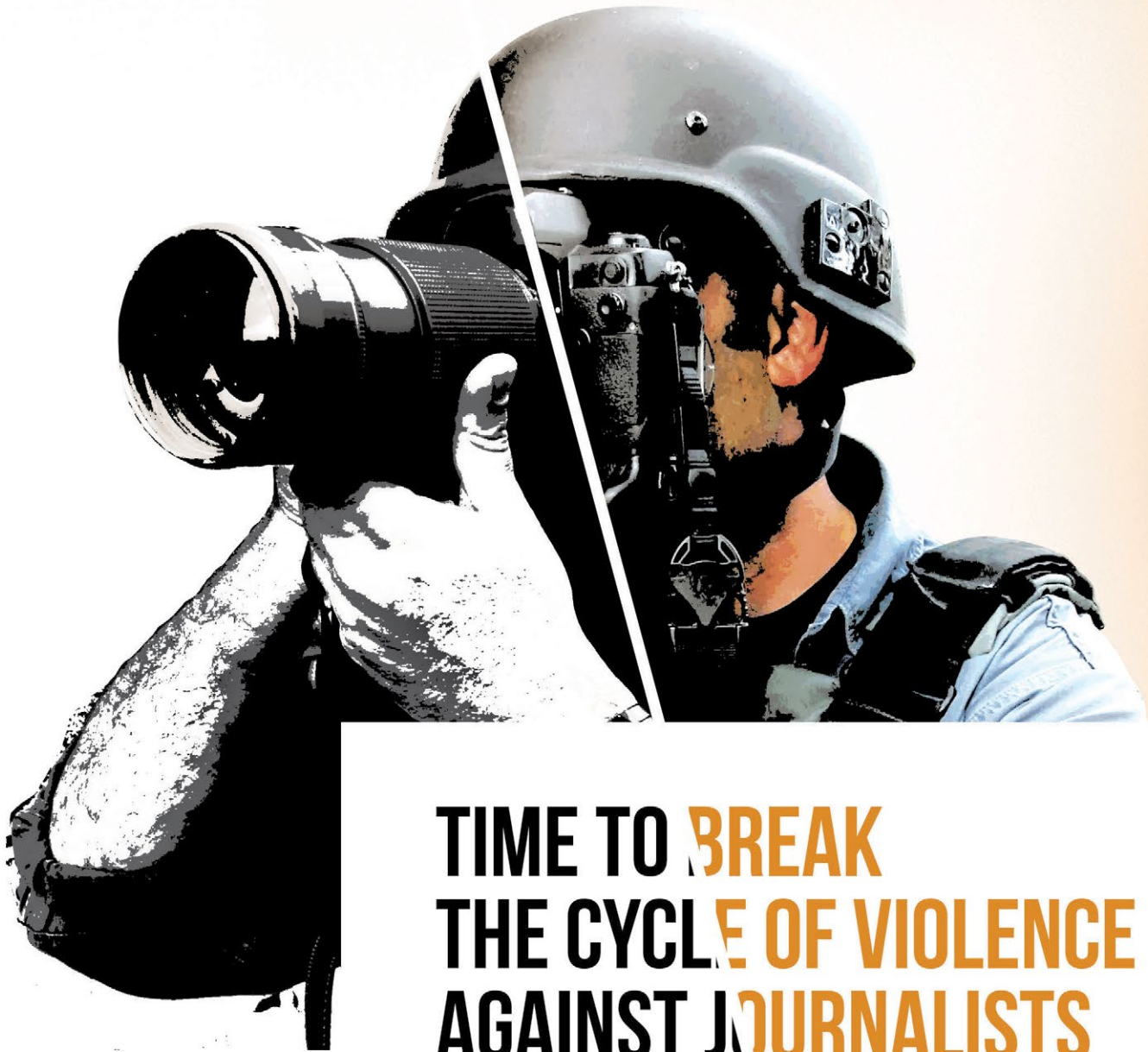




United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization


**IPDC** THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME  
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION



# TIME TO **BREAK** THE **CYCLE OF VIOLENCE** AGAINST **JOURNALISTS**

Highlights from the UNESCO  
Director-General's 2016 Report on the Safety  
of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity





**AT LEAST 827 JOURNALISTS WERE  
KILLED IN THE LAST 10 YEARS.  
THE FIGURE SHOWS THE EXTENT OF  
THE RISK FOR EXPRESSING OPINIONS  
AND DISSEMINATING INFORMATION.**

The full Report of the Director-General on the Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity is online at: [en.unesco.org/dg-report](http://en.unesco.org/dg-report)

It will be discussed on 17 November 2016 by 39 UNESCO Member States. The occasion is the 30th session of the Intergovernmental Council of UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC).

**PHOTO CREDIT:** SHUTTERSTOCK - CHAMELEONSEY'S  
**GRAPHIC DESIGN:** MARC JAMES (WWW.BEHANCE.NET/ARTOFMARC)



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The extent of the risks faced by those exercising their right to express opinions and disseminate information is demonstrated by the figure of 827 killings recorded by UNESCO over ten years. To this, one needs to add the numerous other violations endured by journalists<sup>1</sup>, which include kidnappings, arbitrary detention, torture, intimidation and harassment, both offline and online, and seizure or destruction of material. Overcoming all these threats is needed for measuring progress on the Sustainable Development Goal Target 16.10 on ensuring public access to information and protecting fundamental freedoms within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This Report is focused exclusively on the worst violations, i.e. the killings of journalists, in line with the IPDC Council's 2008 Decision on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.

