

The logo for ARTICLE 19, featuring the text 'ARTICLE 19' in red on a white, torn-paper-like background.

ARTICLE 19

EUROPE

Directory of initiatives on the safety of journalists in Europe

Media Freedom Rapid Response

2023

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ARTICLE 19 is an international think–do organisation that propels the freedom of expression movement locally and globally to ensure all people realise the power of their voices. Together with our partners, we develop cutting-edge research and legal and policy analysis to drive change worldwide, lead work on the frontlines of expression through our nine regional hubs across the globe, and propel change by sparking innovation in the global freedom of expression movement. We do this by working on five key themes: promoting media independence, increasing access to information, protecting journalists, expanding civic space, and placing human rights at the heart of developing digital spaces.

This Directory is part of the Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) project, which tracks, monitors, and responds to violations of press and media freedom in EU member States and candidate countries. This project provides legal and practical support, public advocacy, and information to protect journalists and media workers. The MFRR is organised by a consortium led by the European Centre for Press and Media Freedom, including ARTICLE 19 Europe, the European Federation of Journalists, Free Press Unlimited, the Institute for Applied Informatics at the University of Leipzig, International Press Institute, and CCI/Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso Transeuropa (OBCT). The project is co-funded by the European Commission. For more information, see www.mfrr.eu.



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Abbreviations

Abbreviations

AJP	Association of Professional Journalists
AJM	Association of Journalists of Macedonia
DCMS	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
DJ	Danish Union of Journalists
DM	Danish Media
FNSI	<i>Federazione Nazionale Stampa Italiana</i>
IMS	International Media Support
MFRR	Media Freedom Rapid Response
NCTJ	National Council for the Training of Journalists
NUJ	National Union of Journalists
NUNS	<i>Nezavisno Udruženje Novinara Srbije</i>
NVJ	<i>Nederlandse Vereniging van Journalisten</i>
OBCT	<i>Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso Transeuropa</i>
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
SLAPPS	Strategic litigation against public participation
SNMO	<i>Schéma National du Maintien de l'Ordre</i>
VVJ	<i>Vlaamse Vereniging van Journalisten</i>

About this Directory

In 2022, as part of the Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) project, ARTICLE 19 Europe – with the support of *Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso Transeuropa* (OBCT) – mapped initiatives on the safety of journalists deployed by States, or in whose work the State is involved, within the MFRR region.

The result of that mapping exercise is this Directory. Until now, these initiatives have not been gathered together in one place. Indeed, some of the initiatives included here have not been documented anywhere else at all.

The goals of this Directory are threefold:

1. To map existing initiatives on the safety of journalists.
2. To act as a single reference work for information about these initiatives.
3. To enhance the safety of journalists and the capacity of both journalists and States to respond to violations.

The Directory does not seek to analyse the initiatives collected here; this will be the task of the next stage of the project.

Who is this Directory for?

We envisage this Directory being useful to journalists, journalists' associations, and government officials in the countries featured.

- **Journalists:** First and foremost, we hope that this Directory enhances journalists' safety. It provides journalists with information about initiatives that exist to protect their safety, which they may not have been aware of previously, and information on how to report attacks.
- **Civil society organisations, such as media freedom groups and journalists' associations and unions:** Mapping existing initiatives makes gaps in provision clearer. We hope that civil society organisations use this Directory to lobby for more – and better – initiatives in their respective countries.
- **Governments:** Officials working on the safety of journalists will find this Directory useful in shaping policy and improving provision.
- **Intergovernmental organisations:** The Directory will help international civil servants working on the safety of journalists to better understand how international standards are being implemented at the national level.

Requirements for inclusion in the Directory

To be included in this Directory, an initiative had to fulfil three requirements:

1. The initiative had to operate at the **national level**.
2. **The State** had to be actively involved.
3. The initiative had to be **within the MFRR region**, which covers all EU member States and candidate countries (Albania, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey).

Initiatives at local/municipality levels and civil society initiatives (even those to which States contribute funding) fell outside this project's remit.

If the initiative fulfilled the above requirements, it was included, regardless of whether it could be considered to represent ‘good practice’.

Methods

ARTICLE 19 Europe produced a template questionnaire and shared this with OBCT and other partners to collect information on relevant initiatives. The questionnaire asked for the following information about each initiative:

- Name
- Founders/members
- When it was set up
- Why it was set up
- How it undertakes its work
- Its general goal
- Its specific goals
- How frequently it meets
- Whether it receives any funding, and if so, the source of that funding (if this could be disclosed)
- Its website or terms of reference.

Consent was sought and obtained from each initiative whose information is listed in this Directory, unless the information was already publicly available.

The first iteration of the Directory contained information that was either already publicly available (e.g. on an organisation’s website) or collected via emails and interviews with key actors. Building on this information, in the third quarter of 2023 ARTICLE 19 Europe conducted a mapping exercise to identify the safety initiatives established since the first edition of the Directory was published. To do so, ARTICLE 19 Europe worked with MFRR partners and other key stakeholders in the media community across the EU and the candidate countries. The newly introduced information in this iteration has been obtained directly from the media community is being shared with their consent.

It is important to note that there are various safety initiatives that, though relevant, do not fall within the scope of the Directory because they are led by civil society organisations and/or at an early stage of development (such as in Slovakia, Malta, Cyprus, Croatia and Lithuania), or focus only on a particular aspect of journalists’ safety (for example, the Lithuanian or Estonian visa programmes for journalists at risk in third countries). For this reason, ARTICLE 19 Europe and other MFRR partners will continue to monitor developments in the EU and expand the Directory in the future.

ARTICLE 19 Europe and other MFRR partner organisations are deeply grateful to everyone who supported the production of the Directory.

