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Mid-term Evaluation of the Council of Europe Campaign for the Safety of Journalists

Adopted by Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI)

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Introduction

“Journalists Matter”, the Council of Europe Campaign for the Safety of Journalists, is the Council of Europe’s flagship initiative to promote the safety of journalists across its 46 member States. Launched in October 2023, it was conceived in response to mounting evidence of deteriorating conditions for journalists across Europe, as manifested through, amongst others, physical attacks, harassment, abusive lawsuits (SLAPPs), and online intimidation.

The Campaign seeks to mobilise governments, parliaments, law enforcement, civil society, and media actors around a shared objective: ensuring that journalists can work freely and safely. Its tools include the appointment of member State focal points, the creation of member State-level committees and action plans, high-level conferences, peer-learning workshops, and awareness-raising activities at both the European and national level.

This mid-term evaluation aims to take stock of the Campaign, its development and current operation; and identify its main strengths and weaknesses.

The evaluation focuses on the following areas, covering both external impact and the internal functioning of the Campaign:

- Relevance – Do Campaign objectives address the needs of journalists and threats to their safety?
- Added value – What unique contribution does the Campaign bring?
- Effectiveness – To what extent have intended outputs/outcomes been achieved?
- Efficiency – Were resources used economically and timely?
- Impact – What short or medium-term changes are observable?
- Sustainability – Are changes likely to endure beyond the Campaign?

Based on insights and conclusions under each of these headings, the evaluation identifies opportunities for growth and evolution, strategic challenges that need to be addressed, and suggestions for how the Council of Europe might maintain or adapt its focus on journalist safety beyond the Campaign cycle.

The methodology for this evaluation combined desk research, a stakeholder survey, and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders including state representatives, media representatives, civil society actors (including partners to the Council of Europe Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists (the Platform)), Council of Europe staff, focal points, and members of the Group of Friends of the Council of Europe on the Safety of Journalists and Media Freedom (the Group of Friends). To encourage frank feedback, interviewees were assured anonymity; a list of anonymised interviewees is attached as Appendix A. The methodology is appended as Appendix B, and the text of the stakeholder survey is attached as Appendix C.

The evaluation begins with a brief overview of the Campaign, its objectives, the main actors/stakeholders, and the main activities from October 2023 to the present.

1. The Journalists Matter Campaign: Overview

Since its formal launch in 2023,¹ the Journalists Matter Campaign has developed a multi-layered portfolio of activities to promote press freedom and better protection for journalists across all Council of Europe member States. Below is a descriptive overview of its main interventions and structural elements.

¹ See <https://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/conference-pen-mightier-sword-meeting-todays-challenges-freedom-expression-and-safety-journalists>

1.1. Objectives

The Journalists Matter Campaign was launched in October 2023. It builds on the Council of Europe's long-standing normative framework on the safety of journalists, in particular Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)4 on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors.² This Recommendation, structured around the four pillars of prevention, protection, prosecution, and promotion of information, education and awareness-raising, has served as the conceptual foundation for the Campaign's roadmap and its annual thematic focuses. The political momentum for launching the Campaign was reinforced at the 2021 Ministerial Conference on Media and Information Society in Nicosia, where Ministers committed to strategic and effective action to implement the 2016 Recommendation and invited the Council of Europe to carry out a pan-European campaign on the safety of journalists.³

The core objectives of the Campaign are:

- 1) promoting the development of corresponding campaigns at national level;
- 2) encouraging States to take measures towards the adoption of Action Plans for the safety of journalists;
- 3) supporting the creation of Campaign Committees bringing together institutions, civil society, and media actors, designed to remain as dialogue platforms and coordination mechanisms even after the Campaign's life;
- 4) providing help to the development of appropriate legal and institutional frameworks at national level; and
- 5) changing the situation effectively and significantly in practice.

The first 3 of these objectives concern setting up infrastructure (committees, focal points, campaigns); and the fourth objective concerns providing assistance. The fifth objective concerns achieving on-the-ground change as regards the situation for the safety of journalists.

To advance these objectives, the Campaign has pursued dual political and practical strategies: political, by encouraging States to take policy measures and establish the required infrastructure; and practical, by organising activities designed to build capacity and foster dialogue among the actors most directly involved in protecting journalists, focusing on police, prosecutors, journalists' associations, media, and civil society organisations.

The activities so far reflect this approach. Large thematic conferences have given the Campaign visibility and political traction, helping to frame the protection of journalists as a Europe-wide concern rather than a purely national issue. Meetings of focal points have provided a peer-learning environment where States can compare progress, exchange good practice, and commit to further action. Practical workshops and trainings, some of which have been organised under assistance and co-operation programmes and projects but could be said to be allied with (or perhaps inspired by) the Campaign,⁴ have tackled specific challenges, such as how law enforcement should handle protests or how to respond to abusive lawsuits against journalists (SLAPPs).

By the halfway point of the Campaign, these activities have helped to establish the basic architecture for sustained action. Committees and focal points now exist in nearly all member States;⁵ networks of

² Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 13 April 2016.

³ Conference of Ministers responsible for Media and Information Society, 10-11 June 2021, [Resolution on the safety of journalists](#). See also [Terms of reference of the Steering Committee on Media and Information Society \(CDMSI\)](#), which lists coordinating the Campaign under CDMSI's main tasks (point vii).

⁴ See, for example, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/belgrade/horizontal-facility-for-the-western-balkans-and-t%C3%BCrkiye>.

⁵ There are 41 focal points and committees exist – though of varying quality, as will be discussed – in 21: see <https://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/soj2023-2027-nationalchapters>

practitioners and policymakers are emerging; and 11 have adopted or updated existing action plans, and according to the information received from the focal points, at least 4 countries are in the process of working on an action plan.⁶ While the full impact of these initiatives will take longer to assess, the Campaign has succeeded in moving the issue higher on the political agenda and in creating spaces for dialogue that did not exist before.

1.2. The main actors/stakeholders

The Journalists Matter Campaign brings together a diverse set of actors, each with distinct roles and responsibilities in advancing its objectives.

The Campaign Secretariat

The Secretariat, housed within the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, is the strategic and operational hub of the Campaign. With very limited resources, it coordinates activities, supports focal points, initiates and organises events, and ensures that the Campaign remains visible within the broader work of the Council of Europe.

Member States

Member States are the Campaign's central actors, both as duty-bearers for ensuring the safety of journalists and as participants in shaping the Campaign's direction. Their engagement is channelled through the Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI), which provides intergovernmental oversight and policy guidance, and through the focal points, who are the links to the Member State capitals.

Law Enforcement (and Judiciary)

Police and prosecutors have been central to the Campaign's activities thus far. They are both first responders and guarantors of accountability when crimes against journalists occur. Through workshops and trainings, the Campaign has created rare opportunities for dialogue between law enforcement and journalists, building trust and mutual understanding. Prosecutors and judges have also been engaged, particularly on issues such as prosecuting crimes against journalists and countering the use of strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs), where judicial awareness of the realities of journalism is critical.

The Group of Friends of the Council of Europe on the Safety of Journalists and Media Freedom

The Group of Friends, composed of a coalition of permanent representations in Strasbourg, was established to maintain political attention on journalist safety within the Strasbourg circle of States. While its activity so far has largely been limited to statements and symbolic gestures, the group has the potential to serve as a platform for peer encouragement and joint advocacy.

