



## TI Lithuania Journalism Initiative

Transparency International Lithuania (TI Lithuania) starts with its initiative *Breakfast of Journalists*. The initiative addresses issues that have been identified with the help of previously conducted research and discussions with Lithuanian journalists.

- The *Breakfast of Journalists* discussions aim to create challenging intellectual environment by presenting real life practices and solutions to challenges similar to those faced by journalists in Lithuania. The project allows inviting prominent international experts and opinion leaders to Lithuania to guide discussions with Lithuanian journalists and prompt them to think “outside the box”. By doing so, TI Lithuania aims to contribute to the development of critical approach to journalist practices in the country.

The discussions are not necessarily aimed at appealing to ethical and moral standards of Lithuanian journalists or delivering “a sermon” on morality of ethical, and therefore, “good journalism”. The main task of the initiative is to increase professionalism of Lithuanian journalists and present practical arguments why and how certain ethical choices contribute to the long-term professional success.

- **Target group**

The target group of the initiative are Lithuanian journalist professionals who, on the one hand, seek to enhance their skills and, on the other hand, are concerned about the current persistent trends in Lithuanian media.

- **Duration and language**

The discussions usually last 2-3 hours and are conducted in English, as most journalist professionals possess passive understanding of the English language.

- **Discussion topics**

The topics of discussions have been determined and are an outcome of TI Lithuania findings from two previous media integrity research, observations and discussion with Lithuanian journalists regarding the issues of immediate concern.

The topics provided below are relatively wide and indicate just the main ideas upon which the discussions are and will be based. The theme of seminars may be somewhat narrowed down.

**Opening discussion: Watchdog journalism** (Already conducted on 28 May, 2009 with dr. Stephen J. Farnsworth from the U.S.). *Watchdogs, attack dogs or lap dogs? Investigative journalism and ethical constraints. Accuracy as the highest ethical principle.*

**Informal rewards and the multidimensional relations with sources (September, 2009).** *What to do when journalists are taken out to lunch, given gifts, invited to cultural or entertainment events or travels. How new-gatherers should approach sources? Access to information. The dangers of trading with sources. When deceit is used to get the truth.*

**Managing pseudo-information (October, 2009).** *How critical stance of "pseudo-information" could be maintained? How the "spin" that comes with the information could be identified? How to deal with rumours? How much subjectivity is allowed for a journalists and how it is linked with transparency? Passing judgement: lack of proficiency or freedom of expression?*

**Organizational culture (November, 2009).** *The main challenges that journalists face in a newsroom. Reporting standards, codes of ethics and norms of conduct. Risking the newsroom's image: How the action of editors can strain the independence? How could these obstacles be avoided? How to establish a good relationship with the audience? Openness to comments and criticism.*

**Self-censorship (December, 2009).** *Self-censorship among journalists and the ways to avoid it. Freedom of (political) expression: Do journalists forfeit their right?*

**Making a news story (January, 2010).** *How to make a good story? How to avoid "Iceberg Journalism", negativism, lack of analysis.*

**Breakfast of Journalists** implemented by:



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