Disclaimers

ARTICLE 19 Europe and the MFRR do not necessarily endorse the initiatives featured in this Directory, which is a descriptive mapping project rather than an evaluation of efficacy. ARTICLE 19 Europe has made every effort to research eligible initiatives to include in this Directory. However, we do not claim that it includes all existing initiatives. If you know of any other initiatives that may be eligible for inclusion, or have any updates regarding existing entries, please contact us at info@article19.org.

Directory of initiatives on the safety of journalists in Europe

Belgium

Name of initiative	Persveilig.be
Brief description	A hotline to report aggression against journalists, and other education and cooperation initiatives.
Founders	Flemish Association of Journalists (<i>Vlaamse Vereniging van Journalisten</i> or VVJ).
Members	VVJ in cooperation with other key stakeholders in Belgium.
Governance	The initiatives, especially those on cooperation, are still in the early stages of development.
When was it set up?	2019
Why was it set up?	Due to increasing aggression against journalists, VVJ set up the hotline to report such incidents. According to joint research by the media and academia, journalists increasingly face physical and verbal threats and abuse during demonstrations or sports events.
Main goal	Journalists can use the hotline to report physical or verbal aggression as well as other forms of abuse such as online aggression or strategic litigation against public participation (SLAPPs). VVJ aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Map aggression against journalists and to monitor the situation in Belgium to determine whether there are any common trends in aggression against journalists; ● Engage with the police where needed, on a case-by-case basis; and ● Initiate discussions around possible solutions.

Specific goals	<p>Inspired by the Persveilig initiative in the Netherlands, VVJ's initiatives have three objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information: To provide as much information as possible (on online harassment, physical violence, organised crime, and legal proceedings) to help journalists to be able to do their jobs safely. 2. Education and training: To provide training opportunities for journalists. 3. Dialogue and cooperation: In collaboration with the Association of Professional Journalists (AJP), to maintain dialogue with other stakeholders, including the police, the judiciary, and the government. VVJ, in partnership with AJP, has recently started holding meetings with three ministers from Flanders, the Federal Public Service Justice, and the Federal Public Service Interior to discuss legal reforms to the criminal code in areas related to the safety of journalists. Discussions are ongoing regarding legal reform to the offence of 'insulting public authorities', which would widen its scope to include insults against journalists due to the vital role they play in democratic societies.
How does it work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To report aggression through the hotline, journalists can download a declaration form from the website and send the completed form to info@journalist.be. Complaints will receive an immediate response, be closely monitored, and also be published on international platforms. • With regard to the dialogue with other stakeholders, including the ministers from Flanders, the Federal Public Service Justice, and the Federal Public Service Interior, meetings are taking place on an ad-hoc basis.
How frequently does it meet?	For the dialogue and cooperation initiatives, there is no fixed frequency for meetings between the government representatives and journalists' associations.
Does it receive any funding, and if so, from where?	To be confirmed. ¹
Website	https://journalist.be
Contact	<p>Charlotte Michils, legal adviser, VVJ: charlotte.michils@journalist.be</p> <p>General information: info@journalist.be</p>

¹ All information awaiting confirmation will be provided in the next iteration.

Denmark

Name of initiative	Danish National Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity
Brief description	A national action plan agreed between government, media industry, and other stakeholders to improve journalists' safety.
Founders	Danish Union of Journalists (DJ), Danish Media (DM), International Media Support (IMS), UNESCO Denmark, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Culture.
Members	DJ, DM, IMS, UNESCO Denmark, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Culture, the National Police, and the Attorney General.
Governance	Day-to-day tasks are managed alternately by DJ and DM annually. The first calendar year –2022 – is being managed by DJ, which ensures the involvement of the other stakeholders when relevant. The implementation will be reviewed by all stakeholders semi-annually.
When was it set up?	2022
Why was it set up?	To ensure a well-functioning democracy, it is crucial that journalists can work freely without abuse or threats of any kind either against themselves, their sources, colleagues, or family. Due to increasing levels of risks and threats against journalists, both online and offline, the creation of the National Action Plan, in line with the <i>Council of Europe's recommendations for the protection of the media and journalists</i> , as well as the <i>UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity</i> , was deemed necessary.
Main goal	To provide better protection for journalists and create a safer environment for them.
Specific goals	The National Action Plan's goals are twofold: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure a proactive approach in Denmark to create a safer environment for journalists. 2. To send a clear signal to other countries both in Europe and globally that as many countries as possible should participate, to ensure much-needed improvement in the safety of journalists worldwide.

How does it work?	<p>The parties involved have agreed on the following action points, which will constitute Denmark's National Action Plan and which can be adjusted on an ongoing basis:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor all attacks against journalists: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish a dedicated email address which can be used by journalists to report any abuse. The reports will be monitored and then classified by DJ and DM. b. DJ and DM will prepare semi-annual reports on attacks reported and on their follow-up. 2. Follow up on reports: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Respond to each reported attack with an email providing a recommendation about how to handle it. b. If an investigation is launched, the police may assign the victim a specific police contact, subject to assessment of the severity of the threats. Dialogue with the victim will continue. 3. Maintain dialogue between all parties involved: DJ, DM, IMS, UNESCO, the relevant ministries, the National Police, and the Attorney General agree to meet semi-annually to discuss the current situation, deal with systemic abuses that fall into their area of competence, and keep each other informed of developments. 4. Maintain contact with other countries' working groups and similar initiatives to exchange information and share experiences.
How frequently does it meet?	The parties involved (DJ, DM, IMS, UNESCO, the relevant ministries, the National Police, and the Attorney General) meet semi-annually.
Does it receive any funding, and if so, from where?	To be confirmed.
Website	N/A
Contact	Hans Jørgen Dybro, political consultant, DJ: dyb@journalistforbundet.dk