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<sup>1</sup> The term "journalists" in this report covers "journalists, media workers and social media producers who generate a significant amount of public-interest journalism", in line with the IPDC Decision on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity adopted by the IPDC Council in 2014.

# A KILLINGS OF JOURNALISTS IN 2014-2015 AND OVER THE LAST DECADE: AN OVERVIEW

In 2014-2015 alone, 213 journalists lost their lives; 2015 was the second deadliest year for journalists in the last ten years with 115 journalists killed. It was also marked by a single, unprecedented attack against a media outlet which was deliberately targeted resulting in the death of eight journalists.<sup>2</sup> In 2014, UNESCO recorded 98 cases of killings of journalists.

The Arab States region registered the highest number of journalists' killings in 2014-2015, with 78 deaths, representing 36,5% of all cases. The ongoing conflicts in several countries of the region can partly explain this trend. In Latin America and the Caribbean, 51 journalists (24%) were killed; in Asia and the Pacific 34 (16%); in Africa 27 (12,5%); in Central and Eastern Europe 12 (6%); and in Western Europe and North America 11 (5%). Whereas over the last decade, Asia and the Pacific region was the region second most affected by journalists' killings, in 2014-2015, it was Latin America and the Caribbean.<sup>3</sup>

There was a slight increase in the number of female journalists killed – i.e. nine per annum compared to an average of four in previous years – but men continue to represent an overwhelming majority of the victims of fatal attacks: almost 92% in 2014-2015. Killings are, however, only the tip of the iceberg and women face certain gender-based threats, such as sexual harassment and violence, that are not reflected in these statistics.

## 2015 WAS THE SECOND DEADLIEST YEAR FOR JOURNALISTS IN THE LAST TEN YEARS...

The category of journalists most targeted by killings over the last decade have been print media journalists; in 2014-2015, however, the majority of journalists killed were television journalists. A sharp increase was observed in 2015 in the number of online journalists<sup>4</sup> killed, with 21 cases (18%) compared to just two in 2014. Almost half of these were Syrian journalists and bloggers covering the conflict in Syria.

Almost 90% of the victims in 2014-2015 were local journalists, confirming a trend observed throughout the last decade. Freelance journalists, who work independently and often without adequate protections, are widely considered the most vulnerable group in the media sector. Forty journalists who were freelancers or citizen journalists operating online were killed in 2014-2015, representing 19% of all cases (the same percentage was observed in 2006-2015).

Reflecting the extreme vulnerability of journalists working in conflict zones, 59% of all fatalities – or 126 cases – were registered in countries where there has been armed conflict.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Attack against the French satirical paper Charlie Hebdo, 7 January 2015, Paris, France.

<sup>3</sup> The regional breakdown in this Report corresponds to UNESCO's regional groupings

<sup>4</sup> These include journalists working for online media outlets and social media producers producing journalism.

<sup>5</sup> The 11th and 12th Report of the UN Secretary-General, on the protection of civilians in armed conflict covered the following countries: Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palestine, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, and Yemen (Report presented to the UN Security Council, June 2015 and May 2016)

# **B** ADDRESSING IMPUNITY: MEMBER STATES' RESPONSES TO UNESCO'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

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An important step in addressing the high levels of journalists' killings is combatting impunity which perpetuates a cycle of violence against journalists. This is one of the key objectives of the UNESCO Director-General's request for information from Member States on the status of judicial enquiries into the killings of journalists condemned by UNESCO, as per the 2008 Decision on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity and successive decisions of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC).

Overall, since UNESCO began requesting information for the Director-General's reports to IPDC, covering the period of killings from 2006 onwards and up until the end of 2015, 59 Member States of the 70 Member States contacted have responded at least once on the judicial follow-up to journalists' killings, while 11 have never sent a response.

A noteworthy development in respect of requests for information issued this year is the very substantial increase in the number of responses received from Member States on the status of judicial enquiries into the killings of journalists condemned by UNESCO's Director-General. Almost 65% of the countries concerned (i.e. 40 out of 62) responded to the Director-General's request, compared to 27% (16 out of 59) for the last Director-General's report in 2014; in 2015, 47% of countries (27 out of 57) responded. This trend appears to indicate

growing recognition among Member States of the importance of IPDC's monitoring mechanism and the need to give attention to impunity.

The Director-General has cumulatively received information from 59 Member States on 408 cases out of the 827 cases condemned in the last decade. However, among these 408 cases, only 63 have been reported as resolved, representing 15% of the cases for which information was received, and 8% of total cases. For the remaining 345 cases (or 42% of total cases) for which information was received, either a police or judicial enquiry is reportedly still underway, or the cases have been archived or deemed to be unresolved. Finally, for 419 cases, or 51% of total cases, either no information was received or the Member State in whose jurisdiction the killing occurred sent only an acknowledgment of receiving the Director-General's request.

Of the 63 resolved cases, 20 concern Latin America and the Caribbean (representing 11% of all cases in the region), 14 Central and Eastern Europe (representing 39%), 13 the Asia-Pacific region (representing 6%), eight Western Europe and North America (representing 57%), four Africa (representing 4%) and another four the Arab region (representing 1,5%).

# JOURNALISTS' KILLINGS IN 2014 AND 2015: KEY FINDINGS

IN 2014-2015 ALONE, UNESCO'S DIRECTOR-GENERAL CONDEMNED THE KILLING OF 213 JOURNALISTS; 2015 WAS THE SECOND DEADLIEST YEAR FOR JOURNALISTS IN THE LAST TEN YEARS WITH 115 JOURNALISTS KILLED. IN 2014, UNESCO RECORDED 98 CASES OF KILLINGS OF JOURNALISTS.

