

**Questionnaire**  
**Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity**  
**Ireland's response**  
**June 2019**

Ireland is deeply committed to protecting freedom of expression and the safety of journalists, and seeks to ensure that focused attention is given to this issue within the EU, in multilateral fora, and the UN Human Rights Council and at the UN General Assembly.

While Ireland does not have any specific national mechanisms concerned with ensuring the safety of journalists, the Irish Government has taken a number of measures at national level to ensure that investigations and accountability on allegations of intimidation and reprisals. One such example is the Protected Disclosures Act 2014, which provides comprehensive protections for workers who speak up about wrongdoing in the workplace. Workers are protected from all forms of penalisation or threats of penalisation – including dismissal, demotion, suspension, reduction in pay, coercion, intimidation and harassment – as a consequence of making a disclosure of wrongdoing in the workplace. Disclosures can be made to the worker's employer or to a designated competent authority (usually a sectoral regulator). Public disclosures (e.g. on social media, to a journalist or a public representative etc.) are also protected in certain circumstances. Workers can access these protections via the national workplace relations mechanisms (i.e. the Workplace Relations Commission and the Labour Court).

There are also a number of international monitoring organisations that include Ireland in their area of operation. Ireland is a member of the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and strongly supports their work in this regard.

Ireland strongly supports the mandate of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media who has an early warning role and responds to serious failings with regard to free media and freedom of expression. The mandate of the Representative allows them to observe developments with regards to media freedom in participating States and to promote respect for freedom of expression and free media.

During Ireland's Chairmanship-in-Office of the OSCE in 2012, Ireland prioritised freedom of expression and freedom of the media, with a particular focus on Internet freedom. A two-day OSCE conference on Internet Freedom took place in Dublin Castle in June 2012, aimed at moving towards a clearer understanding of existing OSCE commitments regarding the rights to freedom of expression and freedom of the media, and their application to the Internet.

The Council of Europe platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists was established in 2015. This platform allows specific partner organisations who have signed a memorandum of understanding with the Council of Europe to post alerts regarding concerns in relation to media freedom in any of the member states of the Council of Europe to the platform. Where possible, the Council of Europe and the Member State referred to in an alert may post reports on their respective actions taken in response. No alerts have been raised in relation to Ireland since the Platform was established in 2015.