



Press Freedom Status For Women Journalists

*Alarming Increase in Threats Across Europe with
56% of All Reported Cases*

March 2023

Objective of report

Every day, worldwide, women journalists face severe threats to their safety. These threats exist online and offline, from misinformation and discrediting campaigns rooted in misogyny and sexism to more serious problems such as harassment from the state. The problems women journalists contend with are not broadly recognized. Newsrooms are often tight-lipped about them; governments take little action to counter violations against women journalists.

CFWIJ's monthly reports are drawn from our daily and feature research that offers a landscape view of what press freedom looks like from a gender angle. Each morning CFWIJ team register new violations against them, marshaling ever more evidence of the severity of the threats they face and the urgent need to raise awareness about these issues. Many of these cases are documented internally by The Coalition, to maintain anonymity and ensure the safety of targeted journalists. Our work shows the incredible courage and conviction women journalists work with in spite of the hurdles they face. Our job is to ensure their circumstances are made visible so accurate resources can be directed for their safety and growth.

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Two women
journalists
imprisoned, and one
arrested



Belarus: TUT.by editor-in-chief **Maryna Zolatava** and CEO **Lyudmila Chekina** sentenced to 12 years in prison by Minsk City Court on March 17. The sentencing followed a smear campaign against the newsroom. Zolatava and Chekina were arrested in a raid on TUT.by's headquarters in May 2022. The journalists refused to sign a letter acknowledging their guilt.

France: Le Media TV's **Chloé Gence** strangled, manhandled, and forcibly arrested by police while covering pension reform protests. Police detained the journalist for thirty-five hours. Gence suffered several injuries at the hands of the police.

Turkey: On March 1, Police detained Birgün reporter **Asena Tunca** while covering SOL Party protests in Kadıköy. Tunca was subjected to torture with reverse handcuffs.

Turkey: ANKA News Agency correspondent **Gaye Şeyma Can** handcuffed and detained covering the Feminist Night March in Taksim on International Women's Day. Can identified herself as a journalist, but police continued obstructing her from documenting the event. They held her in a police vehicle before being released.

Zambia: Journalist **Namo Phiri** and her colleague Abel Musonda detained while reporting on a protest on March 10. Police apprehended the TV reporters alongside protestors despite identifying as journalists. They were released after being held at Lusaka Central Station for approximately six hours.

Georgia: TV Rain (Dozhd) reporter **Aleksandra Shvedchenko** denied re-entry to Georgia on March 14. An immigration official told her “she was not allowed into the country for ‘other reasons’ provided for by Georgian legislation.” The Russian journalist was detained after returning from a work assignment in Latvia. She had been living in Georgia for a year.



Four women
journalists detained

Nigeria: Attacks by unknown assailants against at least five women journalists during presidential elections on March 18. **Ima Elijah**, reporter Pulse.ng, her camera operator, and **Henrietta Oke**, AIT correspondent, were forced out of polling stations while unidentified people confiscated AIT correspondent **Nkiru Nwokedi**'s phone.

France: On March 13, serial art thief Stéphane Breitwieser physically and verbally attacked France 3's **Tiphaine Niederlaender** and **Christelle Rewiako**. The reporters were covering his trial at the Sarreguemines criminal court when he assaulted them. Breitwieser accused them of causing his unemployment. He also hurled a sexist insult at the journalists.

Palestine: Soldiers attack Palestinian journalist **Sondos Al-Talbishi** on March 15. Al-Talbishi was documenting the obstruction of Palestinian traffic and the interrogation of residents trying to cross a checkpoint.

Bosnia-Herzegovina: A gang armed with sticks and bottles attack journalists and LGBTQ activists in Banja Luka on March 18. Hooded attackers beat E-Trafika editor **Vanja Stokić**, her colleague, and activists of Bh. Pride Parade. Police were present when the attackers arrived but offered no protection. Instead, activists fled to escape the assault.

Turkey: Relatives of drug operation suspects attack journalist **Melek Firat** — who works for the Aydın Manşet newspaper — and three other journalists while filming outside the courthouse. The assailants damaged their cameras, a phone, and other equipment.

Ukraine: Several journalists harassed, obstructed, and assaulted by clergy members at a monastery in Kyiv. On March 30, the head pushed Espresso TV's **Valeriya Pashko** and obstructed filming. An unidentified priest shoved Suspline's **Daria Nematian Zolbin**.

Canada: On March 1, CTV News presenter **Stephanie Villella** was covering a crash outside Guelph, Ontario, when she was hit by a vehicle. Villella had been gathering images of a separate two-vehicle crash that happened earlier in the day.



13 women
journalists
physically attacked
and assaulted

Turkey: Journalist Sedef Kabaş sued for “insulting the President.” The prosecutor argued that 25 of Kabaş’s tweets were evidence of “intention to damage the honor of the President.” Kabaş faced a similar case a year ago.

Turkey: On March 5, a lawsuit was filed against Cumhuriyet newspaper correspondent **Nagihan Yılkin** and Editor-in-Chief Mustafa Büyüksipahi for “publicly insulting a public official.”

Bulgaria: On March 8, insurance company Lev Ins launched a civil lawsuit against independent news outlet Mediapool, suing the media platform for €500,000. The SLAPP lawsuit concerns **Tsvetelina Sokolova’s** article on international motorist insurance Green Pass.

Georgia: At least four women journalists obstructed from reporting on parliament and protests against a “foreign agents” law. Formula TV reporters **Mari Tsakadze** and **Tea Tetrashvili** were blocked by police when covering protests on March 7. The same evening, police pushed Formula TV reporter **Tea Tetrashvili** and camera operator Nika Kokaia and tried to obfuscate their camera. Photojournalist and co-founder of OC-Media **Mariam Nikuradze** was targeted with tear gas when covering the protests.