## A HIGHEST NUMBER OF FATALITIES IN THE ARAB STATES

In terms of regional breakdown, the Arab States were most affected by journalists' killings in the last biennium, with 36,5% of all cases (or 78 killings) occurring in this region. This is largely due to ongoing conflict situations in the Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq, Yemen and Libya. The second region with the highest level of killings was Latin America and the Caribbean with 24% of all cases (or 51 killings). Asia and the Pacific comes third, with 16% of all cases (or 34 killings). Killings in Africa represented 12,5% of all cases (or 27 killings), while those in Central and Eastern Europe represented 6% of all cases (or 12 killings). Lastly, killings in Western Europe and North America accounted for 5% of all cases (or 11 killings). In this last group, none of the cases recorded by UNESCO occurred in North America.

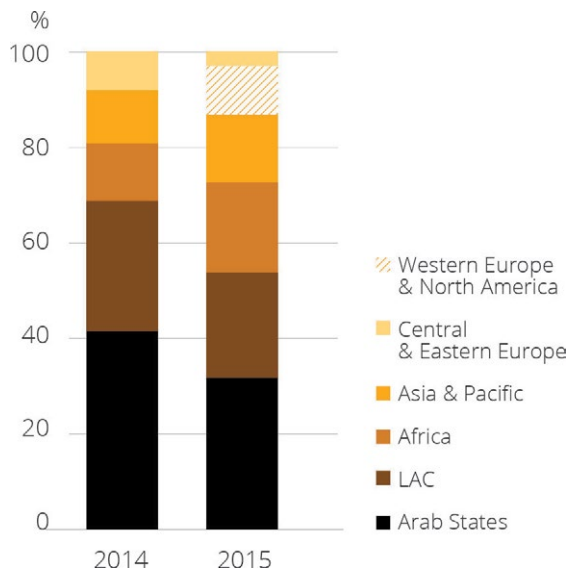
### NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS KILLED BY REGION IN 2014

Arab States	41		42%
LAC	26		27%
Asia & Pacific	12		12%
Africa	11		11%
Central & Eastern Europe	8		8%
Western Europe & North America	0		0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>		

### NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS KILLED BY REGION IN 2015

Arab States	37		32%
LAC	25		22%
Asia & Pacific	22		19%
Africa	16		14%
Western Europe & North America	11		10%
Central & Eastern Europe	4		3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>115</b>		

## % OF JOURNALISTS KILLED BY REGION 2014-2015



A sharp increase can be noted in the percentage of killings that occurred in the Western Europe and North America regional group in 2015 compared to 2014 and to all of the years of the last decade, when the region did not record more than one killing per year. This increase is largely due to a single event - the killing of eight journalists during the terrorist attack against the French satirical weekly, Charlie Hebdo. This event was condemned by the UNESCO Director-General as “unprecedented” insofar as “never before had one media outlet been so deliberately targeted and its staff decimated in an act of such extreme violence”.<sup>6</sup>

## NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS KILLED BY COUNTRY 2014-2015

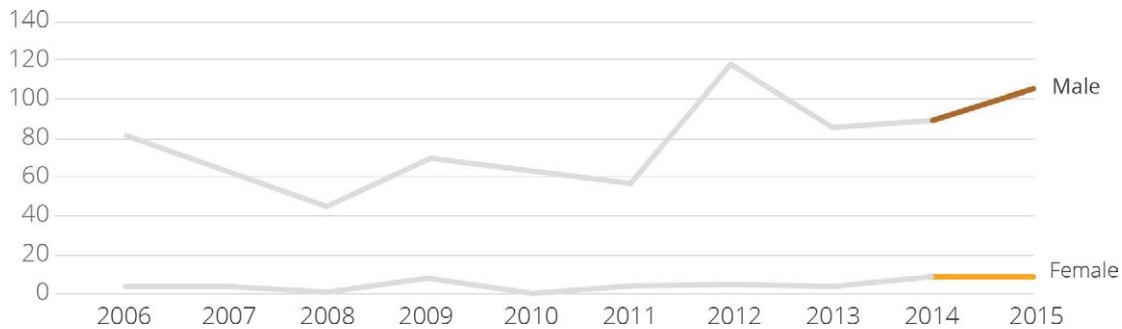
2014	2015
Syrian Arabic Republic 16	Syrian Arabic Republic 13
Iraq 9	Iraq 10
Palestine 8	France 8
Ukraine 7	Yemen 8
Mexico 7	Brazil 7
Brazil 6	Mexico 7
Afghanistan 5	South Sudan 7
Libya 5	India 6
Honduras 4	Libya 6
Pakistan 4	Philippines 6
Paraguay 4	Bangladesh 5
Guinea 3	Somalia 5
Somalia 3	Colombia 4
Cambodia 2	Honduras 4
Central African Republic 2	Pakistan 4
Colombia 2	Guatemala 3
Democratic Republic of the Congo 2	Turkey 3
Peru 2	Ukraine 2
Yemen 2	Afghanistan 1
Egypt 1	Azerbaijan 1
El Salvador 1	Burundi 1
Philippines 1	Democratic Republic of the Congo 1
Russian Federation 1	Kenya 1
South Africa 1	Mozambique 1
	Poland 1