France

Name of initiative	Liaison Committee (known also as the Contact Group)
Brief description	The Liaison Committee is a communication channel between the authorities and representatives of journalists, media, and press freedom organisations, focused mainly on issues related to coverage of protests and other public events in France.
Founders	Ministry of Interior, police and gendarmerie institutions, and journalists, media and press freedom associations.
Members	Ministry of Interior, police and gendarmerie institutions, and journalists, media and press freedom associations.
Governance	While the Ministry of Interior organises the meetings of the Committee, its governance is informal. Dates and agenda are set by the Ministry, based on proposals from other members of the Committee.
When was it set up?	2022
Why was it set up?	The idea of a channel of exchange emerged during consultations between journalists and the authorities conducted by the Independent Commission on Relations Between the Media and Law-Enforcement Agencies (also known as the Delarue Commission). The Commission was set up at the request of the Prime Minister on 22 December 2020 and its conclusions were partly reflected in the new National Scheme for Policing Demonstrations (Schéma National du Maintien de l'Ordre or SNMO) published by the Ministry of Interior in December 2021.
Main goal	The main goal is, according to SNMO, to establish 'a permanent and constructive dialogue' in order to 'continue the exchange on the operational conditions in which journalists and law enforcement can concomitantly exercise their missions during a protest and signal potential difficulties in the application of the provisions [of the SNMO]'.
Specific goals	Based on the experience of the 18 months of work by the Committee, it can be concluded that its specific goals are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to alert actors about press freedom violations, including police violence against journalists covering protests and other public events; ● to alert law enforcement officials about physical threats to journalists beyond the ones at public events in France; ● to obtain explanations from the authorities and to hold them accountable for illegal behaviour, including violence, by officers towards journalists; and ● to discuss measures to be taken by the authorities and journalists to prevent press freedom violations, facilitate the work of the media, and protect journalists.

How does it work?	<p>The meeting usually includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a joint evaluation of the implementation of the SNMO's provisions related to the work of journalists, and the major threats to journalists covering public events and an assessment of their effectiveness (by all parties); 2. alerts about press freedom violations and potential risks observed (main inputs come from journalists, media, and press freedom organisations); and 3. communication of measures taken and their implications (inputs come from the authorities).
How frequently does it meet?	Approximately monthly.
Does it receive any funding, and if so, from where?	No funding. Voluntary contributions of the participating organisations.
Website	N/A
Contact	<p>Pavol Szalai, Head of EU/Balkans Desk, Reporters Without Borders: pszalai@rsf.org</p> <p>Paul Coppin, Deputy to the Director of Advocacy and Assistance, in charge of legal affairs, Reporters Without Borders: pcoppin@rsf.org</p>

Greece

Name of initiative	Task Force on Ensuring the Protection, Safety and Empowerment of Journalists and other Media Professionals, and other initiatives
Brief Description	A group with a special dynamic that covers the whole range of stakeholders and, for the first time, creates a dialogue among them on the current situation in Greece, aimed at coming up with specific proposals for improvement in the safety of journalists.
Founders	The Task Force is part of initiatives that the Secretariat General for Communication and Media is planning and the government is implementing. It was established in the context of the Memorandum of Understanding on Ensuring the Protection, Safety and Empowerment of Journalists and other Media Professionals (23 May 2022), among six relevant Greek ministries (Secretariat General for Communication and Media, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Citizen Protection, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Digital Governance, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs).
Members	Representatives of the journalistic associations, university, ministries, public service media, news agencies, and other stakeholders ²
Governance	The Task Force is a coordinated effort of state and non-state actors, including the academic and media communities. The Secretariat General for Communication and Media provides administrative support. The parties adopted an MoU that specifies activities ranging from monitoring safety situations to legislative and institutional changes. Through specifically dedicated working groups consisting of the interested parties of the Task Force, the members work on the specific agreed activities.

² The Task Force consists of the following representatives: the Secretariat General for Communication and Media; the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of Citizen Protection; the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; the Ministry of Digital Governance; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation; the Athens – Macedonian News Agency; the Department of “Communication, Media and Culture” of Panteion University; the Department of “Communication and Media” of National and Kapodestrian University of Athens; the Department of “Journalism and Media” of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki; Journalists’ Union of Athens Daily Newspapers; Journalists’ Union of Macedonia and Thrace; Journalists’ Union of Peloponnese, Ipirus and Islands Daily Newspapers; Journalists’ Union of the Daily Newspapers of Thessaly, Central Greece and Evia; Panhellenic Association of Journalists’ Union; Journalists’ Union of periodical and electronic Press; the Union of Press Photographers – Greece; the Panhellenic Sports Press Association; the Foreign Press Association of Greece; the Union of Private Television Technicians of Northern Greece; and the Union of Private Television Technicians of Attica.

When was it set up?	2022
Why was it set up?	The Task Force aims to pursue the objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding on Ensuring the Protection, Safety and Empowerment of Journalists and other Media Professionals, which is aligned with Recommendation (EU) 2021/1534 of the European Commission.
Main goal	In line with the MOU, the Task Force offers a platform for a range of stakeholders to collectively engage to devise policies and practices to protect and empower journalists.
Specific goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To monitor and record the situation regarding the position of journalists in Greece. ● To collect the experiences, requests, and concerns or difficulties of the parties in the Task Force. ● To analyse existing best practices in the EU or at the international level, and to adapt them to the needs of the Greek media ecosystem. ● To submit proposals by each participating body to policymakers, with a special focus on female journalists, young journalists, journalists in the regional media, and digital journalists. ● To jointly explore existing tools, ways of cooperation, and forms of mutual support. ● To draft a framework of proposals for legislative and non-legislative initiatives, which will be analysed in parallel through scientific or research development. ● To promote the proposed actions publicly.
How does it work	To address specific topics listed in the MoU, the members, who come from different agencies, collaborate in subgroups on issues related to their competencies and interests. They propose and work on specific projects, arriving at conclusions and proposals that aim to lead to the readjustment of the existing institutional framework, where and if the relevant need is identified, as well as to the drawing up and implementation of good practices by the agencies involved. Through this productive process, an active channel of communication and cooperation is created and maintained between the agencies involved in matters concerning the safety of journalists and other media professionals, which leads to a fast and effective response to issues that may arise.
How frequently does it meet?	The parties involved meet monthly.
Does it receive any	The Task Force does not have a separate budget. It receives

