[CH] Principle of Transparency in the Federal Administration

IRIS 2000-7:1/22

Oliver Sidler
Medialex

On 19 April 2000, the Swiss Executive National Council adopted the draft consultation document for a federal law concerning transparency in administration. The aim of this draft law is to give the public easier access to official documents, thus making the administration more transparent. According to the draft law every person would have what is termed a "right to access", i.e. they could require that they be given the opportunity to inspect official documents and obtain information about such documents. The principle of transparency would be introduced together with the right, for the federal administration, to immunity from disclosure. However, the "right to access" is not unlimited; if it conflicts with prevailing public or private interests, it may be restricted, deferred, or denied entirely. Prevailing public interests are present, for example, when the free development of opinion and intent on the part of an authority would be impaired by the premature publication of official documents, or if this would jeopardise Switzerland's internal or external security. Prevailing private interests are present, for example, when privacy would be substantially impaired or a professional, business or manufacturing secret would be disclosed if the information in question were to be made available.

Avant-projet de loi fédérale relatif à la transparence de l'administration du 19 avril 2000.

Preliminary Draft of a Federal Law concerning Transparency in the Administration, dated 19 April 2000.

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026