

THE CYPRUS

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# WEEKLY

THE PAPER THAT LASTS THE WEEK

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## Karate kid

>12

Nicosia teen is martial arts queen

## Walk this way

>18

Pedestrians at risk on Cyprus roads

# Access denied

## PUBLIC FACES CLOSED DOORS IN HUNT FOR OFFICIAL INFORMATION

An EU-funded initiative yesterday revealed massive violations of the public's fundamental right of access to information held by public bodies in Cyprus.

Research carried out by the 'Open Cyprus Project' in 2010 showed that 75% of public bodies contacted for information did not respond at all, while only 7% of requests submitted resulted in full provision of data.

It was also found that public bodies' websites only have 36% of the most basic information available.

Cyprus is one of four EU countries (Spain, Malta and Luxemburg are the others) with no law to govern access to information, meaning that if a request is ignored, there is

nowhere to turn to for help.

Helen Darbishire, Executive Director of Access Info Europe, a human rights' organisation involved in the project, said Cyprus fell worryingly below European standards on information access.

"This is a clear violation of the right to access information and puts serious obstacles in the way of freedom of speech and public participation in decision making,"

Launching a public consultation on findings and recommendations, that will run until April 29 the project is calling on members of the public, to give their opinions on the right to know via the website: [www.accessinfo-cyprus.eu](http://www.accessinfo-cyprus.eu)