

Fourth Roundtable: Intersectional perspectives

CONCEPT NOTE

BACKGROUND

The increased number of reports received by the RFoM Office of journalists being targeted, is indicative of a growing danger for, and discrimination against, journalists. This is a threat to media freedom and freedom of expression in general, and it is clear that there is an urgent need to counter this worrisome trend. The OSCE Ministerial Council recognized, in its Decision on the Safety of Journalists adopted in Milan in 2018 (MC Decision 3/18), that the work of journalists can put them at risk of violence, intimidation and harassment – which can deter them from carrying out their work, or lead to self-censorship, and have a negative effect on media freedom and media plurality. The Ministerial Council further recognized that targeted campaigns undermining the work of journalists were increasing, eroding public trust and confidence in the credibility of journalism, which in turn can increase the risk of threats and violence. It also recognized the need to effectively address the concerns of women journalists, and that safety entails physical, legal, psychological, political, technological, economic and other aspects.

The RFoM's project on the Safety of Journalists aims at assisting the OSCE participating States to strengthen implementation of relevant OSCE principles and commitments, with particular reference to the pledges outlined in MC Decision 3/18 on the Safety of Journalists. The project also aims to improve the implementation of applicable regulatory 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, seven thematic roundtables will address the following core issues of journalists' safety:

- 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.

FOCUS AND OBJECTIVES

The fourth roundtable of the Safety of Journalists project aims at shedding more light on “intersectional perspectives” regarding journalists’ safety. The participants will examine and discuss how different aspects of identity and inherent or assumed characteristics (which stem from factors that are only attributed or perceived by others, including among others gender, race, religion, ethnicity, disability, age, socio-economic status) affect the safety and protection of journalists. The purpose of the roundtable is to understand the concept of intersectionality more in depth, also in terms of representation and diversity of voices, and to look for ways to improve journalists’ safety in this regard.

The OSCE RFoM has for many years raised awareness on the specific threats and increasing attacks against women journalists, both online and offline. According to a global study by UNESCO and ICFJ, almost three quarters of women journalists have experienced online violence in the course of their work. The MC Decision 3/18 emphasizes that states should approach the safety of journalists also from a gender perspective.

As women journalists face multiple forms of discrimination, a gender-responsive approach needs to address intersecting inequalities, which are strongly intertwined in the very nature of violence and other obstacles that women journalists face. This intersectionality has not always been in the focus of attention of the different stakeholders.

The lack of intersectional perspectives risks weakening strategies to address discrimination, violence and other obstacles to the enjoyment of freedom of expression and media. The objective of this roundtable is therefore to raise awareness among OSCE participating States and to find effective and sustainable responses to current threats to the safety of journalists. It is essential to adopt an intersectional approach, as an important tool for analysis and policy development. The invited experts will share their perspectives in the discussion on intersectionality and help to develop a broader understanding among the OSCE participating States on how best to include intersectional perspectives when developing national measures and mechanisms to prevent violence against journalists and to promote their safety.

MODALITIES

Date and Time: 15 March 2023, 13:00-15:00 and 15:30–16:30, Room 533, 5th floor, Hofburg

Language: English