<sup>6</sup> The Director-General's full response is available on the webpage, UNESCO Condemns Killing of Journalists, at: [http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/director-general\\_condemns\\_unprecedented\\_and\\_appalling\\_crime\\_against\\_charlie\\_hebdo/back/9597/#.V9qzUPI97AW](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/director-general_condemns_unprecedented_and_appalling_crime_against_charlie_hebdo/back/9597/#.V9qzUPI97AW)



# B SLIGHT RISE IN NUMBER OF FEMALE FATALITIES BUT MALE JOURNALISTS STILL PRIMARY TARGET OF KILLINGS

## TRENDS OF JOURNALISTS KILLED ACCORDING TO GENDER



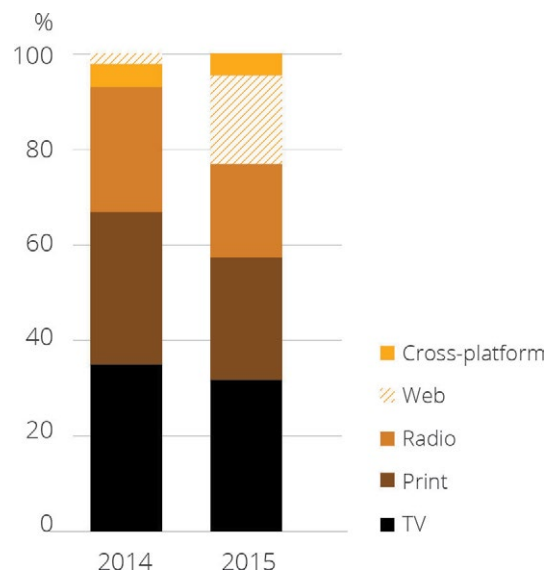
A gender-based analysis of the victims of journalists’ killings in 2014-2015 reveals that, as in previous years, men have been the target of a far greater number of killings than women, with 195 fatalities among male journalists against 18 among female journalists. This difference goes beyond the imbalanced representation of women in news media organizations and may partially be explained by the fact that fewer women journalists cover conflict zones. An increase in the number of female victims can nevertheless be observed: while between 2006 and 2013, an average of four female journalists were killed every year, in both 2014 and 2015 nine female journalists were killed per annum.

# C SHARP INCREASE IN NUMBER OF ONLINE JOURNALISTS KILLED IN 2015

2015 witnessed a sharp increase in the number of online journalists<sup>7</sup> killed, with 21 documented cases of killings (or 18% of all cases) compared to just two in 2014. Almost half of these were Syrian journalists and bloggers covering the conflict in Syria.

The majority of journalists killed in 2014-2015 were television journalists, whereas in almost every previous year of the last decade print media journalists constituted the largest group affected by fatal attacks.

## NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS KILLED ACCORDING TO MEDIA TYPE 2014-2015



<sup>7</sup> These include journalists working for online media outlets and social media producers.

## D LOCAL JOURNALISTS BY FAR MOST AFFECTED BY KILLINGS

Confirming a trend that could be noted throughout the decade, the vast majority of victims – representing almost 90% - were local journalists. In 2014, there was however a significant increase in the number of foreign journalists killed, with 17 such cases compared to an average of four in previous years.

## E NUMBER OF STAFF JOURNALISTS KILLED VS. FREELANCERS

Freelance journalists, who work independently and often without adequate protections, are widely considered the most vulnerable group in the media sector. Forty freelance journalists or citizen journalists operating online were killed in 2014-2015, representing 19% of all cases.

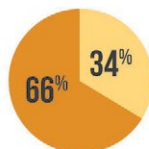
## F MOST KILLINGS OCCURRED IN COUNTRIES WHERE THERE HAS BEEN ARMED CONFLICT

Reflecting the extreme vulnerability of journalists working in conflict zones, UNESCO's statistics on journalists killed in 2014-2015 show that most of the killings took place in countries where there has been armed conflict, with 126 cases (or 59% of all cases).<sup>8</sup>

### NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS KILLED IN COUNTRIES WHERE THERE HAS BEEN ARMED CONFLICT VS. IN COUNTRIES WHERE THERE HAS NOT BEEN ARMED CONFLICT (2014-2015)

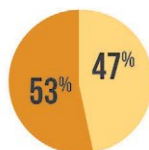
#### 2014

● Armed Conflict	65
● No Armed Conflict	33

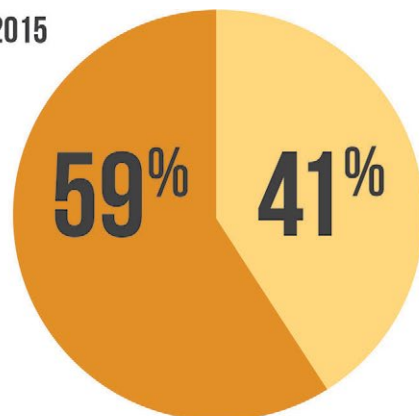


#### 2015

● Armed Conflict	61
● No Armed Conflict	54



#### 2014-2015



● Armed Conflict 126 ● No Armed Conflict 87

<sup>8</sup> The 11th and 12th Report of the UN Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict covered the following countries: Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palestine, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, and Yemen (Report presented to the UN Security Council, June 2015 and May 2016)

# A DECADE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST JOURNALISTS: ANALYSIS OF THE KILLINGS OF JOURNALISTS BETWEEN 2006 AND 2015

IN THE LAST 10 YEARS, BETWEEN 2006 AND 2015, UNESCO DOCUMENTED 827 KILLINGS OF JOURNALISTS, MEDIA WORKERS, AND SOCIAL MEDIA PRODUCERS. A CLEAR UPWARD TREND IN THE RATE OF JOURNALISTS' KILLINGS CAN BE OBSERVED OVER THE COURSE OF THE LAST DECADE. WHILE BETWEEN 2006 AND 2011, THE AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE WAS OF 67 KILLINGS, IT INCREASED TO AN AVERAGE OF 106 KILLINGS PER ANNUM BETWEEN 2012 AND 2015.