Focal Points

Each member state has been asked to appoint a focal point to act as a liaison between Strasbourg and the national context. Focal points vary in background and mandate, but collectively they provide the Campaign with a network for information exchange, peer learning, and domestic follow-up. Their meetings have provided a forum for candid dialogue and mutual support. 41 have been appointed.

Journalists

Individual journalists are both the intended beneficiaries and essential stakeholders of the Campaign. Their lived experiences of threats and pressures provide the foundation for evidence-based advocacy,

⁶ See <https://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/repository-of-national-action-plans-for-the-safety-of-journalists>.

while their interaction with focal points, law enforcement, and civil society organisations is central to the effectiveness of member State-level initiatives. Testimonies from journalists have also been featured in campaign events, serving as powerful reminders of the risks they face in their work and grounding the Campaign's objectives in real-world experience.

Media Organisations

The media 'industry' (owners, managers) represents another important stakeholder group. To date, their involvement in the Campaign has been limited, and they have been described in interviews as a "missing piece of the puzzle." Yet their responsibility for staff safety and their capacity to invest in protective measures means they could become vital partners if they were more systematically engaged in the next phase. This may be easier said than done, but a strategy towards their engagement should be formulated.

Civil Society

Civil society organisations, including journalist associations, NGOs, and international press freedom groups, have been indispensable partners.⁷ They provide expertise, monitoring, and advocacy, and many also contribute directly to Campaign activities such as trainings or joint workshops with state authorities. Their independence makes them key in holding States accountable and ensuring that the Campaign reflects the realities of journalists on the ground.

Other Council of Europe stakeholders

A final group of stakeholders has an important role in the protection of journalists generally, especially at the Strasbourg level, but they have not been 'actors' in the sense that they have had a formal role in the Campaign. This includes the Council of Europe [Platform for the safety of journalists](#), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and its [General Rapporteur on Media Freedom and the Safety of Journalists](#), and the [Commissioner for Human Rights](#).

Taken together, these stakeholders form a complex ecosystem in which the Campaign operates. The Secretariat convenes and provides direction; member States, through the CDMSI and their focal points, anchor the work at national level and steer high-level strategies at the Council of Europe level; civil society and journalists ground the effort in lived realities; law enforcement and judiciary are responsible for ensuring prevention, protection, and prosecution. The effectiveness of the Campaign depends on the engagement of each of them, and how they complement one another. In the second half of the Campaign, there is scope not only to consolidate the functioning of existing mechanisms, but also to activate those stakeholders whose potential has perhaps been underutilised.

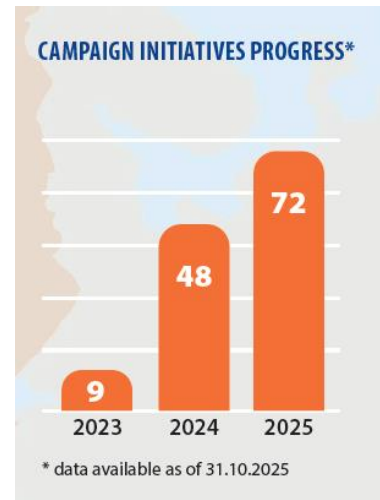
⁷ This has included the Partners to the Council of Europe Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists (listed at <https://fom.coe.int/en/partenaires>).

1.3. Campaign Activities and Resources

Overview

The Journalists Matter Campaign translates the Council of Europe's standard-setting work on the safety of journalists into concrete, cooperative action. Its activities combine visibility, coordination, and capacity-building at both European and national levels. They range from high-level conferences that reinforce political commitment to smaller, practical exchanges that allow journalists, authorities, and civil-society representatives to develop solutions together. The Campaign also provides tools and guidance materials, hosts an online collaborative platform, and supports the creation of member State-level structures such as focal points, working groups, and action plans.

The number of activities has grown from year to year, from 9 in 2023 to 48 in 2024 and 72 in 2025 (as reported up until the end of October).



Main activities

Europe-wide

The events organised under the Journalists Matter Campaign⁸ have been designed to build both visibility and capacity. Large international conferences have served as the Campaign's political showcases. They have drawn attention from senior figures across Europe and provided a platform to underline the urgency of journalist safety. While these high-level events are sometimes seen as set pieces, they play an important role in signalling political commitment and helping States to recognise that the safety of journalists is a core democratic issue. The main such event has been the [Campaign launch in Riga, in 2023](#).

Targeted thematic gatherings have been viewed as very productive tools. So far, there have been two annual thematic conferences, focused on [building multistakeholder dialogue](#) and on the [prosecution of crimes against journalists](#). In addition, there have been seminars and workshops on specific issues, such as [the role of the police](#) and on [combating threats such as SLAPPs](#). Both formats - workshops and the annual thematic gatherings - have been praised for creating an atmosphere of openness, where tensions could be expressed but also where common ground and shared interests were discussed.

The Campaign has also organised meetings of focal points, which have created space for States to share progress and challenges candidly, while peer exchanges and sub-regional visits have allowed participants to see concrete examples of solutions in practice.

Member State level

In parallel with these Europe-wide events, the Campaign has supported the establishment of member State-level structures. The creation of focal points, multi-stakeholder working groups, and, in a smaller but still significant number of States, action plans, has given governments a framework to take practical steps towards improving the protection of journalists. In many countries, this has been the first time that authorities, journalists, and civil society have come together to address safety. In countries where such work was already ongoing, it has helped to deepen these initiatives by providing them added impetus, visibility, and opportunities for comparative learning. This in itself has had immense value, as has been acknowledged by interviewees.

⁸ For a list of all formal Campaign events, see <https://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/events-campaign-for-the-safety-of-journalists>.

The Campaign has also supported member State-level workshops and trainings on specific issues, which have not only built capacity but also provided opportunities to build dialogue and trust between the media and law enforcement. Examples include [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), where prosecutors, police, journalists, and other stakeholders have met several times to strengthen institutional responses to violence against journalists; the Ukraine [launch of the National Chapter](#) in an event that was attended by more than 80 participants and which announced the creation of a national co-ordination committee convening state institutions, media, academia, and civil society; and [Croatia](#), where an [inter-institutional cooperation agreement](#) has been established and [media safety protocols](#) have been introduced for newsrooms. These activities have also promoted cross-European cooperation, with representatives from States that already have well-functioning safety mechanisms contributing to workshops in countries where such initiatives are still emerging.

There have also been innovative approaches to awareness-raising. In Romania, the National Audiovisual Council hosted the [Gala for Excellence in Journalism](#), recognising over 50 journalists who reported from conflict zones in recent years. The event celebrated professional courage and highlighted practical measures for journalist safety, including specialised training for reporters in conflict areas. It brought together media professionals from different and often polarised sectors around shared professional values. In Prague, a Training-of-Trainers workshop on SLAPPs was held alongside a [journalism film festival](#), which included a feature-length [movie about SLAPPs](#).

These events reflect the Campaign's function as a convener: bringing together journalists, state authorities, and civil society in settings where mutual trust can develop and practical solutions can be explored.