funding, and if so, from where?	administrative support from the Secretariat General for Communication and Media.
Website	N/A, for more information see this webpage .
Contact	Eleni Pantzartzi: epantzartzi@media.gov.gr Anastasia Kolofotia: akolofotia@media.gov.gr

Italy

Name of initiative	Coordination centre for the monitoring, analysis, and permanent exchange of information on the phenomenon of intimidation of journalists (Centro di coordinamento dell'attività di monitoraggio, analisi e scambio permanente di informazioni sul fenomeno degli atti intimidatori nei confronti dei giornalisti)
Brief description	A coordination centre for monitoring, analysis and exchange of information on acts of intimidation against journalists and for the identification of prevention strategies.'
Founders	Minister of the Interior.
Members	Minister of the Interior, Chief of Cabinet of the Ministry of the Interior, Chief of the Police, president and general secretary of the Italian National Press Federation (<i>Federazione Nazionale Stampa Italiana – FNSI</i>), president and general secretary of the Chamber of Journalists.
Governance	It's chaired by the Minister of the Interior and it operates through a permanent support body based in the Public Security Department.
When was it set up?	21 November 2017
Why was it set up?	According to FNSI and the Chamber of Journalists, the increase in threats to journalists from organised crime and individuals was not receiving enough attention from national institutions. Long years of advocacy, networking, dialogue, and pressure have led to the creation of a special body in charge of both monitoring and deciding on protection measures. Previously, individual journalists could only report threats to the police, who would grant any protection according to a standard procedure as they would for any citizen. This centre has created a dedicated pathway for both reporting and protection measures, and every journalist using it is supported by the trade unions involved.
Main goal	To coordinate information and data exchange in order to monitor and analyse acts of intimidation against journalists.
Specific goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To collect all threats and acts of intimidation against journalists in a national database. ● To promote analysis and study of the data collected, in collaboration with journalists' associations and professional crime analysts. ● To coordinate responses involving police forces in different locations. ● To formulate proposals for prevention strategies and adequate responses.

How does it work?	Threats, acts of intimidations, and crimes reported to police authorities in different locations are collected in a national database. This data is monitored, with reports published regularly and discussed at quarterly meetings chaired by the Ministry of the Interior.
How frequently does it meet?	Meetings are periodic, convened also in connection with specific needs.
Does it receive any funding, and if so, from where?	The coordination centre's activities are part of the Ministry of Interior's regular activities.
Website	https://www.interno.gov.it/it/ministero/osservatori-commissioni-e-centri-coordinamento/centro-coordinamento-sul-fenomeno-atti-intimidatori-nei-confronti-dei-giornalisti
Contact	Stefano Delfini, Director, Criminal Analysis Service, Criminal Police Central Directorate, Ministry of the Interior: stefano.delfini@dcpc.interno.it Secretariat of the Criminal Analysis Service: segreteria@dcpc.interno.it

Latvia

Name of initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Memorandum of cooperation to ensure effective action on the safety of journalists ● Mapping of existing mechanisms
Brief description	Provisional measures to establish a permanent system to respond effectively when journalists report harassment.
Founders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Memorandum: Latvian Association of Journalists, Latvian Union of Journalists, and the State Police. ● Mapping: Latvian Government.
Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Memorandum: Latvian Association of Journalists, Latvian Union of Journalists, and the State Police ● Mapping: Ministry of Culture.
Governance	N/A.
When was it set up?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The memorandum was signed in 2020 ● Mapping started at the end of 2021
Why was it set up?	There were concerning incidents of journalists being harassed and no sufficiently clear procedures in place to deal with them. As a result, the Latvian Government instructed the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of the Interior to look for solutions to ensure journalists' complaints are promptly investigated.
Main goal	The Ministries' goal is to examine the possibility of establishing a permanent system for law enforcement bodies examining journalists' complaints. This would take into account the specific nature of journalists' work and the Council of Europe's recommendations on the safety of journalists and other media actors.
Specific goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The goal of the memorandum is to define how information should be exchanged in cases where a journalist has been threatened as a result of their professional activities. ● The goal of the mapping exercise is to determine which institutions are – or would be – responsible for the various actions foreseen in the <i>European Commission's Recommendation on ensuring the protection, safety and empowerment of journalists and other media professionals in the European Union</i>. This would be followed by an analysis of the actions that need to be taken in the future.

