Killings of Journalists Worldwide:

The Full Cost of a Free Press.

An Investigation of the Period 2000-2016

Series: Democracy Under Pressure

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Executive Summary

> ⟳ **Why does it matter to know more about the numbers of killed journalists?**

Until recently, professionals, the media and civil society but also the international community and states have approached journalism under an image of a clear set of expectations as to how society and the political system ought to respect the act of holding power to account, and also as to the conditions under which journalists work. Until now, it has been generally accepted that *some* risks are inherently associated with doing a highly sensitive profession, one that seeks to stand between power and society. These risks are associated with the coverage of armed conflict as a matter of "collateral damage" and unintended effects. Our assumptions have been based on the understanding that the extermination of human beings and the silencing of voices in this utmost drastic manner, a killing, were the *exceptions* rather than the rule, in the quest of society to achieve more equality, justice, democracy and prosperity for the many.

These assumptions may have not been met by reality in their totality, some would argue, but they were based on clear expectations regarding standards of any society based on the rule of law and a form of political culture that sees journalism as inherent to its democratic functioning. Killing journalists for pursuing the truth and for doing what society expects them to do has never been considered a "normality" of the job. Available data on killed journalists from international organisations show that not only this is not the case, but also that there is a steady increase in killings.

Our study takes these findings further and argues that, indeed, not only is the practice of killing "normalised", but it is used as a strategic tool in shaping geopolitical maps. *Impunity* and *Information* are here the keywords. Impunity remains the core most crucial issue to tackle. Importantly, the information on which states, international organisations and the civil society base their work is hard to generate and remains incomplete, as long as the methods, collaborations and internal and international policies of monitoring remain the same. We need better, more precise, more comprehensive information about the killings of journalists. This is not a task, we feel, any organisation or State can achieve alone.

This meta-analysis shows clearly that even the worst scenarios and worst numbers available representing the extermination of critical speech and investigative journalism are *even worse*, and that we must begin to entertain the idea that we see only the tip of the iceberg.

➲ The aim of this report is twofold:

First, it aims to support international actors active in the field of protecting journalists by providing a meta-analytic tool to enrich existing and complete databases with the comprehensive number of cases of killed journalists across the world.

The second aim is to provide insights into the methodological differences, strengths and challenges of and for the international community of actors concerned with the rate, trend, nature and impact of independent journalism when under pressure.

We do not see this instrument as a replacement of those currently in use, but as a comprehensively constructed instrument that can be utilised and supported by all actors, while providing a specific methodological foundation complementing instead of antagonising existing models.

The study was conducted by researchers at the University of Vienna, under the guidance of the Media Governance and Industries Research Lab in the course of 2016. It contains all names of killed journalists as double referenced in authoritative databases and organised according to function. The report aims to reconcile methodological differences and gaps across the board.

Key Findings

⮑ **2294 journalists were killed in the period 2000-2016 worldwide. The study found that the number of killed journalists, even when accounting for definitional conflicts, far exceeds the most cited numbers currently in public debate.**

Despite international efforts to monitor and record the circumstances of death, **there are significant gaps in information** for which the international community has not yet compensated. Certainly, the role of national governments and the State are here paramount in actively protecting journalists, ending impunity, and providing transparency in terms of information surrounding the killings.

There are significant gaps in the information the international community holds with regards the media for which journalists have worked, the stories they have covered and their employment status. Although there is some evidence about the trends of killings of journalists, there is little information about the conditions under which they moved into assignments.

For 33 journalists we have no information on gender; 161 of all journalists were women. For 20 per cent of the cases no information could be found about journalists' citizenship and relation to location of reporting and death. 72 per cent or 1647 were local journalists and eight per cent correspondents i.e. died abroad. We have no information about the job position for three per cent of cases and no information about the type of media journalists worked for, for almost a quarter of the cases.

Information about these demographic categories can reveal evidence for changing trends or continuities, as to whether for example the presence of major global television broadcaster might inadvertently provide more safety or whether there are cases where in terrorist assaults, in particular, this might contribute to making journalists even more vulnerable if publicity is sought after by such groups. Information also can reveal gender differences, if any, as well as the role of geopolitical conditions determining at least employment protection.

Recorded *suicides* constitute below one per cent of all cases. Information on suicides is consistently missing, is incomplete or uncertain particularly as to whether the recorded number corresponds to the reality of journalism. It is estimated that suicides, due to their social stigma,

as well as methodological uncertainties as to whether they are to be attributed to practicing journalism, are severely under-reported.

The role of the press itself and the international community in bringing to the light the dangers and violations against human rights is crucial.