Campaign tools and resources

The Campaign has developed and promoted a set of tools and resources designed to support implementation and peer exchange. The central operational tool is the online collaborative platform (*Collab SoJ*), created to enable the focal points to share documents, exchange experiences, and maintain contact between meetings. Although its use has so far been limited to a small number of active participants, it represents the Campaign's main interactive space and a potential legacy instrument for continued cooperation after 2027.

The Campaign has also developed a comprehensive [website](#) that brings together the full range of Campaign materials and provides access to a set of resources. These include a [Visibility Kit](#), a collection of [background documents](#) on standards and practice, and a public [repository of action plans](#) for the safety of journalists. The site also hosts an [interactive dashboard and map of national initiatives](#), offering a visual overview of progress and activities across member States. Alongside these, the Campaign produces a periodic [newsletter](#) and an annual [trifold](#) summary that highlight key developments and priorities. Taken together, these online and print resources enhance transparency and facilitate knowledge-sharing, complementing the Campaign's direct engagement and capacity-building work.

Three complementary reference documents provide substantive guidance. The 2020 [Implementation Guide on the Safety of Journalists](#) and the 2023 [Extended Implementation Guide](#) provide a comprehensive framework for implementing Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)4 at the national level, and also informed the conceptual groundwork for the campaign. The 2024 [Pocket Guide on Key actions for improved safety of journalists](#) offers a concise, practical version developed within the campaign period itself. Together, these guides form the core set of Council of Europe reference materials available to States, complementing the Campaign's efforts to facilitate cooperation and promote good practice.

Overall picture

At the halfway point, the Campaign has undoubtedly raised the profile of journalist safety and stimulated action across member States. The Campaign's activities have created a layered architecture: high-level events to generate visibility and political momentum; mid-level structures like focal points and committees to provide continuity; and targeted workshops to foster practical solutions. The Campaign

has acted as a catalyst for new initiatives and as support for ongoing reforms. Structures have been created, dialogue has begun, and some early changes in practice are visible, notably in how police and journalists interact during public demonstrations and in the growing attention to abusive lawsuits.

Nevertheless, the work is far from complete. Many of the new committees and focal points remain fragile and risk existing largely on paper without continued support. Large conferences have generated visibility, but their long-term impact will depend on whether the lessons are translated into sustained national reforms.

The challenge for the next phase of the Campaign is therefore not only to continue convening and supporting, but also to ensure that structures are animated, commitments implemented, and measurable outcomes achieved before the Campaign concludes in 2027. This emerging picture provides the basis for the evaluation that follows, which assesses the Campaign's performance against the Council of Europe's standard evaluation criteria.

2. Evaluation of the Campaign's Performance

This chapter assesses the Journalists Matter Campaign against six standard Council of Europe evaluation criteria: relevance, added value, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Together, these criteria provide a structured way to understand how well the Campaign's objectives align with needs on the ground, what the Council of Europe has uniquely contributed, what has been achieved so far, how resources have been used, what medium-term changes are visible, and whether those changes are likely to endure. The analysis is based on stakeholder interviews, survey responses, and desk research. It highlights recurring themes and illustrates them with voices from stakeholders and also identifies areas where the Campaign could adjust its emphasis in the second half of its mandate.

2.1. Relevance

From the outset, the Journalists Matter Campaign was designed to respond to a pressing problem: threats to the safety of journalists across Europe. Its objectives – raising awareness, encouraging dialogue, and promoting national structures to protect journalists – were judged by most interviewees and survey respondents to be closely aligned with the challenges they face.

The emphasis on creating structures was seen as especially important. Many pointed out that while monitoring violations is necessary, that on its own does not tackle the issue. As one interviewee put it, the Campaign “is about building the structures that allow States to learn how to improve.” This is contrasted with the role of the Platform, which functions primarily as an alert and dialogue mechanism. This distinction was valued by stakeholders who recognised the Campaign as clearly complementary to the Platform for the Protection of Journalism (and vice versa). That said, there was also confusion about the role of the two, especially among interviewees who were not as intimately familiar with Strasbourg architecture.

Another area where the Campaign proved relevant was in building bridges between different communities. Within their own countries, journalists, police, prosecutors and judges rarely meet in meaningful settings. The Campaign created unique and valuable opportunities for these groups to sit together and find common ground. As one state representative put it, bringing them together “made possible that these communities who come from very different backgrounds, police and media especially, are able to build a better understanding.” Survey responses reinforced this point, noting that cross-sectoral meetings created “trust and understanding for each other's work.”

The Campaign also added relevance by raising awareness at both national and European levels. A state representative who was interviewed explained that even in countries with relatively strong protections, the Campaign revealed blind spots: “We discovered that cases brought by journalists were being dismissed at a very high rate. Without the Campaign, we would not have focused on this.”

This relevance was visible across very different national contexts. In some places, the Campaign offered the first external impetus to act. One interviewee admitted that attending a meeting “made me realise with embarrassment that my country had not taken any steps – no committee, no action plan, nothing in place.” In other countries, the Campaign helped justify the allocation resources internally and spurred the creation of baseline studies. In Ukraine, it provided vital support in wartime: “We have documented over 800 crimes against journalists since the invasion. The Council of Europe’s training and technical support has been crucial.”

Interviewees also noted that relevance must be judged against specific themes, and that this was an area where there was room for improvement. “Safety” was sometimes seen as too broad an umbrella, and attention might need to be focused on specific issues. Gender-specific risks were highlighted by some focal points and civil society representatives, in this regard, especially (but not only) as regard risks and threats online. Others raised the precarious financial and working conditions of journalists as a core issue undermining the safety – and independence – of journalists.

Taken together, the evidence suggests that the Campaign’s objectives are well-matched to the needs of the moment. Its focus on structures, dialogue, and awareness has been broadly validated by stakeholders. The main challenge for the second half of the Campaign will be to maintain that relevance by paying greater attention to specific risks while continuing to strengthen the foundations that have already been built.

2.2. Added value

Stakeholders consistently underlined that the Campaign’s added value lies in its nature as a Council of Europe, intergovernmental initiative. Civil society organisations have long monitored and documented violations. But the Council of Europe, as an intergovernmental organisation and through this Campaign, can create structured processes where governments are themselves the main actors, committing to national coordination, nominating focal points, and reporting back to peers.⁹

Several interviewees stressed that this intergovernmental weight changes how States engage. A civil society representative put it simply: “when the Council of Europe puts its name on this, it signals that the safety of journalists is not a marginal issue but a core human rights concern.” Another pointed out that even if a government is reluctant, “the fact of sending someone to Strasbourg and having them sit at the table means the issue is (at least) acknowledged.”

The Campaign has also offered legitimacy and cover to reform-minded actors within member States. In one country, a state representative admitted that participating in a meeting of focal points “made me realise with embarrassment that my country had not taken any steps: we had no committee, no action plan, nothing in place.” The Council of Europe’s convening role provided the necessary external push to begin change at home.

Added value was also seen in the comparative perspective that the Council of Europe uniquely provides. Through sub-regional visits, peer exchanges, and annual conferences, States can learn directly from one another. As one focal point observed, “we discovered that other countries had already developed solutions we had not even considered, and we could bring those ideas back.” This process of benchmarking and mutual encouragement is only possible in an intergovernmental forum.

