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⚠ Lvl. 2

State  
replied

Switzerland

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## Swiss Intelligence Act threatens Secrecy of Journalistic Sources

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ State

CATEGORY ⓘ ▶ Other acts having chilling effects on media freedom

**PARTNER: EFJ/IFJ, RSF**

The three main journalists' organisations in Switzerland, impressum, syndicom and SSM, have condemned the draft Intelligence Act (Lrens) that is currently being put to a Referendum. According to the organisations representing journalists, this draft is a threat to the protection of journalistic sources and thus the right of Swiss citizens to be fully informed. The reservations foreseen under the Act in favour of people who are subject to professional secrecy, including journalists, do not sufficiently guarantee the protection of whistler blowers' anonymity which is key to disclosing information in the interest of the public. The three journalists' organisations also condemn the means granted to intelligence services to access private exchanges of communication of journalists. Concretely, the text legalises the practice, to be carried out by the intelligence services (Service de renseignement de la Confédération), of a particularly broad and intrusive surveillance of the private lives of citizens, without any real counter- power. The organisations of journalists demand that the law contains explicit guarantees to ensure that the protection of sources cannot be bypassed by the power granted to authorities to access private communications of journalists and whistleblowers.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ▼

➦ [Press Release published \(in French\) on europeanjournalists.org: Suisse: menaces sur la protection des sources](#)

### STATE REPLIES ▼

⊕ 16 Sep 2016 | Reply by the Swiss authorities

➦ [Text of the reply \(in French\)](#)