How does it work?	Based on the signed memorandum, the State Police give journalists who report threats a designated contact. There is also a telephone hotline for journalists who require an immediate response from the police (due to imminent threat to health, life, property, etc).
How frequently does it meet?	N/A.
Does it receive any funding, and if so, from where?	To be confirmed.
Website	N/A
Contact	Operational Management Bureau of Public Order Unit of Riga Regional Branch of the State Police of Latvia Tel: +371 2789 2039

Malta

Name of initiative	Public Inquiry Commission for Daphne Caruana Galizia
Brief description	A public inquiry into the killing of journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia.
Founders	Maltese Government.
Members	The government appointed Michael Mallia, a former judge, to chair the board of inquiry, and former Dean of the Faculty of Law and constitutional expert Professor Ian Refalo and forensic expert Dr Anthony Abela Medici as members of the Commission in September 2019. However, following concerns raised by Galizia's family, two new members were appointed to the board by the Prime Minister to replace the previous members. The new members were Chief Justice Joseph Said Pullicino and Judge Abigail Lofaro. The Chair retained his position.
Governance	There is a board of inquiry and a chairperson.
When was it set up?	December 2019
Why was it set up?	Two years after the assassination of journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia on 16 October 2017, following numerous calls by intergovernmental organisations, including UN experts , the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly , and the European Parliament , a public inquiry was launched in 2019 to determine whether the State was responsible for Galizia's death.
Main goal	To independently investigate the assassination of Daphne Caruana Galizia on 16 October 2017 and the events preceding, concomitant with, and following that assassination, and to consider responsibility, fault, and retribution.
Specific goals	The Commission was tasked with hearing testimonies from witnesses, including investigators, politicians, and journalists, collecting evidence, and publishing its findings publicly, with the purpose of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determining whether any wrongful action or omission by or within any State entity facilitated the assassination or failed to prevent it; ● Establishing whether the State had and has in place effective criminal law provisions and other practical means to avoid the development of a de facto state of impunity; and ● Determining whether the State has fulfilled or is fulfilling its positive obligation to take preventive operational measures to protect those individuals whose lives are at risk from criminal acts, in particular in the case of journalists.

How does it work?	<p>The Commission held hearings to hear testimonies from the journalist’s family, politicians, and other journalists, and collected evidence. The submissions made to the inquiry can be found here.</p> <p>In December 2020, the board of inquiry announced that it would continue its work beyond the deadline set by the government. The members also announced that they were willing to renounce payment for the extension in order for the inquiry to continue.</p> <p>In June 2021, the board declared that the collection of evidence stage was closed and they would move on to finalising their report. Their final report was subsequently published in July 2021. An English translation of the report can be found here.</p> <p>In 2022, based on the learnings from the Public Inquiry into the Assassination of Daphne Caruana Galizia, the government set up a Committee for the Recommendation of Measures for the Protection of Journalists, other Media Actors and Persons in Public Life. The work of the Committee has been delayed by the absence of an official legislative act that would define its responsibilities and scope of engagement.</p> <p>The police in 2022 also set up the Central Intelligence and Analysis unit, responsible for identifying instances of real and imminent threats to life based on an internal assessment protocol.</p>
How frequently does it meet?	The board held 93 sittings and heard 120 witnesses.
Does it receive any funding, and if so, from where?	To be confirmed.
Website	More information can be found at: https://www.daphne.foundation/en/justice/public-inquiry
Contact	N/A

Montenegro

Name of initiative	Commission for Monitoring Investigations of Attacks on Journalists
Brief description	A commission to monitor the State's handling of violence against journalists.
Founders	Government of Montenegro.
Members	Representatives of the media and media associations, the Ministry of the Interior, the Police Administration, the National Security Agency, and the Prosecutor's Office.
Governance	The Commission has no power to ensure the government responds to or engages with its recommendations as there are no enforceable rules that govern the relationship between the Commission and other stakeholders.
When was it set up?	It was established in December 2013, and the members have been re-elected several times. The last was on 4 June 2021.
Why was it set up?	Montenegro created the Commission in 2012, following a request from the European Commission.
Main goal	To monitor the activities of the competent authorities in the investigation of historic and recent cases of threats and violence against journalists, murders of journalists, and attacks on media property, and to provide recommendations to improve investigations.
Specific goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To create a plan and procedures for collecting facts and establishing other circumstances in relation to investigations. ● To initiate cooperation with the authorities responsible for conducting investigations (prosecutors and police) by requesting relevant government bodies submit documentation related to attacks on journalists. ● To review the investigations conducted so far, based on the information obtained and circumstances considered in relation to the investigations conducted. ● To prepare an opinion on effective means of conducting investigations and specific measures that should be taken to improve investigations.
How does it work?	To fulfil its responsibilities, the Commission relies on the cooperation of the police and prosecutors, and on the information and documents they provide. However, it can hold its own private hearings with journalists who have been attacked and officials involved in investigations, and can employ external experts to help with its work. The Commission published a report about the murder of a journalist , revealing new investigative details. Based on the report's recommendations, the authorities requested international assistance to further investigate the case.

How frequently does it meet?	The Commission meets at least once a month, as set out in its Rules of Procedure, and more frequently if needed.
Does it receive any funding, and if so, from where?	The Commission receives no funding for its activities, such as hiring external experts to help in considering complex investigations. However, its members receive a token monthly payment for their work from the Ministry of Interior.
Website	The Commission has no website of its own. It relies on the government to publish its reports and other communications. The Commission has asked the government to establish a website and database to digitise its documentation, in order to increase the efficiency and transparency of its work, but has not yet received a reply. For more information on the first session of the latest Commission, see: https://www.gov.me/clanak/odrzana-prva-sjednica-komisije-za-istrage- napada-na-novinare
Contact	Mihailo Jovović, President of the Commission: mihailo.jovovic@vijesti.me

Netherlands

Name of initiative	Persveilig
Brief description	A comprehensive package of protection measures for journalists from journalism industry bodies and the government to enhance safety of journalists, including a hotline to report attacks and training.
Founders	Persveilig has been developed as a joint initiative of the Dutch Association of Journalists (<i>Nederlandse Vereniging van Journalisten – NVJ</i>), the Association of Editors in Chief, the police and the Public Prosecution Service. The initiative is based on the agreement reached by the Steering Group on Aggression and Violence against Journalists in 2018, which resulted in the Protocol PersVeilig in 2019.
Members	NVJ, the Association of Editors in Chief, the police, and the Public Prosecution Service.
Governance	Persveilig’s Steering Committee consists of the 4 initial members. There is also a project manager who is accountable to the Steering Committee.
When was it set up?	November 2019
Why was it set up?	Due to increasing violence and aggression against journalists, the media sector, the police, and the Public Prosecution Service have taken steps to reduce such threats, violence, and aggression.
Main goal	To strengthen the protection of journalists from violence and aggression on the street, on social media, and/or through legal action.
Specific goals	The Protocol sets out detailed and comprehensive principles for journalists, employers, law enforcement, and prosecutors on how to make sure the necessary measures are in place to protect the safety, health, and well-being of journalists.

