

NATIONAL PARLIAMENT
PROPOSED LAW No. 9/III (2)
TEXT VOTED IN SPECIALTY

Media Law

Whereas the right to information, freedom of speech and of the press are fundamental for the consolidation of democracy, the Timorese State prepares to strengthen the media sector.

In this context, the present law, the first of free and independent Timor-Leste, on the defense of press freedom and regulation of the media, defends the right of the citizen to fully exercise freedom of thought and expression and allows the information professional the guarantee of professional secrecy and safeguard his/her independence.

It is therefore important to delineate by law to regulate the exercise of such freedoms, ensuring their implementation.

The provision of rules on the exercise of the right to information and freedom of expression and the press is also revealed as fundamental, not only to comply with the relevant constitutional requirements laid down in Articles 40 and 41 of the Constitution, but, in the final analysis, to ensure the construction of a democratic state under rule of law.

This law aims to ensure freedom of the press, promoting the necessary balance between the exercise of this fundamental freedom and other constitutionally protected rights and values.

The eight chapters of this law seek to regulate the exercise of journalistic activity by journalists and media organizations.

Fundamentally, it is intended that properly prepared and ethically responsible professionals can objectively and impartially inform the public, stimulating the exercise of active and informed citizenship by the population. Simultaneously, this law calls for measures to protect and safeguard the free and independent exercise of journalists' activity, sanctioning of acts which constitute breaches of that exercise.

This law creates an independent administrative entity called the Press Council, consisting mainly of media agents, that is, journalists and media outlets, which will ensure compliance with this law, including the rights and duties of journalists, as well as observation of ethical principles of journalistic activity.

Therefore, the National Parliament, in accordance with Article 95.1 of the Constitution of the Republic, as law, decrees the following:

ARRANGEMENT OF ARTICLES AND CHAPTERS

CHAPTER 1 - GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1 - Subject

Article 2 - Definitions

Article 3 - Functions of the media

Article 4 - Duties of the media

Article 5 - Functions of the State in the field of media

Article 6 - State support

CHAPTER II - FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Article 7 - Right to information

Article 8 - Freedom of the press

Article 9 - Freedom of expression

Article 10 - Prohibition of censorship

Article 11 - Limits on press freedom

CHAPTER III JOURNALISTS

- Article 12 - Capacity
- Article 13 – Exercise of the profession
- Article 14 - Access to the profession
- Article 15 - Registration and credentials for interns
- Article 16 - Internship
- Article 17 - Incompatibilities
- Article 18 - Freedom of membership
- Article 19 - Rights
- Article 20 - Duties
- Article 21 - Code of Ethics

CHAPTER IV - MEDIA ORGANS AND MEANS

- Article 22 - Creation of media organs
- Article 23 - Nonprofit media
- Article 24 - Foreign capital
- Article 25 - Foreign media organs
- Article 26 - Licensing of frequencies
- Article 27 - Formal requirements
- Article 28 - Registration
- Article 29 - Legal deposit
- Article 30 - Disclosure of owners
- Article 31 – Editorial board
- Article 32 - Editorial statute
- Article 33 - Advertising

CAP. V - RIGHT OF REPLY AND CORRECTION

- Article 34 - Applicable conditions
- Article 35 - Judicial intervention
- Article 36 - Judicial process
- Article 37 - Qualified disobedience

CHAPTER VII - FORMS OF LIABILITY

- Article 38 - Forms of liability
- Article 39 - Liability
- Article 40 - Offences
- Article 41 – Attacks on freedom of information

CHAPTER VII – PRESS COUNCIL

- Article 42 - Nature and independence
- Article 43 - Essential duties
- Article 44 - Powers
- Article 45 - Composition
- Article 46 - Mandate
- Article 47 - Status of Members
- Article 48 - Financing
- Article 49 - Reports

CHAPTER VIII TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

- Article 50 - Prior rights
- Article 51 - Transitional regime
- Article 52 - Regulation
- Article 53 - Repeal
- Article 54 - Entry into force

CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1 Subject

The object of this law is to ensure, protect and regulate the **exercise of freedom of information, press and media.**

Article 2 Definitions

For the purposes of this law, the following definitions apply:

- a) “Journalistic activity,” activities of research, collection, selection; processing and dissemination of information in the form of text, sound or image, to the public, through disclosure in the media;
- b) “News agency” media company specializing in disseminating news to media organizations;
- c) “Censorship”, forced removal of information to be published or transmitted, including the attempt to do so, and the imposition of content to the media;
- d) “Code of Ethics for Journalists”, a compilation of ethical rules applicable to the profession.
- e) “Media (social communication)” means the dissemination of information through text, sound, image and made available to the public regardless of its form of reproduction or dissemination;
- f) “Right of correction”, the right of every natural or legal person to see corrections to incorrect facts published or broadcast about him/her;
- g) “Right of reply”, the right of every natural or legal person to have published or transmitted a response to content which disclosed offensive facts of his/her honor, good name, reputation or image;
- h) “Press”, the same as media;
- i) “Journalist”, a professional who is primarily engaged in journalism;
- j) “Media outlet”, a vehicle which enables regular dissemination of journalistic activity, in print or electronic form;
- k) “Organization of journalists,” a legal person constituted in the form of an association, which brings together media professionals, with different objectives than trade unions;
- l) “Media body”, a collective, public or private person who is engaged in journalistic activity.

Article 3 Functions of the media

1. The media has the following functions:

- a) **Contribute to the formation of public opinion and civic education of citizens;**
- b) **Promote democracy;**
- c) **Disseminate information and news, as well as to propagate knowledge;**
- d) **Propagate culture, values and national identity;**
- e) **Promote peace and social stability, harmony and national solidarity;**
- f) **Defend peace and solidarity between peoples.**

2. As a partner in development, the media also has the following functions:

- a) **Encourage and support quality economic policies and public services;**
- b) **Encourage economic actors to adopt best practices in the provision of services;**
- c) **Conduct public censure against bad practices in the provision of services;**

- d) **Support consumer protection organizations in protecting the interests of their members;**
 - e) **Facilitate the access of cultural, economic and other actors to media bodies for dissemination of their products and services;**
3. **Functions referred to in the preceding paragraph concerning the actions and omissions of any actors which provide services, public or private, national or foreign, not excluding media bodies themselves.**
 4. **The State may institute awards in recognition of journalistic work and media actions that excel in fulfilling duties under this article.**

Article 4 Duties of the media

The duties of the media are:

- a) **To check the veracity of information presented, using diverse sources, to ensure the plurality of versions;**
- b) **To respect human dignity, honor and esteem of people and the rights of others;**
- c) **Not to make discriminatory references to race, religion, gender, sexual preference, illness, political beliefs or social status;**
- d) **To use ethical and lawful means to obtain news and information;**
- e) **To ensure the rights of reply and correction;**
- f) **To not identify victims of sexual abuse and juvenile offenders;**
- g) **To promote the public interest and democratic order.**

Article 5 Functions of the State in the field of media

1. **Essential State functions in the field of media are:**
 - a) **To ensure the existence and functioning of public service radio and television;**
 - b) **To ensure the free flow of information and free access to informational products;**
 - c) **To preserve and defend pluralism and competition;**
 - d) **To monitor compliance with the law and the rules for the exercise of media activity;**
 - e) **To contribute to the training of media professionals;**
 - f) **To establish measures to support private media bodies.**
2. **The public service media can be ensured through a concession contract, for public or private media entities, in accordance with applicable legal regime.**

Article 6 State support

The State may grant benefits to media activity that translate into direct or indirect support, in particular by granting financial subsidies and tax benefits, tax bonuses, which are awarded according to general criteria and objectives to be established by law.

[This article was amended during the Parliamentary plenary discussion.]

**CHAPTER II
FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES**

**Article 7
Right to information**

The right to information for citizens should be provided with objectivity and impartiality, by clearly distinguishing between fact and opinion, with respect for diversity of opinion.