Several stakeholders contrasted the Campaign’s role with that of the Platform for the Protection of Journalism, which is driven by civil society alerts and functions through public pressure. They saw the

⁹ It should be noted that the OSCE and UNESCO, who are also intergovernmental organisations with press freedom as part of their mandate, also operate in the space. For various reasons, they are unable to play this role in the same way that the Council of Europe can; this is partly to do with reasons specific to these two organisations and its members but also because of the Council’s exceptional strengths and track record on human rights and rule of law issues.

Campaign as complementary: whereas the Platform highlights and provides a framework for dialogue about serious concerns about media freedom and journalists' rights, the Campaign builds structures for institutional learning. "It is about enabling governments to improve," as one interviewee put it, "not only pointing to their failings."

In short, the Campaign's added value has been to bring States formally into the process, to facilitate peer support, and to lend political legitimacy to the issue of journalist safety. These are roles that civil society and other international organisations cannot fulfil on their own.

2.3. Effectiveness

Interview and survey evidence suggests that the Campaign has been effective in generating visible activity, especially in its first two years. Nearly all member States have now nominated focal points, nearly half have established committees and there are action plans in more than a dozen. Even where implementation remains limited, stakeholders acknowledged that the very act of creating these structures represents progress, in a relatively limited timeframe. As one civil society representative noted, "when the Council of Europe asks governments to appoint a focal point, they respond. NGOs cannot achieve that."

Practical results were most often cited in relation to dialogue and cooperation between journalists and law enforcement. Workshops, roundtables, and sub-regional visits were highlighted as moments when barriers were lowered and practical solutions discussed. A state representative described one such event as "the most efficient initiative because it goes straight to where tensions arise." A focal point in another country reflected that a communication protocol developed after these exchanges had "reduced the risk of incidents at demonstrations."

Peer learning has also been an important marker of effectiveness. Several participants pointed to study visits or exchanges where States could compare practices. For example, the Dutch PersVeilig initiative has been presented at multiple Campaign events, and its coordinator has been invited by focal points in other countries to share the model. While each country adapts such approaches to its own context, the Campaign has provided a channel for these exchanges and helped ensure that good practice circulates beyond national borders.

Survey responses confirmed that awareness raising has been one of the Campaign's most effective achievements. Respondents mentioned "a more obvious political focus on the issues" and "increased awareness of journalists' concerns among law enforcement officials." Others pointed to a "renewed commitment" from governments to address journalist safety, even in contexts where national action had previously stalled.

At the same time, effectiveness has been uneven. Some focal points have been described as highly active, driving domestic change and sharing practices internationally. Others participate only nominally, attending meetings without follow-up at home. As one interviewee observed, "there are some States that are very well represented and who take part and who are very much into the process; and there are other focal points that attend meetings, but maybe just because they were sent there."

Interviewees also pointed to the challenge of sustaining momentum beyond one-off events. While conferences and workshops were praised for their convening power, there was concern that outcomes are not always followed up systematically. One Council of Europe staff member suggested that meetings should "identify stumbling blocks and fix them," rather than only providing a platform for discussion.

Despite these limitations, the Campaign has demonstrated clear effectiveness in catalysing dialogue, fostering peer exchange, and prompting the creation of national structures. Its record shows progress in areas where previously little or nothing existed, as well as improvements in cooperation in countries with stronger traditions. The next step for effectiveness will be ensuring that these activities are embedded and that outcomes are consolidated into lasting practices.

2.4. Efficiency

A recurring theme across interviews and survey responses was admiration for how much the Campaign has achieved with relatively modest resources. Stakeholders were often surprised by the scale of activities delivered by what one interviewee called “a very small team with a very large agenda.” The Campaign secretariat was repeatedly praised for its energy and ability to mobilise partners, with one civil society respondent noting that “the Campaign has punched above its weight.”

The Campaign has made efficient use of existing Council of Europe mechanisms. For example, focal point meetings have been organised back-to-back with other events in Strasbourg, reducing travel costs and allowing participants to engage across agendas. Sub-regional visits often drew on cooperation projects already underway, ensuring that Campaign activities reinforced, rather than duplicated, other work. As one Council of Europe staff member explained, “we tried to design activities so that they dovetail with projects that are already funded.”

Survey respondents highlighted the Campaign’s ability to leverage partnerships, both internally and externally. Joint events with the CDMSI, links to parliamentary initiatives, and collaboration with international organisations were all cited as examples where the Campaign extended its reach without proportionally increasing its costs.

Nevertheless, limitations were also clear. Several interviewees pointed out that outcomes sometimes remained at the level of dialogue rather than moving into action, and questioned whether more targeted, smaller-scale interventions might yield better returns. One civil society actor commented that “large conferences are necessary for visibility, but the real breakthroughs came in smaller, practical workshops.” Others noted that too many issues were sometimes crowded into a single agenda, diluting focus and limiting the efficiency of each event.

Another factor affecting efficiency is the uneven engagement of focal points. While some are active multipliers in their home countries, others treat participation as a formality. This inconsistency reduces the overall efficiency of the Campaign’s investment in convening and training. As one focal point acknowledged, “it is frustrating when you put a lot into preparing, and then some colleagues go home and nothing happens.”

Overall, stakeholders judged the Campaign to be a highly efficient use of limited resources, particularly in terms of convening power and partnership building. The challenge moving forward will be to sharpen priorities, ensuring that each activity is focused and outcomes are systematically followed up, so that effort translates more directly into results.

2.5. Impact

The Campaign has already produced observable changes at national and European levels, even though it is only at the halfway point. The most visible impact has been the establishment of focal points and committees, which in several countries are functioning as genuine forums for dialogue between journalists, state institutions, and civil society. In some cases, these structures are now referenced in domestic debates as evidence of a state’s commitment to media freedom.

Some interviewees described a shift in institutional culture. Police and law enforcement officials who participated in workshops were said to be more aware of the risks journalists face at demonstrations or in conflict situations. A prosecutor involved in one project commented that “we realised we had treated these cases as ordinary assaults, when in fact they are attacks on freedom of expression.” Journalists also reported that having direct access to state officials in a neutral setting improved trust and reduced hostility.

Survey responses echoed this sense of change. Many respondents said that the Campaign had raised the profile of journalist safety in their countries, creating a political impetus to act. One focal point explained that “before the Campaign, this was not on the national agenda at all. Now it is being

discussed in parliament.” In another case, a national journalists’ union reported that dialogue with police “would not have happened without the Council of Europe initiative.”

At the European level, the Campaign has given visibility to the issue in ministerial meetings, PACE debates, and Council of Europe communications. This has helped counter denial or minimisation by some States. As one parliamentarian put it, “the Campaign makes clear that no country can say they have no problem. Every country has issues.”

Not all impacts have been uniform. In some States, committees meet infrequently and have yet to translate dialogue into concrete measures. A few journalists and civil society representatives were sceptical, suggesting that some governments were using the Campaign mainly to “tick the box” without real commitment. Others argued that impact was limited by the voluntary nature of the Campaign, which cannot compel States to act.

Despite these shortcomings, the Campaign has achieved tangible progress: new mechanisms, increased awareness, and a stronger culture of dialogue. It has also catalysed regional exchanges that allow countries to adapt practices from one another. While the depth of impact varies, the breadth of engagement across Europe shows that the Campaign has moved the debate on journalist safety further than it stood two years ago.