How does it work?	<p>As part of the implementation of the Protocol, Persveilig has been developed as a joint initiative, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A hotline for journalists to report physical, verbal, sexual, and other threats and receive information on what to do. ● The police and Public Prosecution Service prioritise the investigation and prosecution of attacks and harassment against journalists. ● Prosecutors demand 200% of the normal penalty in cases of aggression or violence against journalists. ● A 'Stop Conversation' where police can visit the home of anyone who harasses journalists online to speak to them, in cases where the threshold of criminal liability has not been reached.³ ● A security plan for employers and journalists containing practical details about prevention and training, but also clear procedures about what measures must be taken after an incident, including with regard to providing public statements and aftercare.⁴ ● Incorporation of a collectively agreed norm into the safety plan, setting out which types of (aggressive and intimidating) behaviour are considered unacceptable and always lead to action by the employer/journalists. ● Courses and training to ensure that journalists can defend themselves against forms of aggression and intimidation. ● 'First aid for online threats' online training. ● Guidelines for journalists on issues such as how to prevent aggression to make themselves less vulnerable.
How frequently does it meet?	The Steering Committee and the Project Manager meet once every three months to discuss the implementation of the Protocol.
Does it receive any funding, and if so, from where?	It is funded by the Public Broadcasting Corporation, publishers, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, and the Ministry of Justice.
Website	https://www.persveilig.nl/ (Dutch); https://www.persveilig.nl/about-us (English)
Contact	Peter ter Velde, Persveilig Project Manager: info@persveilig.nl

³ Information obtained from MFRR's [Netherlands Mission Report](#) (page 6).

⁴ Ibid. (page 6).

North Macedonia

Name of initiative	Appointment of a special Public Prosecutor – a designated point of contact within the Skopje Basic Public Prosecutor’s Office for cases related to the safety of journalists.
Brief description	In 2022, the Skopje Basic Public Prosecutor’s Office appointed a special public prosecutor to serve as a contact person for all cases related to the safety of journalists. In line with this decision, this Public Prosecutor’s Office and other public prosecutor’s offices across the country will prioritise cases related to the safety of journalists and will continue to promote cooperation with journalists’ associations, with the aim of acting against any criminal or legal threats to the freedom of the press.
Founders	The Association of Journalists of Macedonia (AJM)
Members	AJM in cooperation with the Skopje Basic Public Prosecutor’s Office
Governance	In line with the changes in the Criminal Code in 2023, the AJM established full cooperation with the Skopje Basic Public Prosecutor’s Office, which designated a point of contact – a prosecutor to act as a liaison officer between journalists and prosecutorial authorities. Journalists can call the officer to report a range of both online and offline threats, including threats of damage to their property. The liaison officer is also responsible for ensuring that threats reported by journalists and filed with the Ministry of Internal Affairs before the MoU was signed are processed according to the MoU and Criminal Law changes.
When was it set up?	2022
Why was it set up?	For years, the AJM had been working on campaigns to raise awareness of the conditions of journalists and media workers, emphasising safety issues and the problem of impunity for offenders. The AJM therefore recommended that the Skopje Basic Public Prosecutor’s Office establish a dedicated point of contact to focus on the safety of journalists. This is in accordance with the recommendations of the Council of Europe with the goal of initiating systemic change to improve the situation.
Main goal	To increase the efficiency and effectiveness of law enforcement and prosecutorial offices in protecting journalists and media workers. To improve communication among all stakeholders for swift identification of perpetrators. To establish a positive practice that will allow prompt investigation and action to tackle threats and attacks against journalists, and will discourage future attempts to intimidate journalists and media workers.

Specific goals	<p>AJM's initiatives have two objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information and data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To provide as much information as possible (on online harassment, physical violence, and legal proceedings and support) to enable the protection of journalists and their work. ● Education and training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To help train journalists and media workers on professional and ethical journalistic standards. ○ To conduct workshops and events that increase cooperation with the judicial system. ○ To organise joint activities between AJM and state authorities aimed at improving the skills of the police and prosecutors in the context of the safety of journalists and media workers.
How does it work	<p>To report aggression, threats, or attacks, journalists can contact the AJM executive office and report the case to the police. AJM serves as a contact point that can communicate immediately with the contact person at the Ministry of Internal Affairs or the Public Prosecutor's Office to report the case. After the police or the prosecutor's office takes action, AJM monitors the case until its resolution. This system will help reduce impunity and improve the environment and working conditions for journalists and media workers.</p>
How frequently does it meet?	No fixed meetings.
Does it receive any funding, and if so, from where?	No funding. Voluntary contributions of the participating actors.
Website	https://znm.org.mk/en
Contact	<p>AJM: Dragan Sekulovski, Executive Director: dsekulovski@znm.org.mk</p> <p>Skopje Basic Public Prosecutor's Office: Iskra Hadji Vasileva, Public Prosecutor: iskrahadjivasileva@gmail.com</p>