1. Introduction

It is hard to imagine democracy and freedom without freedom of expression and a free press. The right to information is one of the fundamental human rights, protected by the international community and a universal consensus as one of the values crucial to the well-being of people around the world. The role of journalism in providing information about issues of common interest cannot be overestimated. Indeed, the value of information and access to diverse sources and views is not an abstract concept or an abstract ideal of democracy. In concrete ways, citizens explore sources of information and content and engage themselves in the production of such content, bringing through witness accounts, citizen journalism and advocacy journalism, broadly what became known as user-generated-content, accounts of events to complement or even counteract established media practices.

Journalism is undergoing important structural and cultural changes. Not only is information generated by non-traditional or non-professional actors in journalistic capacities, but also the very conditions of work for traditional journalists have changed. Precarity and short-term contracts are forcing many journalists to work for multiple media, with substandard social security, protection on the job and career progression. The technological transformation of the press and the media has added another layer of complexity, whereby the costs in the exploitation of technological possibilities are born by journalists, who fulfil functions of reporters, camera crew, web editors at the same time. These pressures shape the working environment for young journalists, who now become an increasingly large part of free lance, self-financed correspondents, especially in conflict zones, as a way to cover 'real' stories and to prove their ability for serious journalism (Council of Europe 2015a). What this means, therefore, is that journalists, are called to pursue reporting under suboptimal conditions of safety, support, remuneration, resources, training, and even experience.

On the contrary, it is the existence of an enabling environment as a point of departure and a basis for journalists that is necessary, in order to enter the field from where they are tasked to report, be it in corruption, armed conflict or human rights fields. An enabling environment involves freedom from persecution and punishment for reporting; security of person and security of sources; material conditions that enable journalists to pursue a story, such as legal protection and stable employment. These conditions, however, remain elusive and unfulfilled

for many in the profession, especially journalists who aim to cover conflict zones and investigate corruption. In particular, the safety of journalists has become a major concern among professionals, civil society and international organisations, in recent years.

The ambition to identify factors, that would mean highest danger for journalists and to create on this basis a 'profile' of the journalists at risk (Sarikakis 2017) and our struggle in doing so was the starting points of this project. We observe the increasing tendency of journalists' deaths not only as a consequence of their presence in conflict zones, but as being targets of violence also in areas without an armed conflict. Across the world, journalists are confronted with a broad array of threats on a daily basis. Women in journalism experience greater risks than their male colleagues. They are more likely to be affected by sexual abuse, violence, assaults or online threats (Parmar, 2015: 42). That is the reason why the UN Human Rights Council is urging a gender-sensitive approach by States placing a particularly strong focus on female media workers.

There is evidence for the increasing number of violence against journalists and other writers such as bloggers and citizen journalists, the attacks against them are on the one hand intensifying in brutality but at the same time due to modern technologies gather more quickly international attention. In the light of the public right to know about the circumstances of the journalistic work more and more cases are being investigated and monitored by international organisations. This task is challenging as we see in attempts of the organisations to provide measurable evidence about the killings and assaults on journalism as an indicator for the condition of the freedom of speech and democracy. Such reports have value as historical records documenting the weakening of journalism profession and not at last advocate for the victims.

In this report we present a meta-analysis of existing databases monitoring the condition of journalists' safety around the world. The study is an attempt to gather the available data from different sources and systematise them in order to provide information about the total cost of human life in the process of news production and journalistic practice.

2. Legal framework

The need to enhance journalistic safety to strengthen media freedom, freedom of expression and democracy has been recognised by a growing number of organisations, including the Committee to Protect Journalists, Reporters without Borders, the Association of European Journalists, the International Federation of Journalists, Article 19. The Council of Europe considers violence against journalists to mean violence against freedom of expression, and as such against basic human rights (Parmar, 2015: 50).

In accordance with international human rights law, States are obliged - by virtue of their duty to protect the right to life and to freedom of expression - to protect media workers from any form of threats by state or non-state actors, particularly when their situation has been declared as an evident risk (UN Human Rights Committee 2004)[1]. The Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion exercises pressure on States in which journalists are systematically killed to undertake measures that guarantee their safety (Parmar, 2015a: 63). Moreover, States are encouraged to gather data, to analyse it and to compile statistics that might be helpful in recognising developments and establishing future action plans (Parmar, 2015: 69). The extent of threats and attacks on journalists has alarmed the international community, so that the Platform for the protection of journalism and safety of journalists, established by the Council of Europe and in collaboration with civil society partners the Reporters Without Borders, the International Federation of journalists, the European Federation of journalists, the Association of European Journalists, Article 19, the Committee to Protect Journalists, Index on Censorship issues alerts and monitors assaults against journalists requiring a speedy and immediate response from Member States on their actions to investigate crimes (https://www.coe.int/en/web/media-freedom/the-platform). This is the most recent and implementation of a direct measure to provide support for the strengthening of protection of journalists.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in 1997, passed Resolution 29 "Condemnation of violence against journalists", which underscored that that "the assassination of journalists goes beyond depriving people of their lives as it involves a curtailment of freedom of expression, with all that this implies as a limitation on the freedoms