2.6. Sustainability

Sustainability emerged as one of the strongest concerns in both interviews and survey responses. Stakeholders repeatedly stressed that while the Campaign has created valuable structures and momentum, these gains risk being lost once the Campaign concludes in 2027 unless a strategy for continuity is in place.

The creation of focal points and committees has been one of the Campaign’s most visible achievements, but several interviewees warned that “setting up a committee is not enough; what matters is whether it continues to function after the Campaign ends.” A civil society actor expressed concern that some governments view the committees mainly as symbolic, noting that “they meet once or twice a year, but without pressure they could easily disappear.”

There was broad agreement that the Council of Europe should explore ways to embed the Campaign’s structures into a permanent mechanism of some sort. One idea was to establish a standing intergovernmental network of focal points, similar to existing networks for police, prosecutors, and judges within the Council of Europe. This would allow regular exchanges to continue and ensure that knowledge and relationships built during the Campaign are not lost. As one Council of Europe official put it, “we would be wasting an opportunity if, after five years, we simply stop.”

The question of focus for the remaining years was also tied to sustainability. Some interviewees argued that the Campaign should dedicate more attention to specific pressing issues, such as online harassment, threats to women journalists, and the economic precarity of media professionals. Others suggested concentrating on deepening the most promising national initiatives so that they become self-sustaining. A focal point observed that “if we can get three or four functioning national mechanisms that are genuinely embedded, they can serve as role models for others.”

Funding was mentioned as a limiting factor. Several stakeholders noted that States sometimes expect external financing to support their initiatives, while the Campaign itself has only very limited resources. This underscores the importance of demonstrating that journalist safety mechanisms can be implemented at relatively low cost, as shown by existing national examples.

In sum, the sustainability of the Campaign’s achievements will depend on two things: (1) embedding the structures it has created into some form of a permanent mechanisms, and (2) ensuring that national initiatives gain sufficient depth to survive beyond the Campaign. Without this, there is a real risk that progress will fade once the Campaign concludes.

3. Reflections

The interviews and survey responses reveal a strong and consistent picture of what the Campaign has achieved so far, and where challenges remain. While the detail varies across stakeholders and national contexts, several themes emerge clearly.

Strong political signal with modest resources

One of the most frequently mentioned achievements is that the Campaign has succeeded in raising the visibility of journalist safety across Europe, despite operating with limited resources. Civil society representatives in particular stressed that the mere fact of an intergovernmental Campaign has “sent a signal that this is an issue which matters to governments, not just NGOs.” This symbolic weight has amplified the work of existing initiatives and created pressure on States to engage.

Structures established, but depth varies

The Campaign has catalysed the creation of focal points in nearly all member States and committees in half. These are widely recognised as an important step forward, giving the issue of journalist safety a formal anchor within government structures. At the same time, there is wide variation in how these bodies function. In some States, committees meet regularly and have enabled real dialogue between media, law enforcement, and government. In others, they meet infrequently or only symbolically, limiting their effectiveness. As one focal point admitted, “we meet twice a year for an hour, but nothing concrete comes out of it.”

Dialogue between journalists and authorities

Perhaps the most tangible progress has come in fostering dialogue between journalists and state authorities. Workshops bringing together police, prosecutors, and media were frequently cited as highlights. One journalist said that for the first time “the police listened to us as professionals, not as troublemakers.” Several law enforcement officials reported that these encounters had changed their understanding of attacks on journalists, recognising them as assaults on democracy rather than ordinary crimes.

Role of peer exchange and regional pressure

Sub-regional visits and peer-to-peer exchanges have been another effective tool. They have allowed States to learn from one another and created a form of soft pressure on those lagging behind. One Council of Europe representative explained that “when officials see with their own eyes how another country has solved a problem, they return home more motivated to do the same.” These exchanges also strengthen informal networks that can outlast the Campaign itself.

Gender and online harassment

Gender-based threats and online harassment emerged as themes, though with some caveats. Several stakeholders emphasised the urgency of addressing these issues, but others noted that attention to them has so far been uneven. Many interviewees only raised gender when prompted, suggesting that while the Campaign has highlighted the issue, it is not seen as a focus. Online harassment, meanwhile, is widely recognised as one of the fastest-growing threats but has also not yet been systematically addressed within Campaign activities.

Limits of voluntary engagement

The voluntary nature of the Campaign remains both its strength and its weakness. It has allowed for broad participation and low political resistance, but it also means that some States engage only superficially. As one civil society actor put it, “you cannot force governments to care. Some show up just to tick the box.” This creates uneven progress and raises questions about how to sustain momentum.

The missing stakeholders

A recurrent observation was that certain stakeholders remain under-engaged. National parliaments have so far played little role, even though they are crucial for ensuring legal reform and democratic oversight. Media owners are also largely absent, despite their influence on journalists' working conditions and financial security. Several interviewees argued that without engaging owners, the Campaign risks ignoring one of the root causes of vulnerability: precarious employment.

Campaign and Platform: complementary but confused

Another theme was confusion between the Campaign and the Council of Europe Platform on the Safety of Journalists. Even well-informed stakeholders sometimes blurred the distinction, treating them as a single initiative. While this is not necessarily harmful, it does obscure the fact that the Campaign is an intergovernmental process aimed at building structures within States to improve journalists' safety, whereas the platform is a pan-European civil society mechanism that highlights serious concerns about media freedom and journalists' rights. Interviewees stressed the importance of clarifying the complementarity of the two – whilst there could also be more joint strategizing to ensure that each optimally reinforces the other.

4. Options and Recommendations for the Future

Looking ahead, the Campaign faces two tasks at once: consolidating the progress achieved so far, and laying the groundwork for what will follow after 2027. Stakeholders expressed strong support for continuity, but they also emphasised that the remaining period should not only repeat what has already been done. It should also concentrate on deepening impact, ensuring sustainability, and addressing gaps that have become apparent.

Consolidating Existing Structures

The network of focal points and committees represent one of the Campaign's most visible achievements. Over the next two years, the priority should be to ensure these mechanisms are not symbolic but genuinely functional. This means encouraging regular meetings, fostering connections with journalists and civil society, and linking committees to concrete reforms. Focal points should remain engaged, including by updating the Strasbourg secretariat of progress in their countries so this can be shared with others. Several interviewees stressed that "committees cannot just exist on paper" and that the Council of Europe should continue to encourage practical outcomes. Consideration could be given to creating a steering committee within the group of focal points, so that more impetus will be generated from within the group.

Building Toward a Permanent Network

A recurring idea was to transform the Campaign into a permanent Council of Europe mechanism, such as an intergovernmental network of focal points on journalist safety. One stakeholder highlighted that this would follow a tried and tested model: "The Council of Europe already has networks for police, prosecutors and judges. Why not for journalist safety?" Such a structure would allow the work to continue after the Campaign ends, with annual meetings and more specialised discussions chosen by the focal points themselves. This mid-term evaluation, well in advance of the end of the Campaign in 2027 and at a point when early results are already visible, is an opportunity to open debate about this option and consider its feasibility.

Prioritising Thematic Focus?

