

# **First Roundtable: Data collection, analysis and reporting on attacks and violence against journalists and promotion of journalistic work**

## CONCEPT NOTE

### **BACKGROUND AND FOCUS**

Safety of journalists, online and offline remains a major challenge for the rights to freedom of expression and freedom of opinion to be fully respected. According to UNESCO's latest Global Report on World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development (2021/22), 400 journalists were killed for their work or while on the job between 2016 and 2020. While this constitutes a decrease from the previous five-year period during which 491 journalists were killed, other repression methods seem to be rising at record levels, including arbitrary detention, imprisonment, judicial harassment, and threats of violence online and offline.

The new RFOM project on the Safety of Journalists (SoJ) aims at assisting OSCE participating States to strengthen implementation of relevant OSCE principles and commitments concerning safety of journalists, with particular reference to the pledges outlined in the Ministerial Council Decision 3/18 on the Safety of Journalists, as well as to improve implementation of applicable legal frameworks and existing national strategies for the protection of journalists.

In order to effectively support the implementation of MC Decision 3/18 in the OSCE region, the seven thematic roundtables will address the following core issues:

- 1) data collection, analysis and reporting on attacks and violence against journalists and promotion of journalistic work;
- 2) secure working conditions;
- 3) safety of journalists in conflict situations;
- 4) intersectional perspectives;
- 5) digital safety;
- 6) legal harassment;
- 7) police prevention and fight against impunity.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The first roundtable will focus on "Data collection, analysis and reporting on attacks and violence against journalists and promotion of journalistic work". By discussing the establishment of national institutions or bodies for data collection on attacks against journalists and relevant methodologies concerning data collection on attacks against

journalists as well as appropriate means of analysis and reporting, the roundtable aims at capturing and conveying characteristics, trends, and patterns that can be used as evidence and knowledge to shape behaviours and policies that will lead to a safer environment for journalists. As emphasized by the “World Development Report 2021: Data for better lives”<sup>1</sup> of the World Bank, data can “serve a public good by informing the design, execution, monitoring, and evaluation of public policy and programmes”, and for building systems of accountability. In other words, only by having a clear understanding of the magnitude, form and quality of attacks against journalists will state authorities be able to design effective mechanisms and measures for the prevention of attacks against journalists, for the protection of journalists and for the prosecution of perpetrators.

On the other hand, data can be used for arbitrary commercial and political surveillance, for surreptitious manipulation of personal agency, and for undermining the right to freedom of expression and of opinion.<sup>2</sup>

Given the central role of data in our societies, it is important to analyse how data can be identified, accessed, analysed, and used to track and guarantee the safety of journalists. It is also essential to define how data are collected, produced, distributed, and used. What types of data gaps exist, and which ones seem to be especially difficult to fill? And what are the main requirements and priorities for leveraging the full potential of data to promote journalistic work?

Six experts will try to answer these questions. They will provide insights into methods of data collection and analysis and develop recommendations based on their experience. Furthermore, after the first two hours of closed discussion among experts, the event will open to OSCE pS and provide an opportunity to discuss the topic with experts in detail, asking relevant questions and identifying opportunities on how to make best use of their recommendations.

## MODALITIES

**Date and Time:** 21 September 2022, 14:00-15:00 Bibliotheksaal, Hofburg

**Language:** English

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank. 2021. World Development Report 2021: Data for better lives. Washington, DC, World Bank. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2021>

<sup>2</sup> UN Human Rights Council. 2021. Disinformation and freedom of opinion and expression: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Irene Kahn. (A/HRC/47/25) <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/47/25>