

#SOFJO Conference 2019

Increasing Opportunities for

Freedom of Expression

and Media Plurality



**12 February 2019**

*OSCE Conference Centre  
Hofburg, Vienna*

Democracy thrives when a plurality of voices are heard online. Yet, one particular group of voices, that of female journalists, has been regularly and systematically targeted.

This type of gender-based violence online, which continues to escalate in every country in the OSCE region, targets women journalists with a barrage of sexually-explicit, violent and misogynistic abuse, in order to shrink the space women are able to access and, ultimately, silence their voices. While much digital abuse is confined to the boundaries of cyberspace, too often, harassment spreads beyond, resulting in physical intimidation and attacks.

An effective system for the protection of journalists is of the utmost importance. However, a different approach, with the engagement of all stakeholders, is necessary to ensure safety online, especially for women journalists who are targeted both as journalists and as women. A holistic approach, that considers all facets of online abuse and the resulting impact on women, is, therefore, key in identifying and developing effective and sustainable solutions to counter online harassment.

This event will provide a forum for discussions on the aforementioned issues, as well as a platform for women journalists to continue to share their experiences as a practical framework for experts and policy-makers to come up with innovative solutions, strategies and resources to better protect plurality online.

During the conference, the Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFOM) will launch a *Communiqué on Media Pluralism, Safety of Female Journalists and Safeguarding Marginalized Voices Online*, outlining the work that has been done, but also a commitment and call to ensure that marginalized voices are provided a space to participate online, as a cornerstone of media freedom and freedom of expression.

8.30 – 9.00 **Morning coffee and registration**

*Vorsaal, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor*

9.00 – 9.15 **Conference opening**

*Neuersaal, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor*

**HARLEM DÉSIR**

OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

**DUNJA MIJATOVIĆ** keynote speaker

Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights

9.15 – 11.00 **Panel: Policy Developments and Challenges – a gender sensitive approach**

This panel will provide an opportunity to assess the impact and capacity of the latest instruments adopted at the international level to tackle online gender-based violence and better ensure women's online participation. Panelists will identify and analyze the key elements of these gender-sensitive measures, including their practical application and effect.

**NANI JANSEN REVENTLOW**

Director, Digital Freedom Fund

**MARIJA VUČIĆ**

Journalist, KRIK Belgrade

**SUZANNE FRANKS**

Author, *Women and Journalism*

**HANNA ANDERSSON**

Project Manager, FOJO Media Institute

**NADEZDA AZHGIKHINA**

Vice-President, European Federation of Journalists

**GÜLSIN HARMAN** moderator

Former Country Coordinator, OnTheLine Campaign, International Press Institute



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11.00 – 11.15 **Coffee break**  
*Vorsaal, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor*

11.15 – 13.00 **Panel: Nature of Online Offenses – Is technology friend or foe?**

Technological advancement has undoubtedly enabled journalism to flourish and enriched the media ecosystem. However, this same technology is equally able to be used in order to distort the safety of female journalists and silence their voices. This panel will address the specific nature of online threats and the role of digital technologies in both exacerbating the problem and empowering targets. This will help make progress in creating and, later on, translating the language of online safety and online targeting into feasible policies and practice.

**MELODY PATRY**  
Advocacy Director, Access Now

**EROL ONDEROGLU**  
Turkey Representative, Reporters without Borders

**MICHELLE FERRIER**  
Founder, TrollBusters

**IRINA BOROCHAN**  
Deputy Editor, Agentura.ru

**DENIZ YAZICI** moderator  
Adviser, OSCE Office of the RFOM

13.00 – 15.00 **Lunch break**  
*Vorsaal, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor*

**13.00 – 15.00 UNESCO/GDL Co-creation Session on the Safety of Women Journalists Online** side event

As a part of a larger UNESCO initiative on countering gender-based harassment and threats against journalists, UNESCO and the Global Diplomacy Lab (GDL) are convening a co-creation session on the Safety of Women Journalists Online. Facilitated by the members of GDL and the Bosch Alumni Network, the session will seek to identify gaps in existing research on the online safety of women journalists and starting a discussion on how UNESCO can best contribute to the field.

*Room 532, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor (by invitation only<sup>1</sup>)*

<sup>1</sup> There are a limited number of spaces available for this session due to its format, but should you be interested in attending, please contact: Saorla McCabe (s.mccabe@unesco.org). Lunch will be provided for invited participants on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor.



**13.45 – 14.45 “A DARK PLACE” screening** side event  
*Neuersaal, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor*

15:00 – 16.45 **Panel: Counter measures – how effective are they?**

Women journalists use a variety of different strategies and tools to deal with online harassment. The number of women choosing to self-censor as a final resort when faced with this type of abuse suggests that the resources available are not enough or as accessible as the situation requires. In this panel, traditional and more innovative methods for countering online harassment will be examined, as well as solutions for effectively ensuring that freelance journalists and other media actors are equally as supported and supplied with tools to continue their work following an online attack.

**ELANA NEWMAN**

Research Director, Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma

**JOHANNA VEKOO**

Journalist and Founder, Long Play

**BARBARA TRIONFI**

Director, International Press Institute

**ARZU GEYBULLAYEVA**

Freelance journalist

**MARILÚ MASTROGIOVANNI**

Editor, *Il Tacco d'Italia*

**JENNIFER ADAMS** moderator

Media Freedom Project Officer, OSCE Office of the RFOM

16.45 – 17.00 **Closing**

**HARLEM DÉSIR**

OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

17.00 – 18:00 **Reception**

*Vorsaal, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor*



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