Stakeholders suggested that the remaining period could also sharpen thematic priorities. Issues identified include:

- Gender-based threats: to make risks faced by women journalists a central concern rather than a secondary theme. One participant underlined that “attacks on women journalists ... define the climate for everyone.”
- Online harassment: to recognise and address the scale of digital threats to journalists. As one civil society representative put it, “this is the fastest-growing risk, and it still isn’t systematically tackled.”
- Economic precarity: to highlight how financial vulnerability and poor working conditions undermine journalistic independence. A focal point warned: “If you are paid €30 an article, you self-censor because you can’t afford to lose work.”

While not all of these can be fully addressed within the Campaign’s mandate, they provide avenues for focus that are relevant to sustainability.

Enhancing Coordination and Communication

There is room to improve coordination with other actors. Clarifying complementarities and communicating more consistently with Strasbourg delegations could amplify impact at low cost. Similarly, stronger engagement with national parliaments would create new leverage for legal and policy reforms. As one parliamentarian put it, “there is a missing link between what happens in Strasbourg and what national assemblies actually do.” There is confusion between the role of the Platform and that of the Campaign. However, it must also be recognised that the Secretariat has very limited staff resources, financial as well as in terms of personnel (effectively only one person), and there is only so much that can realistically be achieved.

Engaging Missing Stakeholders

The Campaign would benefit from bringing new actors into the process. Parliaments, media owners, and journalists’ unions were all identified as missing pieces. Involving them, or involving them more effectively, in committees or in selected workshops could make the mechanisms more representative and effective. Several stakeholders emphasised the need to involve media owners in particular, given their influence over working conditions.

Under-utilised stakeholders?

Whilst they have not been missing, feedback on the Group of Friends has been that their activity has very much depended on who holds the Presidency. There was a sense that there is a missed opportunity here for continuous peer encouragement and advocacy. At a minimum, strengthening the role of the Group of Friends could significantly enhance visibility and political momentum for the Campaign in Strasbourg.

Similarly, while there has been engagement, the feedback from interviewees was that there could have been more or clearer joint strategizing – either explicitly or behind closed doors – with other Council of Europe stakeholders such as the Platform, the Human Rights commissioner, and PACE.

Options for the Council of Europe

At the institutional level, the Council of Europe faces a strategic choice. Several possible paths emerged from stakeholder feedback – and all agreed that the Council of Europe would need to continue the drive. Interviewees were sceptical that States would carry this forward on their own. As one noted, “you cannot expect governments to maintain momentum by themselves. Without coordination, it risks fading away.”

- (1) Pilot to Programme: Transition the Campaign into a permanent Council of Europe programme with dedicated staff. This would build on momentum and provide the continuity that stakeholders see as essential.
- (2) Network Model: Establish an intergovernmental focal points network on journalist safety, modelled on the existing police, prosecutors and judges’ networks. This would provide a

sustainable, light-structure framework for ongoing exchange and pressure, with agenda-setting power in the hands of focal points.

- (3) Strasbourg-driven continuity but without a structural focus: Maintain the Campaign as a Strasbourg-based initiative, ensuring that the Secretariat continues to drive and coordinate work. But this risks a loss of focus, including – importantly – within the Strasbourg hierarchy and is a least-preferred option.

Whichever path is chosen, the underlying challenge is sustainability. Many structures have now been created — focal points, committees, and in some cases action plans. But as one focal point reflected, “if we stop here, it will just be another committee on paper.” By 2027, there needs to be more than institutional frameworks: there must be evidence that they are delivering results, including on the ground – whether in the form of safer protest environments, stronger judicial responses, or practical protections against harassment.

The remaining 2½ years therefore represent an important opportunity not just to preserve what has been built, but to further build, focus, and animate it. Sustained peer exchange, tailored support to underperforming States, and focused thematic priorities could all help ensure that when the Campaign closes, it leaves behind living structures that continue to function.

Possible indicators of success might include:

- Committees meeting regularly and producing recommendations that are acted upon.
- Focal points initiating exchanges or peer visits and reporting back on lessons learned.
- Protocols for protest safety being adopted and used by police and journalists on the ground.
- Law enforcement/judicial authorities demonstrating follow-up in cases of violence against journalists.
- Baseline studies on media safety being repeated to measure change over time.
- On-the-ground impact as demonstrated through improvement of press index scores such as V-Dem¹⁰ and fewer Platform alerts.

These are not definitive targets; it will be for Strasbourg and the member States themselves to determine what is both realistic and ambitious. But they illustrate the kinds of outcomes that could show that the Campaign has gone beyond institution-building and has made a concrete difference for journalist safety.

5. Conclusions

Lessons Learned

The first half of the Journalists Matter Campaign has generated important lessons that can guide its next phase and inform future work on journalist safety at the Council of Europe.

The first lesson is that a light structure, even with limited resources, can have real catalytic impact. The creation of focal points and committees has provided entry points in nearly every member state. These mechanisms have helped open dialogue between journalists, law enforcement, and government institutions, and in some contexts have already produced concrete improvements such as protocols on protest safety or closer monitoring of attacks. Stakeholders consistently underlined that this convening power is the Campaign’s unique strength.

A second lesson is that structures must be animated to remain meaningful. Interviewees warned that committees risk becoming “just another meeting twice a year” if there is no clear agenda, follow-up, or political support. The same applies to focal points, some of whom are highly active while others are

¹⁰ <https://v-dem.net/data/the-v-dem-dataset/>

nominal appointees. The lesson is that appointment alone is not enough; regular engagement, peer exchange, and visible outputs are required to sustain energy.

Third, the Campaign has shown the value of linking state actors with civil society. Practical workshops bringing journalists and police together, and peer visits enabling national actors to learn from one another, were consistently cited as the most effective activities. The ability of an intergovernmental body to host these dialogues – without naming and shaming, but by encouraging cooperation – has been a clear advantage. However, there needs to be greater involvement not just by journalists, but by media owners – as highlighted above, they are an important missing stakeholder.

A fourth lesson is that visibility matters. Several interlocutors noted that awareness of the Campaign, even among delegations in Strasbourg, remains limited. This reduces its potential influence. Short, regular communication updates could go a long way in amplifying impact.

Finally, the Campaign has highlighted the importance of addressing emerging threats systematically. While issues such as SLAPPs and protest safety have been taken up, concerns about online harassment and the economic fragility of journalism also surfaced.

Vision for 2027 and Beyond

Looking ahead, the overarching challenge is to ensure that the Campaign does not conclude in 2027 with structures in place but little evidence of real change. By the end of the five years, stakeholders should be able to point not only to focal points and committees, but to measurable outcomes: safer working conditions during protests, judicial follow-up on attacks, reduced impunity, stronger protections against harassment, and evidence of peer learning being translated into practice. Objective 5 of the Campaign – to bring about real improvements in the safety of journalists on the ground – is an important touchstone for success.

At the same time, it is important to recognise that violations of media freedom have complex and varied causes: political pressure, hostile public climates, precarious working conditions, and structural weaknesses in law enforcement and the judiciary, to name only a few. The Campaign cannot resolve all of these factors and a deterioration in press safety indicators should not be taken as evidence of failure. What the Journalists Matter Campaign can do is bring States together, encourage them to establish structures for dialogue and accountability, and equip them with tools and examples to strengthen protection. The more important measure of success arguably lies in whether States have the frameworks and practices in place to respond more effectively when challenges arise.