## A NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS KILLED PER REGION

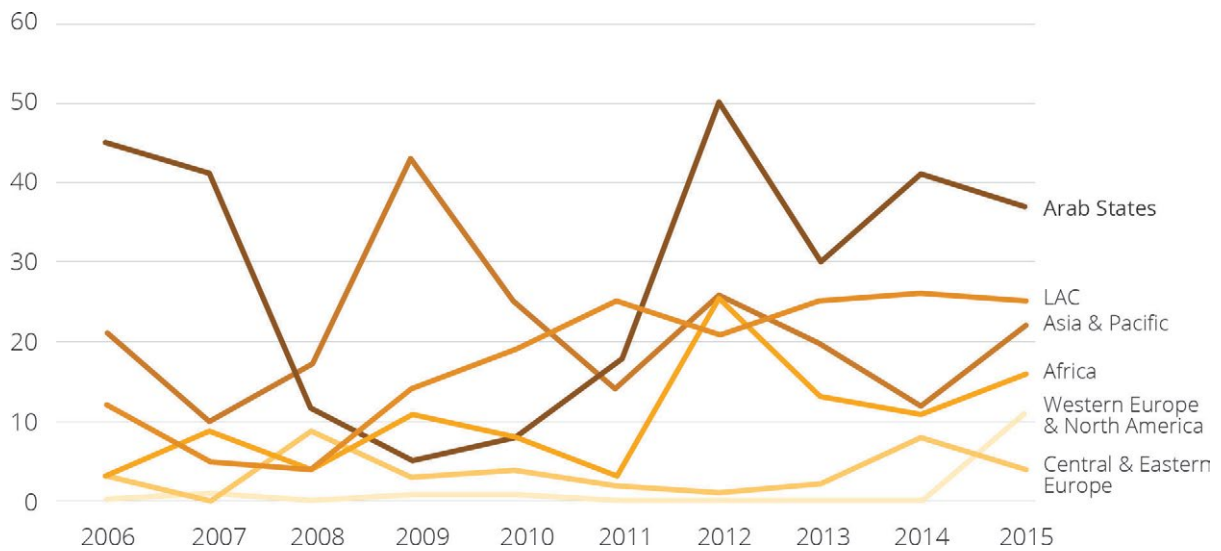
The highest number of victims over the last decade was registered in the Arab States region where UNESCO documented 287 killings of journalists' deaths (or 35% of the total).

One quarter of all cases occurred in the Asia-Pacific region, where 210 killings were recorded. The Latin America and Caribbean region accounted for 176 cases (or 21% of the total), the Africa region for 104 cases (or 13%), the Central and Eastern Europe region for 36 cases (or 4%) and the Western Europe and North America region for 14 cases (or 2%).

### NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS KILLED PER REGION 2006-2015

	ARAB STATES	ASIA & PACIFIC	LAC	AFRICA	CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE	WESTERN EUROPE & NORTH AMERICA	TOTAL
2006	45	21	12	3	3	0	<b>84</b>
2007	41	10	5	9	0	1	<b>66</b>
2008	12	17	4	4	9	0	<b>46</b>
2009	5	43	14	11	3	1	<b>77</b>
2010	8	25	19	8	4	1	<b>65</b>
2011	18	14	25	3	2	0	<b>62</b>
2012	50	26	21	26	1	0	<b>124</b>
2013	30	20	25	13	2	0	<b>90</b>
2014	41	12	26	11	8	0	<b>98</b>
2015	37	22	25	16	4	11	<b>115</b>
	<b>287</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>827</b>

## TRENDS OF JOURNALISTS KILLED BY REGION 2006-2015



In terms of regional trends, there has been a modest but steady upward trend in killings of journalists in Latin America and the Caribbean region over the last decade.

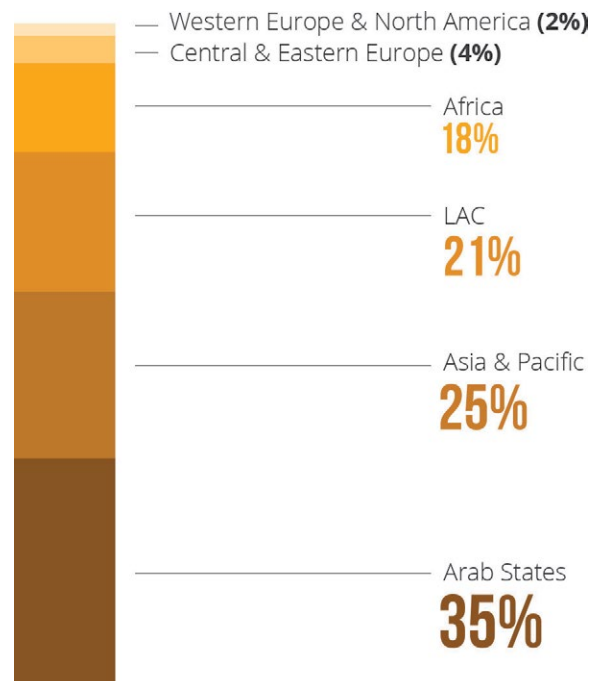
In the Arab States region, after a significant decline in killings between 2008 and 2011, a sharp upward trend can be observed in recent years.