**Article 8
Freedom of the press**

The right of journalists to report shall be exercised on the basis of Constitutional powers, may not be subject to interference that threatens their independence and objectivity, freedom to create, freedom of conscience, their right to seek and receive information, professional secrecy and to participate in editorial direction of the media outlet for which he or she works, with no constraints on meeting the ethical obligations of the profession.

**Article 9
Freedom of expression**

1. Everyone has the freedom to express and disseminate their ideas through the media.
2. No one shall be disquieted for their political, philosophical, religious or other opinions.

**Article 10
Prohibition of censorship**

Freedom of expression is exercised by the media without being subject to any form of censorship, authorization, collateral or prior qualification.

**Article 11
Limits on press freedom**

Press freedom only has limits such as the rights to honor, good name, reputation, privacy, right to the presumption of innocence, judicial confidentiality and state secrecy.

**CHAPTER III
JOURNALISTS**

**Article 12
Capacity**

Citizens of the age of majority, in the full enjoyment of civil rights, and prepared with at least secondary education, may be journalists.

**Article 13
Exercise of the profession**

1. Credentials, called a professional license, which are issued and renewed by the Press Council, are a condition of the exercise of the profession.
2. Government approves by decree law the regulation of the professional credentialing of journalists and trainees.
3. Prior to the adoption of the regulation referred to in the preceding paragraph, the Press Council will issue a temporary document.
4. The professional qualifications as a journalist issued by foreign countries and their holders may apply for registration and issuance of credentials by the Press Council, without requiring internship.
5. No media organization can accept or keep in its service as a journalist, someone who is not duly qualified with the respective credentials.

Article 14

Access to the profession

Access to the profession of journalism begins with a mandatory internship, to be completed successfully, with a duration of eighteen, twelve and six months, respectively, for those with secondary education, bachelor's degree in another subject, and bachelor's degree in the media studies.

Article 15

Registration and credentials for interns

1. Interns must apply for registration and issuance of their credentials.
2. The application is accompanied by the following documents:
 - a) A statement of admission as an intern in a media organization, signed by the director, with the identification of the journalist supervising the internship and their professional license number;
 - b) Copy of identity document;
 - c) Copy of certificate of academic qualifications.
3. An intern's credential identifies him/her as a trainee journalist and is sufficiently qualified for the practice of journalistic activities.

Article 16

Internship

1. The internship takes place in a media organization, consisting of the deepening of technical and linguistic knowledge of the trainee, with the goal of endowing him/her with knowledge of the legal regime of the media, the rights and duties of a legal nature, and ethics of the profession of journalism.
2. A trainee is guided by a journalist with more than five years of experience in the profession who is responsible for supervising the internship.
3. Internship consists of theoretical and practical components.
4. During the internship, the intern should practice at least five of the following journalistic acts and functions:
 - a) Editing, coordinating, choosing headlines, integrating, correcting or coordinating material to be disseminated through the media, with or without commentary;
 - b) Review or commentary on media;
 - c) Interview, investigation or written or spoken report in the media;
 - d) Planning and organizing technical services;
 - e) Research, collection, selection and analysis of events, news, information or opinions and their preparation through text, image or sound for dissemination in the media;
 - f) Revision of original articles and research of their data for the preparation of news;
 - g) Organization and maintenance of a journalistic archive and search of its data for the preparation of news;
 - h) The distribution of text, photograph or illustration of journalistic nature for dissemination purposes;
 - i) Implementation of artistic or technical illustrations of journalistic character.
5. The media organization issues a certificate of successful completion of internship, to which are appended the documents proving the practice of acts of journalistic nature referred to above.