A credible vision for 2027 and beyond could rest on three pillars:

1. Consolidate and Animate Structures

Ensure that focal points and committees function as genuine coordination mechanisms. Regular meetings, peer exchanges, and thematic focus (such as defamation law or online harassment) could keep them engaged and productive.

2. Deliver Tangible Results

Focus on a small set of themes where progress can be demonstrated across multiple States. Protest safety, judicial response to violence, and anti-SLAPP measures are promising candidates. Visible results will help justify continued investment and convince States of the value of participation.

3. Prepare for Legacy

The Campaign should leave behind more than a temporary structure. One option is to evolve into a permanent network of focal points, modelled on existing Council of Europe networks for police, prosecutors, and judges. Another is to institutionalise journalist safety within the regular programme of work of the Council of Europe, with dedicated staff. What is clear is that leaving sustainability to States

alone would risk losing the progress made. As one participant put it, “if Strasbourg steps back, it will simply wither.”

At the same time, while the conclusions of this review point to areas where the Campaign can and should do more, it is equally important to recognise the limits of current capacity. Much of the Campaign’s progress has been driven by a very small Secretariat team, in practice centred on a single staff member in Strasbourg. The Campaign has therefore already reached a remarkable level of delivery relative to the resources available. This creates a structural tension: on the one hand, stakeholders see clear opportunities to expand activities; on the other, the Secretariat cannot simply multiply its output without either additional staffing or sharper prioritisation. If resources remain unchanged, the Campaign will need to make strategic choices about where its limited capacity can have the greatest impact, and ensure that existing successful formats are not diluted by overstretch.

The evidence gathered for this evaluation suggests that there is appetite among States, civil society, and Council to continue with a strong focus on Journalists Safety beyond 2027. For the Council of Europe, this is both a challenge and an opportunity: to secure its place as the European home for journalist safety, and to ensure that the progress made since 2023 does not fade but grows into a durable architecture for protecting media freedom.

Appendix A: Interviewees and survey respondents (anonymised)

Interviewees and survey respondents

Stakeholder category	Interviewee	Survey respondent	<i>Total</i>
State (Public Officials)		12	12
State (Group of Friends	3		3
State (Focal point)	5		5
Civil society (platform partners)	4	3	7
Law Enforcement		10	10
Judiciary		1	1
Media Regulators	1	3	4
Council of Europe staff	4	2	6
Journalists		3	3
total	17	34	51

Appendix B: Methodology

This mid-term evaluation combined qualitative and quantitative methods to build a balanced picture of the Journalists Matter campaign's progress, challenges, and opportunities halfway through its five-year cycle. The approach was designed to be both participatory and independent, ensuring that the findings reflect the experiences of those most directly involved while maintaining analytical distance.

Data collection

The review draws on three principal sources:

- 1) Semi-structured interviews with seventeen stakeholders, conducted between August and October 2025. Interviewees represented the main actor groups engaged in the campaign: state focal points, Council of Europe officials, members of the Group of Friends, civil society organisations, media representatives, and independent experts. Conversations followed a common interview guide but remained flexible to allow exploration of themes most relevant to each participant.
- 2) A stakeholder survey, distributed in parallel to a wider group of participants, including focal points and civil society partners. While the overall number of respondents was modest, it was sufficient—and across a sufficiently broad spread of stakeholder groups—to yield usable and meaningful data. In addition to generating quantitative indicators (for example, on perceived effectiveness and coordination), the survey also provided qualitative insights through open-text fields. A majority of respondents made active use of these fields, offering detailed reflections that helped contextualise and deepen the quantitative findings.
- 3) Desk research, including review of Council of Europe documentation, campaign records, relevant resolutions and recommendations, and public-facing materials from the Journalists Matter website.

Analysis

Findings from all sources were coded thematically using the Council of Europe's standard evaluation criteria: relevance, added value, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Interview and survey data were compared to identify convergence or divergence of perceptions between stakeholder groups. Where appropriate, direct quotations from interviews are used to illustrate key points; these have been verified against the original transcripts.

Anonymity and ethics

To encourage open and frank feedback, interviewees were informed that their identities would remain confidential and that individual statements would not be attributed in the final report without their explicit consent. Quotations are presented anonymously and edited only very sparingly, for clarity.

Limitations

The evaluation captures perceptions at a specific moment in time, halfway through the campaign. Some intended results, particularly at the national level, require longer to materialise. Quantitative measurement of impact remains limited due to the absence of systematic indicators across all member States. Nonetheless, triangulation of multiple data sources provides a sound basis for assessing progress and identifying priorities for the campaign's second phase. It may be noted that the number of journalist stakeholders interviewed or who responded to the survey is very low – only three. This reflects the low awareness of the Campaign among this stakeholder group. It is remedied somewhat by civil society including journalists' unions and representative groups.

Stakeholder Survey: 'Journalists Matter'

You are invited to contribute to the mid-term review of the [Journalists Matter campaign](#), the Council of Europe's flagship initiative for the safety of journalists. Launched in October 2023, the Campaign aims to promote press freedom and protect journalists from violence, threats, and harassment, while reinforcing the [implementation of the Council of Europe's 2016 Recommendation on the protection of journalism and the safety of journalists and other media actors](#).

The review seeks to assess the Campaign's relevance, visibility, and effectiveness to date, and to gather insights from key stakeholders. Your input will help us understand the Campaign's impact thus far, identify areas for improvement, and inform future actions aimed at ensuring a safe and enabling environment for journalism in Europe.

This questionnaire will take between 10 to 45 minutes of your time, depending on the length of your answers (the survey is a combination of multiple choice and open questions). If you would prefer to do an interview rather than go through the questionnaire, please email the consultant commissioned to lead the review, Peter Noorlander, at peter.noorlander@globalrightshub.com. You can also email Peter if you have any questions, or problems with completing the survey.

If you are not the right person in your organisation to respond to this questionnaire, or you would like that one of your colleagues also fills it out to provide their perspective, please feel free to share the link with whomever you believe to be appropriate.

All responses will be treated in confidence, securely stored, and used solely for the purposes of this review. Any personal data collected through this form will not be shared with third parties unless with your permission (there is a consent question at the end of the questionnaire). All personal data will be securely deleted once it is no longer required for the purposes of the review, in accordance with applicable data protection laws.

* Indicates required question

Section A: About You

1. Your name (you may respond anonymously if you wish)

2. Organisation

3. Stakeholder group **Check all that apply.*

- ☐ Journalist
- ☐ Press council
- ☐ Media outlet
- ☐ Judiciary
- ☐ Law enforcement (including police and prosecutors)
- ☐ Public official
- ☐ Civil Society
- ☐ Council of Europe
- ☐ Group of Friends of the Council of Europe on the Safety of Journalists and Media Freedom
- ☐ Other: _____

4. Country or countries of activity (if active across the CoE region, please tick "all Council of Europe member States") *

Check all that apply.