In Asia and the Pacific, the trend has fluctuated over the last decade, with peaks in 2009, 2010, 2012, and 2015.

Journalists' killings have been consistently low in Western Europe and North America, with a slight increase in the last biennium.

In Africa, the number of journalists killed remained relatively low between 2006 and 2011 but an overall increase can be noted since 2012. (see figure above)

## % OF JOURNALISTS KILLED PER REGION 2006-2015



## B GENDER BREAKDOWN OF VICTIMS

The vast majority of journalists killed each year are men, representing approximately 94% of all victims. Killings are, however, only the tip of the iceberg and women journalists have to deal with a range of threats such as intimidation, abuse and violence, including sexual assaults and harassment.<sup>9</sup>

### NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS KILLED ACCORDING TO GENDER 2006-2015

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
2006	80	4	84
2007	63	3	66
2008	44	2	46
2009	70	7	77
2010	64	1	65
2011	57	5	62
2012	119	5	124
2013	85	5	90
2014	89	9	98
2015	106	9	115
	<b>777</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>827</b>



94%

Male

6%

Female

## C NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS KILLED ACCORDING TO THE TYPE OF MEDIUM

Journalists working for print media represent the highest proportion of journalists killed in the last decade, with 316 journalists' killings (38% of all cases) condemned by the Director-General. The second highest is journalists working in television, with 234 killings (28% of all cases), followed by those working in radio (171 killings, or 21% of all cases). There has been a general upward trend in the number of victims among television and radio journalists.

While journalists from traditional media continue to constitute the majority of victims of fatal attacks, there has been an increase in the last four years in the number of fatalities among journalists working for online media, including bloggers, as well as those working on different media platforms (see "cross-platform" in Table 5). Sixty-four online journalists (representing 8% of all cases) and 42 journalists working across different media platforms (representing 5% of all cases) were killed in the last decade. In 2012 and 2015 their number was particularly high, with 33 online journalists and 12 cross-platform journalists killed in 2012, and 21 web journalists and six cross-platform journalists killed in 2015.

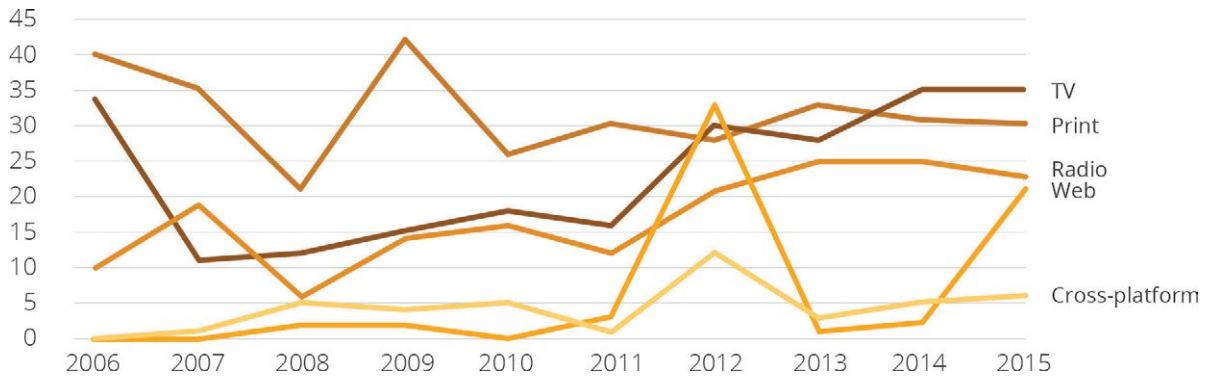
### NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS KILLED ACCORDING TO MEDIA TYPE 2006-2015

	PRINT	TV	RADIO	WEB	CROSS-PLATFORM*	TOTAL
'06	40	34	10	0	0	<b>84</b>
'07	35	11	19	0	1	<b>66</b>
'08	21	12	6	2	5	<b>46</b>
'09	42	15	14	2	4	<b>77</b>
'10	26	18	16	0	5	<b>65</b>
'11	30	16	12	3	1	<b>62</b>
'12	28	30	21	33	12	<b>124</b>
'13	33	28	25	1	3	<b>90</b>
'14	31	35	25	2	5	<b>98</b>
'15	30	35	23	21	6	<b>115</b>
	<b>316</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>827</b>

\*Cross-platform\* includes journalists who worked regularly across different media including Print/Web; Print/TV; Film; Radio/TV; Radio/Print; Radio/Web; TV/Radio; TV/Print.

<sup>9</sup> For more information, see: "Violence and harassment against women in the news media: a global picture" (2014), a study authored by the International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF) and the International News Safety Institute (INSI) in collaboration with UNESCO and with financial support from the Austrian Government.

## TRENDS OF JOURNALISTS KILLED ACCORDING TO MEDIA TYPE 2006-2015

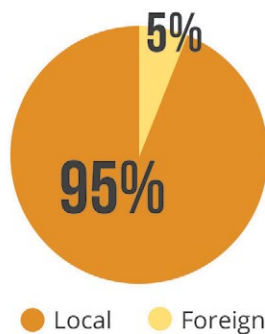


## D NUMBER OF FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS KILLED VS. LOCAL JOURNALISTS

Although the killing of international journalists often generates more media attention, an overwhelming majority of the 827 journalists killed over the course of the last decade has been local journalists, accounting for 95% of all cases compared to 5% for foreign correspondents.

### NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS KILLED: LOCAL VS FOREIGN 2006-2015

	LOCAL	FOREIGN	TOTAL
'06	78	6	84
'07	64	2	66
'08	44	2	46
'09	75	2	77
'10	61	4	65
'11	57	5	62
'12	118	6	124
'13	84	6	90
'14	81	17	98
'15	109	6	115
	<b>771</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>827</b>



## E NUMBER OF STAFF JOURNALISTS KILLED VS. FREELANCERS

As the reliance on freelance journalists by news organizations is increasing, it is interesting to look at the proportion of freelance journalists among the journalists killed in 2006-2015. Freelance journalists are particularly exposed to risk, as they often work alone on stories, often in dangerous environments, and rarely get the same level of assistance and protection as staff-journalists.

Over the last decade, according to UNESCO data<sup>10</sup>, 158 freelance journalists have been killed, representing 19% of all cases.<sup>11</sup>

### NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS KILLED: STAFF/FREELANCER 2006-2015



<sup>10</sup> Supplemented by CPJ data

<sup>11</sup> Bloggers, citizen journalists and other social media producers of journalism have been counted as freelancers in the calculation of this percentage.

# 3 MEMBER STATES' RESPONSES: STATUS OF THE JUDICIAL INQUIRIES ON CASES OF JOURNALISTS KILLED FROM 2006 TO 2015

THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S REQUEST TO MEMBER STATES FOR INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF THE JUDICIAL FOLLOW-UP TO THE KILLINGS OF JOURNALISTS CONDEMNED BY UNESCO ARE SENT OUT ON AN ANNUAL BASIS.

## **A** NOTEWORTHY INCREASE IN MEMBER STATE RESPONSE RATE TO DIRECTOR-GENERAL REQUEST

In February-March 2016, UNESCO sent out letters to 62 Member States concerned by killings of journalists between 2006 and 2015 and for which UNESCO records showed no information indicating that the cases had been resolved. The requests for information covered 784 of the 827 cases of killings of journalists condemned by the Director-General between 2006 and 2015, namely those cases which, according to UNESCO records, were still unresolved or for which an investigation was ongoing. They also included those cases for which UNESCO had never received information from the Member State concerned.

Of the 62 Member States contacted, 40 provided a response. Of these, 32 provided concrete information on the status of judicial investigations on the cases of killings of journalists condemned by the Director-General, while eight acknowledged the Director-General's request and/or informed that they had transferred it to competent national authorities, without providing an update on the specific cases for which information was being requested. Among the latter group, several Member States provided general information on the national situation regarding the safety of journalists. No response was received from 22 Member States.

## OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES RECEIVED FROM MEMBER STATES TO THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S REQUESTS IN 2016

### MEMBER STATE RESPONSE IN 2016

Afghanistan	●
Angola	✓
Azerbaijan	✓
Bahrain	✓
Bangladesh	✓
Brazil	✓
Bulgaria	✓
Burundi	
Cambodia	
Cameroon	●
Central Africa Republic	
Colombia	✓
Congo	●
Democratic Republic of Congo	
Dominican Republic	
Ecuador	✓
Egypt	
El Salvador	✓
Eritrea	
France	✓
Georgia	✓
Greece	✓
Guatemala	✓
Guinea	✓
Guyana	✓
Haiti	●
Honduras	✓
India	
Indonesia	✓
Iran	✓
Iraq	●
Kenya	✓
Kyrgyzstan	
Lebanon	
Libya	
Mali	
Mexico	✓
Mozambique	
Myanmar	
Nepal	
Nigeria	●
Pakistan	●
Palestine	
Paraguay	✓
Peru	✓
Philippines	●
Poland	✓
Russian Federation	✓
Rwanda	✓
Somalia	✓
South Sudan	
Sri Lanka	
Sudan	✓
Syrian Arab Republic	
Thailand	
Tunisia	✓
Turkey	✓
Uganda	✓
United Republic of Tanzania	✓
Ukraine	✓
Venezuela	✓
Yemen	

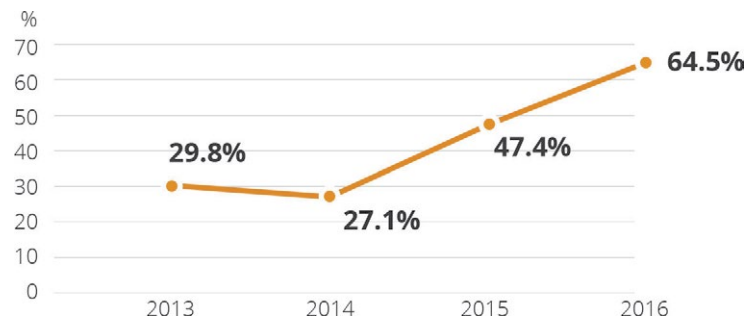
✓ Received  
● Acknowledged

40/62

An analysis of the level of responses received from Member States to the Director-General's requests over the years reveals a strong increase in the response rate, which would suggest a growing recognition among Member States of the importance of this monitoring mechanism.

In 2016, almost 65% of the countries concerned (i.e. 40 out of 62) responded to the Director-General's request, compared to 27% (16 out of 59) for the last Director-General's report in 2014; in 2015, 47% of countries (27 out of 57) responded.