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[1] As cited by Council of Europe (2015)

and rights of society as a whole" (UNESCO, 2007). The 2014 UNHRC Resolution was preceded by the 2012 "Safety of journalists" (International Press Institute, 2012). That resolution expressed "concern that violations of the right to freedom of opinion and expression continue to occur, including increased attacks against, and killings of, journalists and media workers", and stressed "the need to ensure greater protection for all media professionals and for journalistic sources". The resolution condemned "in the strongest term all attacks and violence against journalists, such as torture, extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and arbitrary detention, as well as intimidation and harassment" and expressed "concern that there is a growing threat to the safety of journalists posed by non-state actors, including terrorist groups and criminal organizations". It called on "all parties to armed conflict to respect their obligations under international human rights law and international humanitarian law, including their obligations under the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and, where applicable, the Additional Protocols thereto of 8 June 1977, the provisions of which extend protection to journalists in situations of armed conflict, and to allow, within the framework of applicable rules and procedures, media access and coverage, as appropriate, in situations of international and non-international armed conflict". The resolution underscored that attacks against journalists often occur with impunity, and called upon States "to ensure accountability through the conduct of impartial, speedy and effective investigations into such acts falling within their jurisdiction, and to bring to justice those responsible, as well as to ensure that victims have access to appropriate remedies". It also called upon States to "promote a safe and enabling environment for journalists to perform their work independently and without undue interference including through (i) legislative measures, (ii) awareness-raising among the judiciary, law enforcement officers and military personnel as well as journalists and civil society regarding international human rights and humanitarian law obligations and commitments relating to the safety of journalists, (iii) monitoring and reporting of attacks against journalists (iv) publicly condemning, as well as, (v) dedicating necessary resources to investigate and prosecute such attacks".

The United Nations has also been active on the topic of the protection of journalists' safety in recent years. The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1738 in 2006, condemning attacks against journalists in conflict situations. The text recalled war correspondents' right to the status of prisoners of war under the Third Geneva Convention, and underscored "that journalists, media professionals and associated personnel engaged in dangerous professional missions in areas of armed conflict shall be considered civilians, to be respected and protected as such".

(United Nations, 2006). In May 2015, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2222 under the agenda item "protection of civilians in armed conflict", expressing deep concern at the growing threat to journalists and associated media personnel, including killings, kidnapping and hostage-taking by terrorist groups (United Nations, 2015). The resolution also underscored the fact that journalists and associated professionals are civilians — providing they do not behave in a way that adversely affects that status — and emphasized that all international human rights law protecting civilians during conflict applies also to them, as well as the Additional Protocol of the Geneva Conventions. The UN Security Council, echoing the Council of Europe, noted that it is the primary responsibility of States to protect journalists and safeguard the right of free expression "online as well as offline" (United Nations, 2015).

In the European context, the Council of Europe has demonstrated increasing interest in the protection and safety of journalists. A number of relevant declarations, resolutions, and recommendations have been passed accompanied by campaigns to increase awareness. In 2011, the Parliamentary Assembly adopted a Resolution on the state of media freedom in Europe highlighting the obligation of States to protect journalists against attacks on their lives and freedom of expression, as well as a recommendation on the protection of journalistic sources (Council of Europe Committee of Ministers 2011). In November 2013 the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Media and Information Society adopted a Resolution on the safety of journalists. In April 2014 the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted a declaration on "The protection of journalism and the safety of journalists and other media actors" (Council of Europe Committee of Ministers 2013). Later, in April 2015, the Council of Europe launched the online Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists. The Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly adopted, in January 2015, Resolution 2035 (2015) on the "Protection of the safety of journalists and of media freedom in Europe" (Council of Europe, 2015b), in the aftermath of the attack on French magazine *Charlie Hebdo*. The resolution reiterated the importance of media freedom for democracy, noting, "any attack on the media and journalists is an attack on a democratic society". The Resolution also noted that the Parliamentary Assembly was "deeply concerned about the deterioration of the safety of journalists and media freedom in Europe", urging member States to intensify efforts for "the protection of the life, liberty and protection of those working for and with the media".

Another important actor on a European level is The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) that monitors media development in its 57 participating States for violations of free expression. This includes monitoring and demanding accountability for murders, attacks and harassment of journalists and prosecution of journalists and members of the media for their professional activities; reviewing legislation that can affect free expression and legislation regulating the media. The OSCE reaffirms "Joint declaration on freedom of expression and countering violent extremism" every year since 1999. The joint declarations and recommendations strongly encourage governments of OSCE participating States to treat violence against journalists as a direct attack on freedom of expression.

