

TITLE: Journalists improve their oil and gas coverage

The Samir Kassir Eyes Center for Media and Cultural Freedom (SKeyes) has released its second study on news coverage of Lebanon's nascent oil and gas sector, finding a slight improvement in oil and gas journalism over its 2014 report. Balanced and vibrant media coverage is important to accountability and transparency as political obstacles have stalled Lebanon's oil and gas sector in the last three years.

The study, a collaboration between SKeyes, Middle East Strategic Perspectives (MESP) and the Lebanese Oil and Gas Initiative (LOGI), found a decrease in the number of errors in news coverage of the oil and gas sector noting also that the number of news stories produced declined from 2014. While coverage of Lebanon decreased media outlets looked more to regional neighbors in covering oil and gas developments.

The most common mistakes repeated by journalists involved the use of inaccurate terminology and inaccurate estimations of the hydrocarbon potential in neighboring countries. Errors in news coverage were largely attributed to the source and not the journalist, while Op-Eds still contained too many mistakes rising from 0.39 errors per Op-Ed in 2014 to 1.50 per Op-Ed in 2016. There was progress in 2016. For example, the number of sources journalists used per story increased, almost double per story compared to the 2014 average.

But there are a number of areas where the media can yet improve. SKeyes recommends journalists do their own fact-checking of their stories and journalists should continue learning oil and gas terminology to master the topic. Media outlets should vary their type of coverage to include interviews with officials, academic experts and businesspersons and to translate or cover the work and reports of think tanks and international organizations working on the sector.

In an effort to support Lebanese journalism SKeyes and the Lebanese Petroleum Administration have organized a number of trainings, in Lebanon and abroad, to familiarize Lebanese journalists with the basics of the sector. SKeyes and MESP are also cooperating with journalist Matt Nash and LOGI to verify the accuracy of statements by politicians and prominent economists around the oil and gas sector. All the results of the fact-checking can be found on the smart phone app "LOG&Learn" available on [iOS](#) and [Android](#).

[Click here to read the full 2016 report on Lebanese Media Coverage of the Oil and Gas Sector](#)

[Click here for the 2014 report on Lebanese Media Coverage of the Oil and Gas Sector](#)