of protections and sanctions.

“The Open Government Partnership risks missing the opportunity to set high standards which can serve as a model for all the participating countries,” commented Helen Darbishire, Executive Director of Access Info Europe. *“The policy must be reformed to incorporate basic open data principles such as that information will be made available in a machine-readable, electronic format free of restrictions on reuse.”*

Note for editors

The full analysis by CLD and AIE can be found at: <http://www.law-democracy.org/?p=1504>

The OGP’s draft Disclosure Policy can be found at <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/call-public-input-open-government-partnership-draft-disclosure-policy>.

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