3. Methodology and Dataset

Several organisations, such as Committee for the Protection of Journalists; International Federation of Journalists; International News Safety Institute; International Press Institute; Pen International; Reporters sans Frontiers; UNESCO and World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers WAN-INFRA collect and publish data on killed journalists worldwide. We examined *all data* listed in the databases and reports from 2000 to 2016 as they were made available online. Additionally we contacted the organisations and asked for the data in Excel format that would enable us editing and sorting out the lists. Unfortunately the resonance to our request was very limited or the provided material did not meet our expectations and we worked with the files accessible online.

The starting point of the research was the observation that the names listed in the existing databases are not identical. We ran a pilot study and compared the cases reported by two major organisations CPJ and IFJ for the period of three years from 2013 to 2015. We decided to choose those organisations due to the comprehensiveness of their records, as well as the strict definition of journalism, which they apply. Moreover, other organisations often use the data by CPJ and IFJ as points of reference. As the comparison of cases for the examined period shows (table 1) between 55 % and 81 % of the records overlap, it means the records differ not only in numbers but also in persons recorded. We included all causes of deaths as some names occurred in both databases, in different categories though, especially relevant for accidents, diseases and natural disasters related deaths.

Year	Killed journalists and media workers **IFJ**	Killed journalists and media workers **CPJ**	Number overlapping cases	Number of names covered **only by IFJ**	Number of names covered **only by CPJ**	Total number (common names + only IFJ+ only CPJ)
2013	120	101	**74**	46	27	132
2014	135	92	**75**	60	17	152
2015	115	101	**65**	50	36	151

Table 1: Results of the pilot study, comparison of CPJ and IFJ records between 2013-2015

We identified three main methodological differences that lead to different reported numbers of killed journalists.

 ⮡ **Who is included?**

Questions regarding classification of media professions, inclusion of media workers, who is considered a journalist, whether online journalists such as bloggers or citizen journalists should be included. Table 2 provides a comparison among organisations accredited and unaccredited journalists, freelancers, photographers, camera operators, publishers, media owners as well as chairpersons of media companies are included in all investigated reports methodologies. Yet, Bloggers are included by IPI, WAN-INFRA and International PEN whereas CPJ, IFJ and RSF cover bloggers on case-by-case basis or list them as a separate category. Professions of a supporting capacity to journalists, such as translators, drivers, 'fixers' and administrative workers are excluded from the data provided by IPI and PEN, CPJ, while RSF lists them separately. As the table below shows IFJ provides the most comprehensive categorisation available.

IFEX members' responses to the question *Who is included in the data and who is not?*

Category	CPJ	IFJ	IPI	RSF	WAN-IFRA	WiPC
Accredited journalists	√	√	√	√	√	√
Journalists who are not accredited	√	√	√	√	√	√
Freelancers	√	√	√	√	√	√
Photographers	√	√	√	√	√	√
Camera operators	√	√	√	√	√	√
Bloggers	CbC	CbC	√	LS	√	√
Publishers	√	√	√	√	√	√
Media owners	√	√	√	√	√	√
Chairpersons of media companies	√	√	√	√	√	CbC
Translators	LS	√	X	LS	X	√
Drivers	LS	√	X	LS	X	CbC
Fixers	LS	√	X	LS	X	CbC
Administrative workers	LS	√	X	LS	X	√
Others[1]	LS	√	X	CbC	X	√

√ = yes; X = no; CbC = case by case basis; LS = yes, but listed as a separate category

Table 2: Media professionals included in the databases, source IFEX report 2011 p.6

⮌ **Type of death.**

This point touches upon the circumstances surrounding the journalists' deaths and there is a consensus about the targeted deaths. Moreover, all organisations include the names of journalists who lost their lives in crossfire. The context matters: while all organisations report journalists who were on a dangerous assignment, regardless of whether targeted, some (RSF, International PEN) decided not to cover journalists on dangerous assignments who were not on duty and some (CPJ, WAN-IFRA) follow case by case design. IFJ and IPI include this category without limitations. The most disputable cause of death is an accident whether on duty or not that appears only in datasets of IFI, as a separate category, and IPI as case by case.