- ☐ All Council of Europe member States
- ☐ Albania
- ☐ Andorra
- ☐ Armenia
- ☐ Austria
- ☐ Azerbaijan
- ☐ Belgium
- ☐ Bosnia and Herzegovina
- ☐ Bulgaria
- ☐ Croatia
- ☐ Cyprus
- ☐ Czechia
- ☐ Denmark
- ☐ Estonia
- ☐ Finland
- ☐ France
- ☐ Georgia
- ☐ Germany
- ☐ Greece
- ☐ Hungary
- ☐ Iceland
- ☐ Ireland
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Latvia
- ☐ Liechtenstein
- ☐ Lithuania
- ☐ Luxembourg
- ☐ Malta
- ☐ Moldova
- ☐ Monaco
- ☐ Montenegro
- ☐ Netherlands
- ☐ North Macedonia
- ☐ Norway
- ☐ Poland
- ☐ Portugal
- ☐ Romania
- ☐ San Marino
- ☐ Serbia

- ☐ Slovakia
- ☐ Slovenia
- ☐ Spain
- ☐ Sweden
- ☐ Switzerland
- ☐ Türkiye
- ☐ Ukraine
- ☐ United Kingdom

Section B: Opinion Statements

On the next few pages, you will be presented with a series of statements.

For each of the statements, indicate whether you agree, disagree, feel neutral, or don't know/have no opinion.

If you tick agree/disagree/neutral, you will have the option to add text to elaborate on your response.

If you tick don't know / no opinion, you will be taken to the next statement.

There will be eleven statements, followed by three open questions.

5. The Campaign addresses urgent safety priorities for the safety of journalists. *  Dropdown

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Agree *Skip to question 6*
- ☐ Disagree *Skip to question 6*
- ☐ Neutral *Skip to question 6*
- ☐ Don't know / no opinion *Skip to question 7*

6. Please elaborate on your answer to the statement in the previous question (the Campaign addresses urgent safety priorities for the safety of journalists). If your work spans multiple countries and your answer applies only to some of them or varies between them, please make that clear in your response.

7. Through the campaign, the Council of Europe Campaign has added unique value to existing initiatives for the safety of journalists. *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Agree Skip to question 8
- ☐ Disagree Skip to question 8
- ☐ Neutral Skip to question 8
- ☐ Don't know / no opinion Skip to question 9

8. Please elaborate on your answer to the statement in the previous question (through the campaign, the Council of Europe Campaign has added unique value to existing initiatives for the safety of journalists). If your work spans multiple countries and your answer applies only to some of them or varies between them, please make that clear in your response.

9. An effective Action Plan for the safety of journalists or similar plan has been adopted in the country/countries in which I work. *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Agree Skip to question 10
- ☐ Disagree Skip to question 10
- ☐ Neutral Skip to question 10
- ☐ Don't know / no opinion Skip to question 11

10. Please elaborate on your answer to the statement in the previous question (an effective Action Plan for the safety of journalists or similar plan has been adopted in the country/countries in which I work). If your work spans multiple countries and your answer applies only to some of them or varies between them, please make that clear in your response.

11. A National Committee for the safety of journalists or similar committee or working group comprising various stakeholders has been established or exists in the country/countries in which I work. *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Agree Skip to question 12
- ☐ Disagree Skip to question 12
- ☐ Neutral Skip to question 12
- ☐ Don't know / no opinion Skip to question 13

12. Please elaborate on your answer to the statement in the previous question (a National Committee for the safety of journalists or similar committee or working group comprising various stakeholders has been established or exists in the country/countries in which I work). If your work spans multiple countries and your answer applies only to some of them or varies between them, please make that clear in your response.

13. In the last two years, the national legal and regulatory environment for the safety of journalists has improved, either through the adoption of new laws or amendments to existing laws. *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Agree Skip to question 14
- ☐ Disagree Skip to question 14
- ☐ Neutral Skip to question 14
- ☐ Don't know / no opinion Skip to question 15

14. Please elaborate on your answer to the statement in the previous question (in the last two years, the national legal and regulatory environment for the safety of journalists has improved, either through the adoption of new laws or amendments to existing laws). If your work spans multiple countries and your answer applies only to some of them or varies between them, please make that clear in your response.

15. The enforcement of laws that protect the safety of journalists has improved, for example through more effective investigation and prosecution of offences against them. *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Agree Skip to question 16
- ☐ Disagree Skip to question 16
- ☐ Neutral Skip to question 16
- ☐ Don't know / no opinion Skip to question 17

16. Please elaborate on your answer to the statement in the previous question (the enforcement of laws that protect the safety of journalists has improved, for example through more effective investigation and prosecution of offences against them). If your work spans multiple countries and your answer applies only to some of them or varies between them, please make that clear in your response.

17. The achievements of the Campaign are sustainable. *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Agree Skip to question 18
- ☐ Disagree Skip to question 18
- ☐ Neutral Skip to question 18
- ☐ Don't know / no opinion Skip to question 19

18. Please elaborate on your answer to the statement in the previous question (the achievements of the Campaign are sustainable). If your work spans multiple countries and your answer applies only to some of them or varies between them, please make that clear in your response.

19. The Campaign has effectively addressed, or is effectively addressing, the risks *
faced by women journalists

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Agree *Skip to question 20*
- ☐ Disagree *Skip to question 20*
- ☐ Neutral *Skip to question 20*
- ☐ Don't know / no opinion *Skip to question 21*

20. Please elaborate on your answer to the statement in the previous question (the Campaign has effectively addressed, or is effectively addressing, the risks faced by women journalists). If your work spans multiple countries and your answer applies only to some of them or varies between them, please make that clear in your response.

21. Since the start of the Campaign, dialogue between journalists, media, and civil society stakeholders and stakeholders from law enforcement, the judiciary, and public officials has improved. *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Agree Skip to question 22
- ☐ Disagree Skip to question 22
- ☐ Neutral Skip to question 22
- ☐ Don't know / no opinion Skip to question 23

22. Please elaborate on your answer to the statement in the previous question (since the start of the Campaign, dialogue between journalists, media, and civil society stakeholders and stakeholders from law enforcement, the judiciary, and public officials has improved). If your work spans multiple countries and your answer applies only to some of them or varies between them, please make that clear in your response.

23. The Campaign has raised significant awareness among society of the importance of protecting the safety of journalists. *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Agree Skip to question 24
- ☐ Disagree Skip to question 24
- ☐ Neutral Skip to question 24
- ☐ Don't know / no opinion Skip to question 25

24. Please elaborate on your answer to the statement in the previous question (the Campaign has raised significant awareness among society of the importance of protecting the safety of journalists). If your work spans multiple countries and your answer applies only to some of them or varies between them, please make that clear in your response.

Please provide succinct answers to the following questions:

25. Since the start of the Campaign in 2023, what is the most significant change you have observed in terms of the safety of journalists? If your work spans multiple countries and your answer applies only to some of them or varies between them, please make that clear in your response.

26. What barriers do you believe remain to the protection of the safety of journalists, and what would be the role of the Campaign in addressing these? If your work spans multiple countries and your answer applies only to some of them or varies between them, please make that clear in your response.

27. What activities, or what type of activities, do you believe have been most impactful and why? If your work spans multiple countries and your answer applies only to some of them or varies between them, please make that clear in your response.

Consent:

28. If we quote your response in the evaluation report or related materials, how would you prefer it to be attributed?

Check all that apply.

- ☐ You may quote me with my name and affiliation (e.g. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, stated...)
- ☐ You may quote me with my affiliation only (e.g. A representative from the United Nations stated...)
- ☐ You may quote me only by stakeholder group (e.g. An INGO stakeholder stated...)
- ☐ Please do not quote me directly

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