6. **Internship ends with an examination by the Press Council in which the trainee must demonstrate knowledge related to professional ethics, rights and duties of journalists, functions and duties of the media, state functions in the media sector and other relevant issues to legal regime of journalistic activity.**
7. **Internship takes place under the rules of principal, permanent, paid employment with at least the national minimum wage.**

Article 17 Incompatibilities

1. The profession of journalism cannot be performed concurrently with the following functions:
 - a) Civil servant;
 - b) Office-holder in a sovereign body, a local authority or in community leadership;
 - c) Leader of a political party;
 - d) Public relations or advisor for press, communications or images;
 - e) Any activity aimed at promoting goods or services in the form of advertising.
2. The provisions of paragraph a) above shall not apply to civil servants who perform the functions of a journalist for the state's media.
3. While performing the duties specified in paragraph 1, the professional must return his/her credentials to the Press Council, and is banned from exercising journalistic activity.
4. The ban ends when the situation that gave rise to it ceases, and the journalist may again exercise his/her duties as a journalist, when re-integrated into any media organization.
5. **Violation of paragraph 1 of this Article shall be punished by a fine of \$250 to \$1,000.**

Article 18 Freedom of membership

1. Journalists have the right to affiliate with journalist organizations of their free choice.
2. **Whoever compels or coerces a journalist to join a particular organization by any means, shall be punished with a fine of \$250 to \$500.**

Article 19 Rights

1. A journalist has the right to identify with their name any work which they have authored or in which they have collaborated.
2. **A journalist has a right of access to official sources of information, in accordance with law.**
3. A journalist has a right of access to all events open to the public, within the performance of their functions, as well as those which, although access is restricted, are or could be open to the media in general.
4. A journalist has the right to professional secrecy, and may not be forced to disclose their sources of information, except when so ordered by a court under the criminal procedure law.
5. A journalist cannot be compelled to express or subscribe to opinions or to do work contrary to their conscience or the Code of Ethics of Journalists, and cannot be sanctioned because of this refusal.
6. **A journalist cannot be detained, or prevented in any way from performing relevant activity in a place where his/her presence as a media professional is required.**
7. **A journalist cannot, in any case, be dispossessed of their professional materials or forced to display collected evidence, except by judicial ruling.**
8. **A journalist has the right to participate in the affairs of the media organization where they are working, including on the editorial board or similar body, if any, under the respective statutes.**

Article 20

Duties

1. It is the duty of the journalist to:
 - a) Contribute to a free and democratic society, combating any restriction on freedom of expression, freedom of the press or any other form of restriction on citizens' right to information;
 - b) Contribute to the development of society by informing citizens in an educational, honest and responsible way in order to promote the creation of enlightened public opinion;
 - c) Defend the plurality of opinions, ensuring the ability of expression of different currents of opinion and respect for citizens' cultural, religious and ethnic diversity;
 - d) Exercise their profession freely and with independence, without other major interests beyond the right of public understanding;
 - e) Always observe the personal rights of citizens, including protecting their honor, dignity and privacy, except when there is an obvious and unequivocal cause to defend the public interest;
 - f) Respect the presumption of innocence of legal defendants until the final judgment of the courts;
 - g) Exercise their activity with respect for ethical principles of the profession, complying with the rules contained in the Code of Ethics of Journalists.
2. **Violation of the duties prescribed in the preceding paragraph is an infraction punishable by a fine of \$500 to \$1,500.**

Article 21

Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics of Journalists is approved by the Press Council, having consulted journalists, and binds all professionals in the exercise of their activity.

CHAPTER IV

MEDIA ORGANS AND MEANS

Article 22

Creation of media bodies

1. The role of the media is to inform, educate and entertain, contributing to an informed society and diverse public opinion.
2. Every citizen has the freedom to establish a media body, in the form of a commercial company created under the law.
3. The state has the right to create public service media under the law.
4. The state and citizens are free to create news agencies for the dissemination of information at national and international level.

Article 23

Nonprofit media

Community, membership-based, denominational and doctrinal media will be regulated by law.

Article 24

Foreign capital

The participation of foreign natural or legal persons in the ownership of a media body may not exceed 30% of the share capital of the respective body.