IFEX members' responses to the question *Do you include in your tallies the following types of incidents?*

Type of Incident	CPJ	IFJ	IPI	RSF	WAN-IFRA	WiPC
a) incidents linked to journalist's profession	√	√	√	√	√	√
b) journalists caught in the crossfire	√	√	√	√	√	X
c) journalists who are on a dangerous assignment, even if not targeted	√	√	√	√	CbC	X
d) journalists who are on a dangerous assignment, but not on duty	CbC	√	√	X	CbC	X
e) accidental death, while on duty	X	LS	CbC	X	X	X
f) accidental death, while not on duty	X	LS	CbC	X	X	X

√ = yes; X = no; CbC = case by case basis; LS = yes, but listed as a separate category

Table 3: Types of accident included, source IFEX report 2011 p. 8

We propose that deaths by accident are monitored and whenever possible a description of the circumstances be provided. This allows longitudinal monitoring of causes of death, circumstances and frequency and allows us to draw conclusions and issue warnings, should patterns arise.

➲ Confirmed vs. unconfirmed causes of death

In many cases it is difficult to establish a causal link between the killings of media professionals and their jobs. Situations, such as criminal attacks or murders for personal reasons are difficult to connect with the freedom of expression issue. Organisations that include *only* confirmed cases that professional activity is the target of the killing (RSF, WAN-INFRA) argue that including data otherwise (IFJ, IPI, International PEN) can lead to bias and to a wrong perception of danger in particular places. CPJ overcomes this problem in listing the names in two separate tables 'confirmed murders' and 'unconfirmed murders'.

In Table 4 we provide an exhaustive comparison of methodologies applied by the organisations under study and the effects on data sets. For this analysis we added the UNESCO database, which was not included in the previous comparison.

Organisation	Methodology	Data description
Commitee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) www.cpj.org www.cpj.org/killed/	Strict journalistic standards, CPJ defines journalists as people who cover news or comment on public affairs through any media including in print, in photographs, on radio, on television, and online. The combination of daily reporting and statistical data forms the basis of case-driven and long-term advocacy, Categories used: Journalists Killed / Motive Confirmed, Journalists Killed / Motive Unconfirmed, Media Workers (since 2003) Terminology explained	Since 1992, includes: name, sex, date of death, country killed, media organisation, nationality, medium, job, covered topics, wheatear freelancer or not, local or foreign, source of fire, type of death, impunity for murder, whether taken captive, threatened or tortured
International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) www.ifj.org http://ifj-safety.org/en/contents/ifj-annual-reports-on-journalists-and-media-staff-killed	Based on information provided by its regional offices, member unions and other media sources. IFJ statistics include journalists and media staff - fixers, drivers, technicians, security staff and translators and our figures do include some cases that are still under investigation and where the death remains unexplained, but where colleagues, unions or press freedom groups believe that the killing was related to the journalists' work. Not included in this list are journalists who are missing and feared dead but whose bodies have not been found. Separately, the IFJ compiles a list of journalists and media staff killed on the job in automobile, air or other accidents, by natural disasters or by medical problems triggered by strenuous or dangerous work	Since 2000, annual reports, data includes name, country, position, employer, date of death
UNESCO www.unesco.org http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/freedom-of-expression/press-freedom/unesco-condemns-killing-of-journalists/	Director- General) publishes since 2008 every two years an analytical report on safety of journalists. Broad and diverse range sources. Multi- sourced research: -press reports -information from monitoring groups -direct reports -information from UNESCO field officers -information from other UN bodies Not clear if UNESCO counts the media workers together with the journalists. In the report they comment on journalists but in the detailed information about the killings some described as media workers (plus media company name).	Data is available from 1993 but analyzed and included in the reports since 2006, latest report 2014. Data includes name, nationality, date and country of death, performed profession and employer, UNESCO statement and eventually member state's response on investigation. Information on the status of judicial investigation, based on answers form the Member States, categories: no information received so far, ongoing, resolved, killed in cross-fire, others. Type of death: Shot or murdered, kidnapped and killed, killed in conflict situation, in prison but only on a aggregate level.

Organisation	Methodology	Data description
Reporter Sans Frontiers www.rsf.org http://thejournalistsmemorial.rsf.org	RSF took into account cases where the link between the occupation of the victim and the incident is either established or very likely. The figures cover the cases the organization was aware, excluding those for which the victims were deliberately kept secret, often to protect their safety. Methodology not explained (exhaustive explanations only for the press freedom index), RSF publishes annual reports with numbers of killings, statistics and selective description of cases. As database RSF publishes *The Journalists Memorial*, this online memorial lists all journalists and media assistants killed in the course of their work since the end of the Second World War	Reports available since 2002, the memorial includes cases since 1944, information published: name, sex, media outlet, type of media, country of birth, country of death, whether war zone, whether targeted, impunity (some older cases do not cover all categories). Moreover a short context inf. in category 'about', and description of the killing, category 'death', provided
International News Safety Institute (INSI) www.newssafety.org http://www.newssafety.org/casualties/2016/	INSI tracks and records all staff and freelance casualties during coverage- related activities - print, photo and video journalists as well as essential support staff such as drivers, fixers and translators. As it is a safety organisation, its casualty list includes all causes of death, whether deliberate, accidental or health-related. Covers journalists and media workers and citizen journalists but not cases under investigation	Data since 2011, cases listed by year, information includes: name, date and country of death, sex, cause of death (unknown, shot, blown up, other accident, stabbed, other non-natural), type of media (unknown, TV, print, online, radio)
International Press Institute (IPI) http://www.freemedia.at http://ipi.freemedia.at/death-watch.html	IPI includes in its "Death Watch" journalists and media staff who were deliberately targeted because of their profession - either because of their reporting or simply because they were journalists. IPI also includes journalists who were killed while on assignment. No more explanation on methodology	Since 1997, cases reported by countries, narrative texts about the killings include name, country of death and description of the case (in a non systematic way)