North Macedonia 2

Name of initiative	Protocol for the safety of female journalists on the internet and the appointment of a contact person for online threats against journalists and media workers.
Brief description	In 2023, the Association of journalists of Macedonia (AJM) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs signed a new protocol related to safety of female journalists online and appointing a contact point within the Ministry to address online threats.
Founders	AJM
Members	AJM and the Ministry of Interior
Governance	In line with the protocol, at the initiative of AJM, a contact person has been appointed in the Ministry of Internal Affairs to address online threats against journalists and media workers. The protocol offers practical steps for journalists to report threats online, through the proactive involvement of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the protection of media workers.
When was it set up?	2023
Why was it set up?	For years, AJM has been working on campaigns to raise awareness about the situation of journalists and media workers, emphasising safety issues and the problem of impunity for attackers. The AJM therefore recommended that the judiciary and law enforcement establish a special system of points of contact for the safety of journalists. This is in accordance with the recommendations of the Council of Europe with the goal of initiating systemic change to improve the current situation.
Main goal	To increase the efficiency and effectiveness of law enforcement and prosecutorial offices in protecting journalists and media workers. To improve communication among all stakeholders for swift identification of perpetrators. To establish a positive practice that will allow prompt investigation and action to tackle threats and attacks against journalists, and will discourage future attempts to intimidate journalists and media workers.

Specific goals	<p>AJM's initiatives have two objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information and data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To provide as much information as possible (on online harassment, physical violence, and legal proceedings and support) to enable the protection of journalists and their work. ● Education and training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To help train journalists and media workers on professional and ethical journalistic standards. ○ To conduct workshops and events that increase cooperation with the judicial system. ○ To organise joint activities between AJM and state authorities aimed at improving the skills of the police and prosecutors in the context of the safety of journalists and media workers.
How does it work	<p>To report aggression, threats, or attacks, journalists can contact the AJM executive office and report the case to the police. AJM as a contact point can communicate immediately with the contact person at the Ministry of Internal Affairs to report the case. After the police acts, AJM monitors the case until its resolution.</p>
How frequently does it meet?	<p>No fixed meetings</p>
Does it receive any funding, and if so, from where?	<p>No funding. Voluntary contribution of the participating actors.</p>
Website	<p>https://znm.org.mk/en</p>
Contact	<p>AJM: Dragan Sekulovski, Executive Director: dsekulovski@znm.org.mk</p> <p>Ministry of Internal Affairs: Ana Blazeska, contact person: ana_blazeska@moi.gov.mk</p>

Serbia

Name of initiative	The Standing Working Group for the Safety of Journalists
Brief description	The working group was established to foster cooperation on the safety of journalists between media organisations and competent state authorities. It serves as a platform to create a systemic response to the threats against journalists (e.g. contact points in every prosecutorial office and police station in Serbia).
Founders	The Agreement on Cooperation and Measures to Increase the Safety of Journalists was signed by the Supreme Republic Public Prosecutor's Office, Ministry of Interior, and seven journalism and media associations: Association of Journalists of Serbia, Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (Nezavisno Udruženje Novinara Srbije or NUNS), Independent Journalists' Association of Vojvodina, Association of Independent Electronic Media, Media Association, Online Media Association, and Association of Journalists of Vojvodina. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) mission in Serbia has an observer's role that lets it attend meetings and participate in discussions with the members.
Members	The Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office, the Ministry of Interior, and six journalism and media associations (Association of Journalists of Serbia, NUNS, Independent Journalists' Association of Vojvodina, Association of Independent Electronic Media, Media Association, and Online Media Association).
Governance	<p>The Standing Working Group consists of representatives and deputy representatives of the signatories of the agreement. To date, the Standing Working Group has created three action plans based on the Agreement, proposing concrete measures (e.g. monitoring of threats by the Public Prosecutor, contact points in police stations, rapid police investigations, etc.) that are being jointly implemented. In addition, at the group's regular meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journalists and media organisations report attacks and threats, and establish contacts for ongoing communication. • Representatives receive updated records of attacks against journalists from the Serbian Republic Public Prosecutor's Office. <p>See OSCE's Standing Working Group on the Safety of Journalists 2017–2021 Activity Report.</p>
When was it set up?	2016

Why was it set up?	In line with the EU Action Plan for Chapter 23 and as a part of the process of Serbia's accession to the European Union, a stronger engagement of the key stakeholders was proposed as a functional mechanism to address permanent and serious threats to journalists and the overall lack of institutional understanding of the impact of such threats on the media freedom. The parties agreed that it is necessary to formalise existing forms of cooperation, and introduce new ones, between state authorities and the media community, specifically focusing on the legal aspects of the protection of journalists.
Main goal	To foster cooperation among the members of the agreement and establish a system of safety measures to ensure more efficient legal protection of journalists.
Specific goals	<p>Under the Agreement, the Standing Working Group has the following goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to establish a Standing Working Group that includes authorised representatives of the signatory parties; ● to establish a mechanism, which includes contact persons in media associations and police stations across Serbia, and prosecutors' offices, to report attacks against journalists and exchange information; ● to establish a mechanism of rapid escalation and investigation of the threats against journalists; ● to ensure that records of attacks against journalists are maintained by the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office; ● to introduce high-priority procedures for police officers in cases of attacks against journalists; ● to analyse the provisions of the Criminal Code and procedures of the competent authorities, and propose legislative and institutional changes to make journalists safer; and ● to analyse current communication methods and the degree of openness of competent authorities to the media.
How does it work?	The members meet quarterly, and in extraordinary circumstances, to discuss the status of individual criminal cases of threats to journalists, related safety issues, and other activities included in the Action plan. In addition, members communicate by email in between meetings to consult and exchange information about relevant cases.
How frequently does it meet?	The Standing Working Group usually meets every three months. If needed, ad-hoc meetings can be arranged more often.
Does it receive any funding, and if so, from where?	Representatives on the Standing Working Group are not paid for their work. The activities envisaged by the Action plans are conceptualised, funded, and implemented by OSCE.