Article 25

Foreign media bodies

- 1. Bodies of foreign media wishing to distribute or post a correspondent in Timor-Leste have to apply for registration of their body and accreditation of their correspondent to the Press Council.**
- 2. The Press Council shall issue the correspondent with a professional license.**

Article 26

Licensing of frequencies

Radio and television **media** operate only under licensed frequencies, to be allocated by the National Communications Authority, which ensures management of the radio spectrum.

Article 27

Formal requirements

1. Print media shall contain on the first page, the publication title, date or periodicity and respective price, and also, on any inside page, the owner, the board members, the people with editorial responsibility and the name and address of the registered office of the printer.
2. Radio or television programs shall mention the identification of the means of communication transmission, the authors and the editorial and technical responsible people.
3. Media have an obligation to preserve a copy of audiovisual materials for six months after publication.
- 4. Violation of paragraphs 2 and 4 of this Article is an infraction punishable by a fine of \$1,000 to \$2,500.**

Article 28

Registration

- 1. Organs and media are subject to registration with the Press Council.**
- 2. Registration is an administrative measure and does not constitute an act of authorization.**
- 3. The Press Council establishes the elements to be included in the registry.**
- 4. Registration must be published in the official gazette (*Jornal da República*), by the Press Council.**

Article 29

Legal deposit

- 1. Owners of all publications must submit on the day of distribution two copies to the National Library and the National Archives.**
- 2. Legal deposit aims to enable the creation of a documentary archive, keeping the documentation so that it can be consulted by interested parties.**

Article 30

Disclosure of owners

- 1. Companies and media should undertake to publicly disclose the identity of their owners or their associates, partners or co-workers or the corporation which owns them.**
- 2. Disclosure in the preceding paragraph is done at the beginning of each calendar year and whenever there is any change in ownership of property rights or the composition of the corporation or its capital.**
- 3. The act of disclosure is published in the *Jornal da República* and in media organs owned by the media business.**
- 4. Violation of the provisions of this article an infraction punishable by a fine of \$1,000 to \$2,500.**

Article 31
Editorial Board

1. **Media must have an editorial board.**
2. **Editorial board is headed by an editor-in-chief.**
3. **It is incumbent on the editorial board to:**
 - a) **Cooperate with management in carrying out the tasks of editorial guidance within its responsibility;**
 - b) **Advise on development and changes to the editorial statute;**
 - c) **Give advice on the conformity of the writings or advertising images with the editorial policy of the media;**
 - d) **Give advice on journalists' invocation of the right to freedom of conscience, under the law;**
 - e) **Give advice on ethical issues or other activity relating to editing;**
 - f) **Give advice on the disciplinary responsibility of journalists, including proceedings on dismissal for cause, within five days from the date on which the process will be delivered.**
4. **The editorial board is responsible for all journalistic outputs, internally and externally.**

Article 32
Editorial statute

1. **All media must adopt an editorial statute that clearly defines their orientation and objectives and includes a commitment to ensure respect for the ethical principles and professional ethics, as well as the good faith of the readers.**
2. **The editorial statute is prepared by the Director of the media outlet, after the weighing in of the Editorial Board, subject to ratification by the owner, to be inserted in the first edition of the publication or the first broadcast of the station and sent to the Press Council within ten days.**
3. **Notwithstanding the preceding paragraph, the editorial statute is published at the beginning of each calendar year to inform the public of its continuation.**
4. **Changes to the editorial statute are subject to prior opinion of the Editorial Board, should be reproduced in the first edition or broadcast subsequent to its ratification by the owner of the entity, and should be sent to the Council within ten days.**

Article 33
Advertising

1. **The dissemination of advertising materials must respect fundamental constitutionally enshrined values, principles and institutions.**
2. **All word or graphic advertising, in the form of text or images whose inclusion has been paid for, shall be identified by the word "ADVERTISING" ("*PUBLICIDADE*") or the letters "PUB".**
3. **Insertion of advertising materials in the media cannot undermine its editorial independence.**
4. **Advertising to express opinions on matters of public interest should contain the identity and address of the advertiser.**
5. **Violation of the provisions of the preceding paragraphs is an infraction punishable by a fine of \$5,000 to \$25,000.**