Organisation	Methodology	Data description
PEN International http://www.pen-international.org/ http://www.pen-international.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/CASE-LIST-January-December-2015.pdf in cooperation with the Writers in Prison Committee (WiPC)	PEN International gathers its information from a wide variety of sources. It seeks to confirm its information through two independent sources. Where its information is unconfirmed, it will either take no action, or word its outputs to reflect the fact that the information is as yet incomplete. Sources include press reports, reports from individuals in the region in question, reports from other human rights groups, PEN members themselves, embassy officials, academics, prisoners' families, lawyers and friends, and exile groups. It also partners with other international NGOs.	First report for 2014 including also cases since 2007. Descriptive non- systematic data, i.e. cases listed for the year 2015 are not necessarily cased of people killed in 2015 but could they appear i.e. when the case could be solved in 2015 or there have been some new information. For this reason many cases could be listed more than in one year. **Detailed data using many categories such as:** killed, killed: motive unknown, killed: impunity, executed, death in custody, enforced disappearance, abducted, reported missing, imprisoned-main case, imprisoned- investigation, detained- main case, detained- investigation, on trial. Includes also information about death threats.
World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-INFRA) http://www.wan-ifra.org/ http://www.wan-ifra.org/articles/2015/01/21/71-journalists-killed-in-2015	WAN-IFRA highlights the number of journalists who have been confirmed as killed in the line of duty or targeted because of their work. Methodology, terminology and cases based on CPJ .	Since 1998, data includes name, media outlet, date of death, **exact place of death**: city/region, county. For details reference to the CPJ homepage.

Table 4: Methodology comparison, own production

Yet, the different approaches[2] could **prevent** these organisations from uniting forces to lobby for better investigation on cases or from common statements on journalists' deaths. Our analysis shows that the organizations exchange information but do not have a systematic way of working together. One showcase example is the fact that the organisations are often not familiar with methodologies of other organisations that publish data on the same issue of killed journalists, which rises potential for conflicts and misperceptions.

Our approach

We have examined each entry in each database and report from 2000 to 2016 manually, first, across databases to identify overlaps and misses. In the second step, in cases of similar but not identical names or other details, we conducted extensive searches in online sources to locate press coverage or other supporting material to confirm identities. It was not simply adding names of available databases, which would be methodologically questionable. The resulting database, hence, contains further details explaining circumstances of death or stating contradictions.

In the following section we present the categories of the new database.

Name: The full name of the person. In case of differences in spelling, clarification through additional online sources.

Alias: In case the person was known under any other name, than the official one.

Sex: Gender of the victim: male, female or transgender, however transgender category did not match any case, and was kept for further entries.

Age: Information about the age of the targeted person.

Date of Death: exact date when the person died. In case of unknown date of death the day when the body was found inserted, especially relevant for kidnapped victims.

Type of Death: divided in subcategories:

a) Assassination: shot/gunned down *(intentional e.g. by a sniper or other gunmen)*, stabbed/slit *(i.e. stabbed with a knife, slit open with a machete),* executed/death sentence *(executed by*

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[2] In the IFEX project respondents were not concerned about the significant differences in reported numbers, they see this 'as a natural consequence of the different member' methodologies and missions' (2011 p.5). They suggested instead to focus more on the **similarities** among the findings and their trends studies

political groups, government forces etc.), airstrike, bombed *(i.e. suicide bombing, mortar shell, grenade etc.),* beaten to death/tortured, natural death as result of an attack *(e.g. died of heart attack - shot prior to that),* other

b) Accident: crossfire *(not intentional, i.e. during a confrontation between police and a criminal; wounded by shrapnel);* disease *(i.e. heart attack, tuberculosis, etc.),* natural disaster *(earthquake, volcanic eruption etc.),* road accident, plane/helicopter crash *(inserted as a category due to the surprisingly high number of this kind of accident)*, other

c) Suicide: plausible, implausible (*not clear what happened, murder not excluded)*

Citizenship of the killed person.