Website	<p>The Standing Working Group has no website, but information can be found at http://www.rjt.gov.rs/sr/bezbednost-novinara.</p> <p>More information:</p> <p>OSCE's 2022 Annual Report on the Activities of Permanent Working Group for Safety of Journalists</p> <p>OSCE's Standing Working Group on the Safety of Journalists 2017–2021 Activity Report</p>
Contact	Marija Babić, NUNS: marija.babic@nuns.rs

Serbia 2

Name of initiative	Commission to review the facts related to the investigation of murdered journalists
Brief description	A commission to review the investigations of journalists who have been killed
Founders	Government of the Republic of Serbia.
Members	Two journalists, three representatives of the Ministry of Interior, representative of the War Crimes Prosecutor's Office, and two representatives of the Security Information Agency.
Governance	The Commission consists of a chair and seven members. The Commission reports back to the government on its activities.
When was it set up?	2013
Why was it set up?	A willingness to reopen unsolved cases of journalists who had been killed led to the Commission being founded to analyse the investigations that had been conducted in these cases, determine the facts about why they were unsuccessful, and lay the foundation for further investigations.
Main goal	To consider the facts in the investigations into the killings of journalists Radislava Dada Vujasinovic, Slavko Curuvija, and Milan Pantic, as well as journalists and Radio Television Serbia workers during the 1999 bombing, and to consider the facts which led to investigations into the killings of journalists during the armed conflicts in the former Yugoslavia from 1991 to 1995 and the killings of journalists in the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija from 1 January 1998 to 31 December 2000.
Specific goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To determine a plan and procedures for gathering facts and other information related to the murder investigations. ● To cooperate with the bodies responsible for conducting such investigations. ● To provide an overview of the current state of the investigations being conducted. ● To prepare an opinion as to how methods of investigation can be improved to make sure that they are conducted more effectively, with proposals for concrete measures to achieve this.
How does it work?	The Commission is required to submit a report on its work to the government every 90 days, and to the competent committee every 60 days.
How frequently does it meet?	There is no fixed frequency for meetings. The Commission meets on an ad-hoc basis.

Does it receive any funding, and if so, from where?	Members of the Commission do not receive remuneration for their work, except for reimbursement of necessary and justified expenses related to their work for the Commission, subject to the regulations regarding the reimbursement of civil servants.
Website	http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/odluka/2013/8/7/reg
Contact	None available; enquiries can be addressed to Marija Babić, NUNS: marija.babic@nuns.rs

Sweden

Name of initiative	National Action Plan: Defending Free Speech
Brief description	A national action plan to monitor and reduce threats to journalists and others in public life.
Founders	Swedish Government
Members	Swedish Government
Governance	The actions included in the Action Plan mainly consist of specific tasks for various State authorities. These authorities carry out the tasks autonomously; however, they report the results and progress back to the government once the tasks are completed. The government then evaluates the work internally and follows up the results in different ways, e.g. round-table discussions with relevant actors from the media sector.
When was it set up?	Adopted in May 2018
Why was it set up?	To defend the open and free formation of opinion and to address the increased risk of exposure to hatred and threats, and the resulting impact on journalists, elected representatives and artists whose exposure to such threats leads to adaptation and self-censorship.
Main goal	The Action Plan is specifically intended to safeguard politically elected representatives, journalists, and artists as part of the infrastructure for democratic discourse.
Specific goals	Based on available knowledge, the government monitors ongoing initiatives in this area, as well as proposing new ones, with the aim of laying the foundations for more systematic work in the future. The ambition is to strengthen its preventive work through greater knowledge and targeted measures that can reduce the exposure of elected representatives, journalists, and artists to threats and hatred.

How does it work?	<p>The measures mentioned in the Action Plan as ‘currently being taken’ include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitoring the work of the Swedish Police Authority and the Swedish Prosecution Authority to ensure they have knowledge of threats and hatred against, <i>inter alia</i>, journalists and an ability to handle them. ● Increased capacity for crime prevention. ● When a crime with the intent to influence the free formation of opinion is suspected, the Swedish Police Authority is expected to give special attention to whether such a crime can cause a journalist to refrain from operating in the public sphere. ● Specialist democracy and hate crime units under the Swedish Police Authority. ● Internal training for the Swedish Police Authority to increase skills and knowledge regarding offences affecting fundamental rights and freedoms. ● Providing personal protection to victims of threats and hatred, via the Swedish Police Authority's crime victim and personal security division. ● The Swedish Police Authority's Stockholm Development Centre, whose designated area of responsibility includes offences that threaten fundamental rights and freedoms, established consultation forums in 2015. In these forums, the Authority meets, for example, with representatives from the media industry and party organisations on a regular basis to exchange experiences and improve operational collaboration. ● A national cybercrime centre has been established within the Swedish Police Authority. ● The Swedish Prosecution Authority has produced a legal memorandum including guidance on the practical handling of hate crime on the Internet. ● The Swedish government has commissioned the University of Gothenburg, Linnæus University, the Swedish Arts Grants Committee, the Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, and the Swedish Police Authority – and is funding the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, and Victim Support Sweden – to strengthen work against threats and hatred (e.g. funding the Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority to produce a training and information resource concerning support for those exposed to threats and hatred while participating in democratic discourse).
How frequently does it meet?	N/A

Does it receive any funding, and if so, from where?	This is a State-led National Action Plan, funded and administered by the government.
Website	https://www.government.se/information-material/2018/05/action-plan-defending-free-speech
Contact	Contact information for the Swedish Ministry of Culture, including the current Minister of Culture is available here . (The plan was adopted during Alice Bah Kuhnke's term as the Minister of Culture and Democracy.)