

[Chilean government pushes for greater transparency](#)

TUESDAY, 08 JANUARY 2013 22:39

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Latest report shows Chile's transparency policies are having positive results.

Access to information is increasing in Chile, helping to pave the way for further transparency legislation, according to a new study released Tuesday by the Chilean Press Foundation and the National Press Association of Chile.



According to the 9th Barometer of the Access to Information, 50.5 percent of a sample of 418 journalists thought their access to public information increased in 2012, and only 13.2 percent thought it got worse.

"We are very happy because the study shows that the transparency policies are producing results. It shows that there is an appreciation and an attitude within the authorities in favour of greater transparency," said Presidential Press Secretary Cristián Larroulet.

The National Institute for Statistics (INE), Universidad de Concepción, Central Bank and National Consumer Service (Sernac) led the list as the most transparent organizations.

"As a government we are advancing in recovering the confidence of our citizens in our institutions, because we know that this is the only way of having a more mature and participatory democracy," said Larroulet.

[Proacceso](#) Chile, a group dedicated to the free access to information in Chile, was pleased by the progress shown by the report, but was cautious to call this a victory, given the amount of work yet to be done.

“(The report) is a very healthy sign for democracy in Chile that compliance rates for delivery of information by government agencies are substantially better than in the previous edition,” said Rodrigo Mora, legal coordinator of Proacceso Chile. “However, this study should not be taken in isolation from other measurements made by the [Council for Transparency](#) that indicate a low overall knowledge of the rules. In this sense, the government’s job for next year should be even more focused in the promotion of the right to free access to information.”

Globally, Chile ranks 31st for access to information, according to the [Center for Law and Diplomacy](#). This ranking places Chile ahead of Uruguay, Ecuador, and Colombia, but behind Brazil and Guatemala.

Both factors of the barometer, access to information and willingness to provide information, apply to the global ranking.

Toby Mendel, Executive Director of the Center for Law and Diplomacy, said that it was the latter that was most worrisome.

“The main obstacle to realizing the right to information in the country will be political will, and there have been some suggestions that politicians are going to obstruct access but so far nothing very serious,” Mendel said.

Chile’s [Access to Information Law](#) was established in August of 2008 and took effect in April of 2009. Article eight of Chile’s [constitution](#) also provides for the freedom of information as it relates to government processes.

The government is working to take further steps to increase transparency through a lobbying bill currently in congress that would create public records of all lobbyists in government.

"The lobby law has spent nine years in congress and this government is determined to promote it. We will make every effort to move forward," said Larroulet. "We are committed to transparency, we are achieving good results, but more is needed. This is why we hope to convince the majority of the Senate and the Chamber (of Deputies) to approve the lobbying law by the end of this government term."

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