Country of death: Describes in which country the person was killed.

Job position: Describes the profession of the victim in three big categories, only one category per person. Due to the transformation in what is considered today journalism and who is asserted as journalist, we applied a broader, yet well defined, set of definitional criteria to include those immediately and directly involved in the making of a news story in the field.

a. *Journalist*: a person who collects, writes, or distributes news or other current information e.g. reporter, publisher, producer, editor, columnist

b. *Camera operator/photographer*: is the chief over the camera crews working on a film, television production or other live action piece and is only responsible for making artistic and technical decisions related to the image.

c. *Other media worker*: every other person supporting the gathering of information etc. in the media field. E.g. drivers, translators, technician, CEO, advertising & marketing person and any other office worker.

In case of multiple jobs we proceeded as follows:

- ➲ if a person is a journalist and media worker/cameraman, we chose "journalist" as the professional designation.
- ➲ If s/he was a media worker and a cameraman (or media worker and other media worker), we chose media worker as the profession.

Media employer: Provides the name of the victim's employer, i.e. CNN, Al Jazeera.

Type of media: Describes kind of media the person worked for: TV/Video / Internet (blog, social media, etc.)/ Radio / Print /Combination in case the person worked for more than one type.

Topics covered: Describes on which main topic the victim was working until his/her death:

a. *Business*: covers business and economy issues as well as corruption in business

b. *Politics & corruption*: covers political issues and corruption and crime in politics

c. *Religion*: covers religious matters and conflicts

d. *Culture*: covers human rights, personality issues, private life, matters of equality (i.e. gender, race), sexual identity.

e. *War*: reports on wars and conflicts

f. *Crime*: crime issues in general, not including crime in politics

g. *Sports*: reports on sports and sport events

h. *Various topics*: the person worked on many topics, the main one couldn't be identified

Freelancer: Describes whether the person was a freelancer or not, yes/no question, we define a freelancer as self-employed journalist[3] who might be associated with traditional media organisations but has no traditional employment as journalist.

Sources of information for death reports: Provides information in which databases the name was listed, every organisation, which mentioned the case, was marked with an "X".

Further sources: Online sources of further information (e.g. a newspaper article)

Notes and uncertainties In case of contradictorily information, i.e. the spelling of names this column provides information about the contradictions, we needed to note this somewhere. In case the information differed between the databases, the most common information included in the previous columns.

⊃ **Challenges**

There have been several challenges we faced in the process of creating the database. Firstly, the transcription of names into Latin alphabet, in most of the cases from Arabic, turned to be *inconsistent* between the databases and different sources. In consequence, the researchers turned to multiple sources in order to ensure that two similarly spelled, but not identical, names are in reality two different persons and not simply a transcription mistake.

Secondly, the not unusual practice of journalist and writers to publish under a pseudonym or nickname made the identification of the person in case of death complicated. We uncovered cases, when the same person was listed in one database under the real name and in another

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[3] 'pieceworkers who are paid by the story'(Massey/ Elmore 2011, p. 672)

one under the alias. We cannot exclude that our database contains such cases, however, this is rather unlikely, due to exact research.

Finally, a significant difficulty we were confronted with was the lack of information on the age of the killed person. As in other cases here we included additional sources, yet for one third of the cases this detail was not disclosed.