### TREND IN MEMBER STATE REPLIES IN 2013-2016



Overall, since UNESCO began requesting information for the Director-General's reports to IPDC, covering the period of killings from 2006 onwards and up until the end of 2015, 59 Member States of the 70 Member States contacted have responded at least once the judicial follow-up to journalists' killings, while 11 have never sent a response.<sup>12</sup>

The 2012 IPDC Decision on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity calls upon the Director-General to "make available on UNESCO's website, upon request of the Member States concerned, information officially provided for killings of journalists condemned by the Organization". All of the responses that the Member States agreed to make public have consequently been made available on the UNESCO website alongside the statement of the Director-General condemning the killing. These public responses represent 52,5% (or 21 responses) of the responses received in 2016. They can be accessed through the following link:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/freedom-of-expression/press-freedom/unesco-condemns-killing-of-journalists/>

<sup>12</sup> These countries are: Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Guyana, Libya, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, South Sudan, Thailand, and Yemen.



## **B** OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF CASES STILL UNRESOLVED

While there is growing recognition among Member States of UNESCO/IPDC's reporting mechanism on the safety of journalists, an analysis of the responses received highlights the extent to which impunity still continues to be a problem.

Cumulatively, the Director-General has received information from 59 Member States on 408 cases out of the 827 cases condemned between 2006 and 2015. Among these 408 cases, according to the information provided by Member States, 63 have been resolved, representing 15% of the cases for which information was received, and just 8% of all cases. For the remaining 345 cases (or 42% of all cases) for which information was received, either a police or judicial enquiry is still underway, or the cases have been archived or are unresolved. Finally, for 419 cases, or 51% of all cases, either no information was received or the Member State in which the killing occurred sent only an acknowledgment of the Director-General's request.

Of the 63 resolved cases, 20 occurred in Latin America and the Caribbean, 14 occurred in Central and Eastern Europe, 13 in the Asia-Pacific region, eight in Western Europe and North America, four in Africa, and another four in the Arab region.

On the basis of the information received from Member States, which needs to be interpreted with caution since there are a significant number of cases for which no updated information was received, the highest percentage of resolved cases can be observed in Western Europe and North America. There, out of the 14 cases condemned by the UNESCO Director-General, 8 (or 57%) have been resolved. Concerning other regions, in Africa, UNESCO has been informed of four resolved cases out of 104 (or 4%); in the Arab states region, four out of 287 cases (or 1.5%) can be categorized as resolved; in the Asia and the Pacific region, 13 out of 210 cases (or 6%); in Central and Eastern Europe, 14 out of 36 cases (39%); and in the Latin America and Caribbean region, 20 out of 176 cases (or 11%).

### STATUS OF JUDICIAL INQUIRY PER REGION (2006-2015)

	ARAB STATES	ASIA & PACIFIC	LAC	AFRICA	CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE	WESTERN EUROPE & NORTH AMERICA	TOTAL
Resolved	4	13	20	4	14	8	<b>63</b>
Ongoing/Unresolved	7	97	144	69	22	6	<b>345</b>
No Information	276	100	12	31	0	0	<b>419</b>
	<b>287</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>827</b>

For information on the methodology used by UNESCO for the preparation of this report and on the status of investigations of each of the cases condemned by the Director-General, please view full report at: [en.unesco.org/dg-report](http://en.unesco.org/dg-report)

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# BACKGROUND

The UNESCO Director-General's 2016 Report on the Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity ([en.unesco.org/dg-report](http://en.unesco.org/dg-report)) was prepared for submission to 30th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication's (IPDC) in accordance with its Decision on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity adopted in March 2008 and renewed in 2010, 2012, and 2014. The latest Decision from 2014 reiterates "the continuing relevance of [previous] IPDC Decisions that request the Director-General of UNESCO to provide to the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC, on a two-year basis at its biennial session, an analytical report on the Director-General's condemnations of the killings of journalists, media workers and social media producers who are engaged in journalistic activities and who are killed or targeted in their line of duty".

The present report offers an overview of the killings of journalists condemned by the Director-General in 2014-2015 as well as providing an analysis of the killings condemned over the last 10 years, between 2006 and 2015. It presents an update on the status of investigations into these killings based on the information provided by Member States.

UNESCO is the leading agency within the UN system with a mandate on freedom of expression and press freedom enshrined its constitution, which states that it will "promote the free flow of ideas by word and image". It is in charge of the coordination of the United Nations Plan on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, the first systematic UN-wide plan, endorsed by the UN Chief Executives Board in 2012, which aims to work toward the creation of a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers.

# CONCLUSION

Media and freedom of expression are under siege with fatal attacks on producers of journalism as the most serious cases. Over the course of the last decade, a total of 827 journalists have lost their lives for bringing information to the public. On average, this constitutes one casualty every five days.

With only 8% of cases reported as resolved (63 out of 827), impunity for these crimes is alarmingly high. This impedes the free flow of information that is so vital for sustainable development, peace building, and the social welfare of humankind. This widespread impunity fuels and perpetuates a cycle of violence that silences media and stifles public debate.

The response rate of concerned Member States to the UNESCO Director-General's request for information on the judicial process of these cases has however seen a significant increase. The issues of the safety of journalists and impunity have also received increased attention from the international community, as reflected by the nine international resolutions on safety adopted in the UN in recent years and by the inclusion of journalists' safety as an indicator of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The vital role of information in achieving a better world for each and every one of us is widely recognized, as it serves not only as a goal in itself but also as an enabler of wider positive change.

It is important that this current progress does not lose momentum. The safety of journalists can only be ensured by tackling the "three Ps" – prevention, protection and prosecution – via an all-encompassing approach, involving each stakeholder. This is the approach of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity. In order to secure peace, democracy, and sustainable development, it is imperative that the free flow information remains uninhibited.



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