



13th Edition of the International
Conference of Information
Commissioners

PUBLI(STATEMENT



Access to information as a milestone of the digital age to guarantee human rights, the inclusion of groups in situations of vulnerability and the strengthening of democratic institutions in the 21st century.

The members of the International Conference of Information Commissioners, meeting on June 22, 2022, during the 13th Edition of our Annual Conference, held virtually and in the City of Puebla, Mexico, issue the following statement:

RECALLING that, in accordance with the Johannesburg Charter, the ICIC not only has the mission of acting as a collective voice at the international level aimed to improve the citizen's right of access to information and their ability to hold public bodies accountable, but also to act as a global forum that connects guarantor bodies in favor of improving transparency and accountability for the benefit of all;

RECALLING that, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights establishes that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, which will be guaranteed by the States under the principles of universality, inalienability, interdependence, indivisibility, progressivity, and rule of law;

RECALLING that access to information is an essential pillar of the freedom of expression, as reflected in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in which it is provided that freedom of expression includes the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information of all kinds regardless of frontiers;

NOTING the scope of international instruments that protect the rights of people in situations of vulnerability, such as: the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD); the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP); the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), among others;

HIGHLIGHTING the role that access to information plays in advancing and fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, as reflected in goal 16, which seeks to promote more just, peaceful and inclusive societies for all, and its component 16.10, which guides efforts to ensure public access to information;

RECALLING that access to information is a democratic tool that allows citizens to hold their State and public administrations accountable for the decisions taken and activities carried out by them, in such a way that participation, governmental integrity and the formulation of public policies can be strengthened;

RECOGNIZING the importance of access to information not only as an instrumental prerogative that enables the enforceability of economic, political and social rights, but also as a cornerstone for the creation of more democratic, inclusive and resilient societies;

RECOGNIZING that freedom of expression and access to information are two key pillars in the democratic arrangements and that both allows the promotion of informed and open debates; generate useful knowledge and promote more transparent and responsive governments;¹

¹ It should be noted that not all jurisdictions recognize this right as a fundamental right.

The ICIC members

STATE

1. That the consolidation, autonomy and independence of the institutions and bodies that guarantee and oversee access to public information must continue to be encouraged, through cooperation, collaboration and communication schemes, in which the principles of open government, transparency and accountability will be promoted. To guarantee human rights, new mechanisms must be promoted, so that this global forum includes more guarantor bodies, with a view of improving the Right of Access to Information, Transparency, and Accountability for the benefit of the population and with greater emphasis on vulnerable groups.
2. That the effective implementation of access to information laws will be ensured through regular public reporting, proactive and reactive transparency mechanisms, continuous training of public servants and the promotion of the importance of this right among more and more sectors, in order to promote a culture of openness and integrity at all levels of government, from the local to the national level.
3. That as a community, we will seek to provide the necessary measures to promote access to timely and quality of information, through public policies that have as their mission to uphold respect for freedom of expression and access to information, and by making clear standards that are expected to support all citizens in exercising their fundamental rights with special attention towards ensuring access for groups in vulnerable situations.
4. That as a global forum, we note the work programme on Action for Climate Empowerment adopted at the 26th Conference of the Parties on Climate Change in Glasgow on November 12, 2021 (which reiterates the Convention and the Paris Agreement), and in particular the link between the access to public information and the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, and with this, we recognize the importance of promoting its values as essential components to develop more just, peaceful, inclusive and sustainable societies
5. That as a community, we will seek to encourage international institutions, national governments, and other public bodies to develop proactive

transparency systems that take advantage of the progress of information and communication technologies to encourage better access to information by citizens, with special provisions put in place where necessary for vulnerable population. Likewise, we must continue the strengthening of democratic institutions, as a community. The professionalization of the staff of guarantor bodies must be promoted, so that they can provide equal service and assistance to members of vulnerable groups.

6. That through our work as guarantor bodies, we will support the adoption of measures focusing on socially disadvantaged or historically excluded groups and maximize the use of indicators to inform and enhance, the implementation of targeted policies intended to benefit them.

June 2022.

Endorsement for the declaration

"Access to information as the milestone of the digital age to guarantee human rights, the inclusion of groups in situations of vulnerability and the strengthening of democratic institutions in the 21st century"

No.	AUTHORITY		SUPPORT FOR THE DECLARATION
1		Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada	Yes
2		Information and Data Protection Commissioner of Albania	Yes
3		Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	Yes
4		FOI Philippines	Yes
5		Institute for Access to Public Information from the State of Guanajuato, Mexico	Yes
6		Council for Transparency and Good Government, Spain	Yes
7		Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (Australia)	Yes
8		Hungarian National Authority for Data Protection and Freedom of Information	Yes
9		Information and Privacy Commissioner for Nova Scotia (Canada)	Yes
10		Tribunal of Transparency and Access to Information of Peru	Yes

No.	AUTHORITY	SUPPORT FOR THE DECLARATION
11	 Information Commissioner of Croatia	Yes
12	 Commission for Access to Administrative Documents of Portugal	Yes
13	 Swiss Federal Data Protection and Information Commissioner	Yes
14	 National Information Commission of Nepal	Yes
15	 Ombudsman Perú	Yes
16	 Comptroller General of the Union of Brazil	Yes
17	 Agency for Access to Public Information of Argentina	Yes
18	 Institute of Transparency, Access to Information and Personal Data Protection of the State of Puebla	Yes
19	 National Authority for Transparency and Access to Public Information of Peru	Yes
20	 Institute of Access to Public Information of Coahuila, Mexico	Yes
21	 Information Commissioner's Office for Bermuda	Yes
22	 Guarantor Body of the Right of Access to Information of the City of Buenos Aires	Yes

No.	AUTHORITY		SUPPORT FOR THE DECLARATION
23		INFOCDMX, Mexico City, Mexico	Yes
24		INFOEM, State of Mexico, Mexico	Yes, with comments
25		Information Commissioner's Office UK	Yes, with comments
26		Scottish Information Commissioner	Yes, with comments
27		Information and Privacy Commission of New South Wales (Australia)	Yes, with comments
28		Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario	Yes, with comments
29		Center for Law and Democracy*	Yes, with comments
30		Information Regulator of South Africa	Yes
31		Access to Information Authority of Tunisia	Yes
32		The National Institute for Transparency, Access to Information and Personal Data Protection (INAI)	Yes

*Strategic partner



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