

Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI)



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Proposed issues for Ministerial Conference, Belgrade, Autumn 2013 from European Federation of Journalists

We first would like to underline that the notion of “digital age” literally applies to all journalistic activities. There is hardly any “non-digital” journalism left.

The European Federation of Journalists identified three following issues as crucial:

- Self-regulation and ethics.
This is an on-going debate, with various applications of libel laws across Europe, the growing number of media users who claim to be journalists, the recent “Leveson” enquiry in the UK and the recommendations of the EU high level group on media. How can we make sure that press freedom is guaranteed in a fair manner to professionals without undue interference?
- Protection of sources, electronic data and cyber-security for journalists (including a follow-up of the “Reykjavik Declaration” and the balance between anti-terrorism and press freedom).
Journalism in the digital age implies that professionals can work in a secure technological and legal environment, which is not always the case. How can the situation be improved and what can public authorities do about that? What can journalists and media users do?
- The impact of precarious work in the media sector.
In many member states of the Council of Europe, governments are sensitive to the impact of declining working rights on ethical and quality journalism. Around half of journalists across Europe have “atypical” working relationships such as freelance, short-time or part-time work and are deprived of any collective rights, especially in the online environment. There is clearly a responsibility for States to consider that violation of labour rights have an impact on press freedom.