**CHAPTER V
RIGHT OF REPLY AND CORRECTION**

**Article 34
Applicable conditions**

1. The right of reply or correction shall be exercised by the owner or legal representative within thirty days from the date of publication or broadcast of the content which requires response or correction.
2. A right of reply or correction is complied with if, in the meantime, with the consent of the owner or his representative, the media outlet has corrected or clarified the content in question.
3. Text of reply or correction, properly identified, should be directed to the head of the media body.
4. The text of reply or correction shall be published or broadcast in the edition following the date of receipt, following the same criteria of visibility as the content that gave rise to it.
5. **Correction must be included and cannot be refused.**
6. The reply text may be refused if it:
 - a) Exceeds the scope of the references that provoked it;
 - b) Goes beyond the limits of space or time of the content that gave rise to it;
 - c) Contains offensive or discourteous expressions for any of the people or entities involved.
7. Refusal must be justified by the responsible editor of the media body and must be made known to the complainant on the day following receipt of the reply text.
8. **Lack of reason for the refusal of the right of reply constitutes an offense punishable with a fine of \$2,500 to \$10,000 USD.**

**Article 35
Judicial intervention**

1. **If the answer is not published, the applicant may, within thirty days from the date of being informed of the refusal, appeal to the court of first instance to order its publication.**
2. **The appeal shall be reasoned and shall state clearly the reasons for the response, the errors, the rules violated and be accompanied by a sample or copy of the writing that motivated the right of reply and the reply text in triplicate, signed and dated.**

**Article 36
Judicial process**

1. **The judge, having received the request, orders within forty-eight hours, the citation of the editor-in-chief of the publication to respond and justify the reasons for not publishing the answer.**
2. **Response time is forty-eight hours.**
3. **The process is decided within eight working days of the entry of the application in the court registry.**
4. **In ruling, the judge condemns the defendant to publish a mandatory response, and also its broadcast in a station to the largest audience and other journal with the largest circulation, all expenses required to be allocated to the defendant.**
5. **Publication and dissemination referred to in the preceding paragraph shall be made within three days of the final judgment of the court decision.**

**Article 37
Qualified disobedience**

Failure by the editor-in-chief to comply with a court order directing the publication or dissemination of the response is qualified disobedience punishable under the Criminal Code.

CHAPTER VI FORMS OF LIABILITY

Article 38 Forms of liability

For acts injurious to the interests and values protected by law, committed through the press, the perpetrators are civilly and criminally answerable.

Article 39 Liability

1. The author, the director or his legal substitute and the media company or organization are jointly liable for the damage they have caused in cases of publication of text, sound or image in a media body,
2. Entitlement to compensation for damage caused by media lapses if the action is not brought within three years from the date on which the publication or broadcast occurred, as provided in Article 432 of the Civil Code.

Article 40 Offences

1. Violations of the provisions of this law which do not entail criminal liability, and for those which the Press Council has exhausted its mediation mechanisms, if these mechanisms have taken place, are judged by the Press Council, which applies the respective fines.
2. Decisions of the Press Council may be appealed to the court of first instance.
3. Allocation of revenue from fines referred to in the preceding paragraph shall be determined in joint diploma of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry that oversees the area of Media.

Article 41 Attacks on freedom of information

1. Is punished with imprisonment up to two years or a fine anyone who:
 - a) **Obstructs or disturbs the composition, printing, distribution and free circulation of publications;**
 - b) **Impounds any publications;**
 - c) **Takes or damages any materials necessary to the exercise of journalistic activity;**
 - d) **Prevents journalists or teams of press bodies from free access to public places;**
 - e) **Practices any other act that disrupts, impedes, jeopardizes or reduces the ability to exercise journalistic activity under this law.**
2. A civil servant or agent of the State who commits attacks on freedom of the press shall be punished with imprisonment up to three years or a fine.
3. Attempted attacks are punishable.
4. The criminal liability of the offender does not affect the right to compensation under the general liability regime.