Turkey: On March 9, the 3rd hearing of the trial against journalist **Yağmur Kaya** took place. She stands accused of “targeting people involved in the fight against terrorism.”



Eight women
journalists legally
harassed

At least two women journalists sexually harassed



Montenegro: On March 12, TV producer **Lelja Kašić** told the media she was harassed by musician Antonije Pušić, better known as Rambo Amadeus. Kašić says Pušić touched her inappropriately and insulted her while filming an episode of the Dnevnic program for public broadcaster RTCG.

Georgia: Mako Jabua accuses the director of pro-governmental TV station POSTV Shalva Ramishvili of sexual harassment during a job interview. Several women journalists followed, accusing Ramishvili of sexual misconduct. In 2018, Ramishvili lost a sexual harassment case brought against him by another woman journalist, Tatia Samkharadze.

Two women journalists threatened and intimidated

Germany: China exiled journalist **Su Yutong** has been a target of abuse since leaving the country over a decade ago. Recently, the attacks have increased in intensity and frequency, including bomb threats in her name.

Bulgaria: Bulgaria's President's press secretary Kiril Atanasov attempted to pressure and discredit Brussels correspondent **Antoinette Nikolova**. Atanasov called her reporting on the president's two-faced stance on Russia for Nova TV "lies," Nikolova tells CFWIJ.



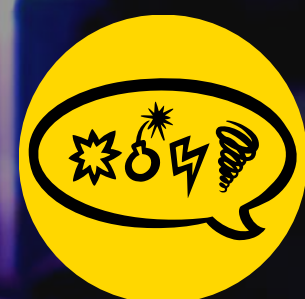
Two women
journalists sexually
harassed, two
threatened and
intimidated



Canada: Canadian radio and TV host **Jody Vance**'s online harasser given twelve-month probation after a plea deal. Richard Sean Oliver stalked Vance for years. Oliver had sent hundreds of threatening and sexualized messages to Vance, her colleagues, and guests on her radio show.

Serbia: **Žaklina Tatalović**, the presenter at CNN International's local broadcast partner N1, threatened with life on Twitter. Trolls say she should be hanged, burned alive, and beheaded.

Bosnia-Herzegovina: Al-Jazeera Balkan's **Dalija Hasanbegovic** receives threats and harassment on social media, including from notorious troll Jasmin Mulahusic. Mulahusic is currently under police investigation for threatening behavior on social media against others.



Two women journalists
harassed online, one
subject of organized
troll campaign



Canada: At least four women journalists laid off from the Canadian newsroom Global News. Those affected include prominent journalists **Rachel Gilmore** and **Teresa Wright**, who received death threats for their reporting. Journalists **Heidi Lee** and **Irelyne Lavery** also let go.



Four women
journalists laid off



One woman
journalist target of
an assassination
attempt



France: Second assassination attempt on French environmental journalist **Morgan Large**. On March 24, 2023, Large found her car sabotaged. Known for her investigations into agribusinesses, the reporter has been the target of numerous attempts at intimidation, including nocturnal phone calls, insults, and the attempted poisoning of her dog.



One woman journalist discredited

Georgia: Pro-government TV channel POSTV spreads fake news about journalist **Tatia Samkharadze**. The journalist successfully sued its director for sexual harassment in 2018. The smear campaign follows a recent slew of sexual misconduct allegations against Ramishvili.

One woman journalist's accreditation revoked

Bolivia: TV journalist **Magdalena Guzmán Cuéllar** and her Detrás de la Verdad (DTV) press team thrown out of party congress by Movimiento Al Socialismo on March 19, 2023. Party representatives interrupted the channel's live broadcast three times before they revoked their accreditation.



One woman
journalist
discredited, one
woman journalist's
accreditation
revoked

PRESS
ACCREDITATION

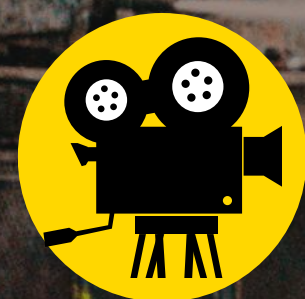


One woman journalist's equipment destroyed

Ukraine: Former political candidate Serhiy Berestoviy assaulted journalist **Natalia Myedvyedeva** and her camera operator while filming for local TV channel Dytynets in Chernihiv on March 30. Berestoviy destroyed their camera. The journalists were unharmed.

Several Hong Kong women journalists stalked and harassed

Hong Kong: On March 21, 2023, two unidentified men followed several women reporters after covering an ongoing press freedom trial involving the prosecution of the Editor-in-Chief of former independent news outlet Stand News. The reporters were tailed for hours by men wearing earpieces. The Hong Kong Journalists Association (HKJA) said various journalists had come forward that covert police officers were surveilling them.



One woman
journalist's
equipment
destroyed, several
Hong Kong
journalists harassed




Taliban shuts down women-led broadcaster Radio Sadai Banowan

Afghanistan: On Thursday, March 30, Taliban authorities raided women-led broadcaster Radio Sadai Banowan shutting down its operations. According to a Taliban official, they closed the station for playing music during Ramadan. Station head Najia Sorosh denied the allegations.

Ukrainian journalist denied medical care in prison

Ukraine: **Iryna Danylovych**, a Ukrainian citizen journalist who has been illegally sentenced to 7 years in prison in occupied Crimea, has been denied urgent and critical medical care in the pre-trial detention center for five months.



Taliban shuts down
women-led
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**CFWIJ is working hard to change these
circumstances everyday.**
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