CHAPTER VIII PRESS COUNCIL

Article 42 Nature and independence

1. The Press Council is an **independent administrative entity and shall exercise its powers and duties** without being subject to any guidelines or directions from political power.
2. **The statute of the Press Council will be adopted by decree-law.**

Article 43 Essential Duties

1. The Press Council has as essential duties to ensure the professional and ethical conduct of professional journalists and media operators, as well as ensuring compliance with the conditions of access to and exercise of journalistic activity.

Article 44 Powers

The powers of the Press Council are:

- a) **Promoting freedom of expression and of the press and independence of the media** from any influences of individuals, groups or political and economic interests;
- b) **Approve** and oversee compliance with the Code of Ethics by all journalists and media;
- c) **Exercise disciplinary authority over journalists, under specific regulations, to be approved by the Press Council, where the violations are set, the corresponding sanctions and disciplinary proceedings;**
- d) **Grant, renew, suspend and revoke the professional credentials of journalists;**
- e) **Implement the registry and promote publication in the *Jornál da República* of media bodies and media outlets;**
- f) Maintain a database of active media companies, journalists' organizations and journalists;
- g) Arbitrate and mediate disputes arising from the exercise of journalistic activity, the relationship between citizens, organizations, state bodies and media bodies;
- h) Issue opinions where a Court requires the expert opinion of the Press Council with a view to settling disputes arising from journalistic activity;
- i) **Promote dialogue** between media operators, society and state bodies;
- j) Support organizations of journalists in the development of professional, technical and intellectual skills of journalists.

Article 45 Composition

1. **The Press Council consists of five members, appointed as follows:**
 - a) **Two representatives of journalists chosen by them, through election;**
 - b) **A representative of media bodies, chosen by them, through election;**
 - c) **Two citizens of recognized integrity and professional merit, preferably connected with media, one being a jurist, appointed by the National Parliament.**
2. **The President of the Press Council is elected by the members from among the persons referred to in c) above.**

[Paragraphs 1(c) (no requirement for a lawyer) and 2 (any member can be President) of this article were amended during the Parliamentary plenary discussion.]

Article 46 Term

The term of a member of the Press Council is four years, renewable once.

Article 47 Status of members

1. **The performance of the function of member of the Press Council is combined with the professional activity of the same kind, and is not paid or subsidized and not permanent.**

2. Members of the Press Council are entitled to an attendance fee, pursuant to what is established in its statute.

**Article 48
Financing**

1. Financial costs of the Press Council are assured, without prejudice of raising its own revenues, by allocation from the State Budget.
2. The form of budget allocation should not affect the independence of the Press Council.

**Article 49
Reports**

The Press Council presents an annual activity report to the National Parliament, which is subject to assessment and discussion in plenary session, with the obligatory presence of the President of the Press Council.

**CHAPTER VIII
TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS**

**Article 50
Prior rights**

1. Those who have been practicing this activity for a time equal to or greater than that required for the professional internship corresponding to their qualifications on the date of entry into force of this Act are recognized as journalists.
2. For the purposes specified in the preceding paragraph, the length of internship required for those with a high school qualification will apply to journalists who have less than high school education.
3. Journalists referred to in paragraph 1 are exempt from the completion of the internship and entitled to immediate issuance of professional credentials, unless they have worked for less time than foreseen for the internship corresponding to their educational level, in which case professional credentials can only be requested and granted after the time allotted for the internship has elapsed.

**Article 51
Transitional regime**

1. Media bodies that do not comply with this law, in particular Articles 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30, 31 and 32, by the date of entry into force of this Act, shall have a period of one year after that date to complete the process of regularizing their situation with the relevant public authorities.

**Article 52
Regulation**

The statute of the Press Council will be approved within ninety days of the entry into force of this Act.

**Article 53
Repeal**

Article 11.1(a) of Law no 9/2003 of 15 October on Immigration and Asylum is repealed.

**Article 54
Entry into force**

This Law shall enter into force thirty days after its publication.