4. Results

➲ Overview

The final database, available on our website, contains 2294 cases of deaths of journalists and media workers during the period of 2000 – 2016. 71 % (1.632 cases) of the total cases were recorded as journalists, 16 % (356 cases) as camera operators or photographers, 10 % (238 cases) as other media workers and only for 3 % (68 cases) no information on the job position could be found (Image 1).
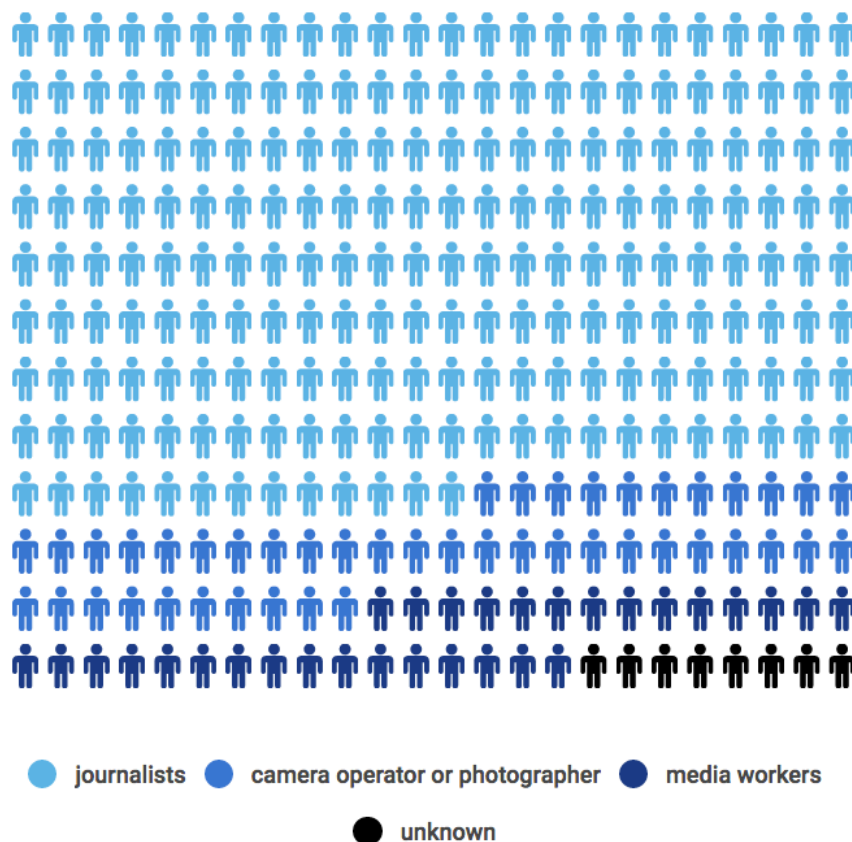

Image 1. Distribution of deaths and positions.

The following graph (Image 2) shows the development of the deaths from 2000 to 2016 per year. The increase of recorded cases per year does not only show an increase of cases of killings worldwide but also the increasing attention by the international community to monitor press freedom and publish cases of killed journalists and media professionals. As some of the

databases have only started collecting data after 2011 (e.g. PEN and INSI) the number of cases has risen rapidly, the documentation has been improving from year to year. However, especially in war regions the number of deaths has increased. For example in 2012 the graph shows a peak that is linked to the on-going war in the Middle East (especially in Iraq and Syria).
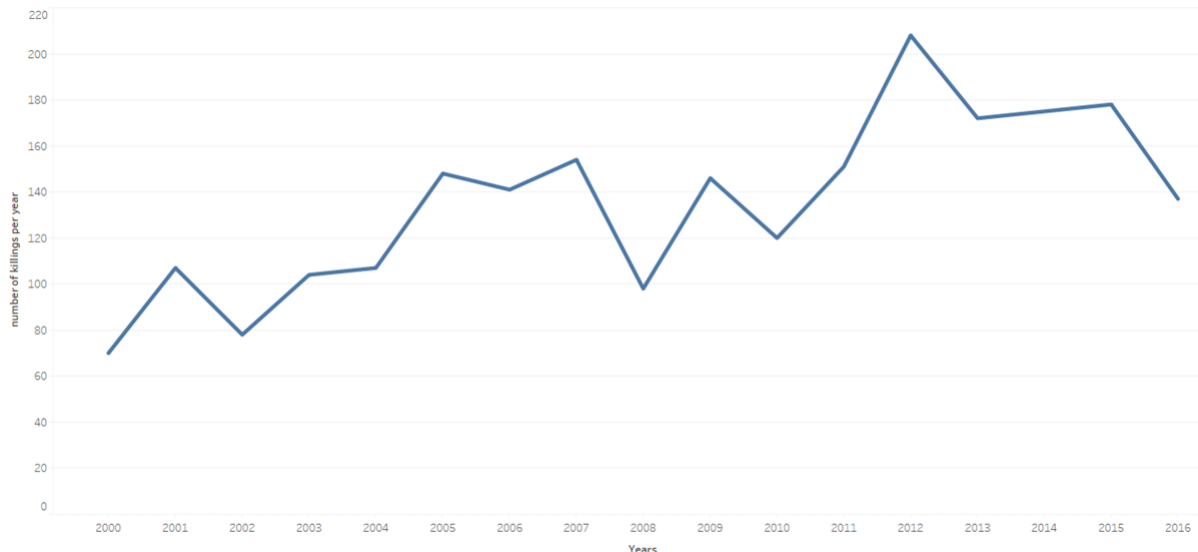

Image 2. Development: deaths per year (2000-2016). Total number: 2.294

Gender distribution and also origin of the journalists are important indicators in this database showing the cruel reality of journalism. Of all killed journalists 92% (2.100) were men, 7% (161) were women and for 1% (33) there is no data regarding the gender available. When examing the origin of the killed journalists, we found, that most of them (71,8 %) were killed in their home country – only 19,8 % were foreign journalists reporting in other countries, for 8,4 % no information was available (Image 3).
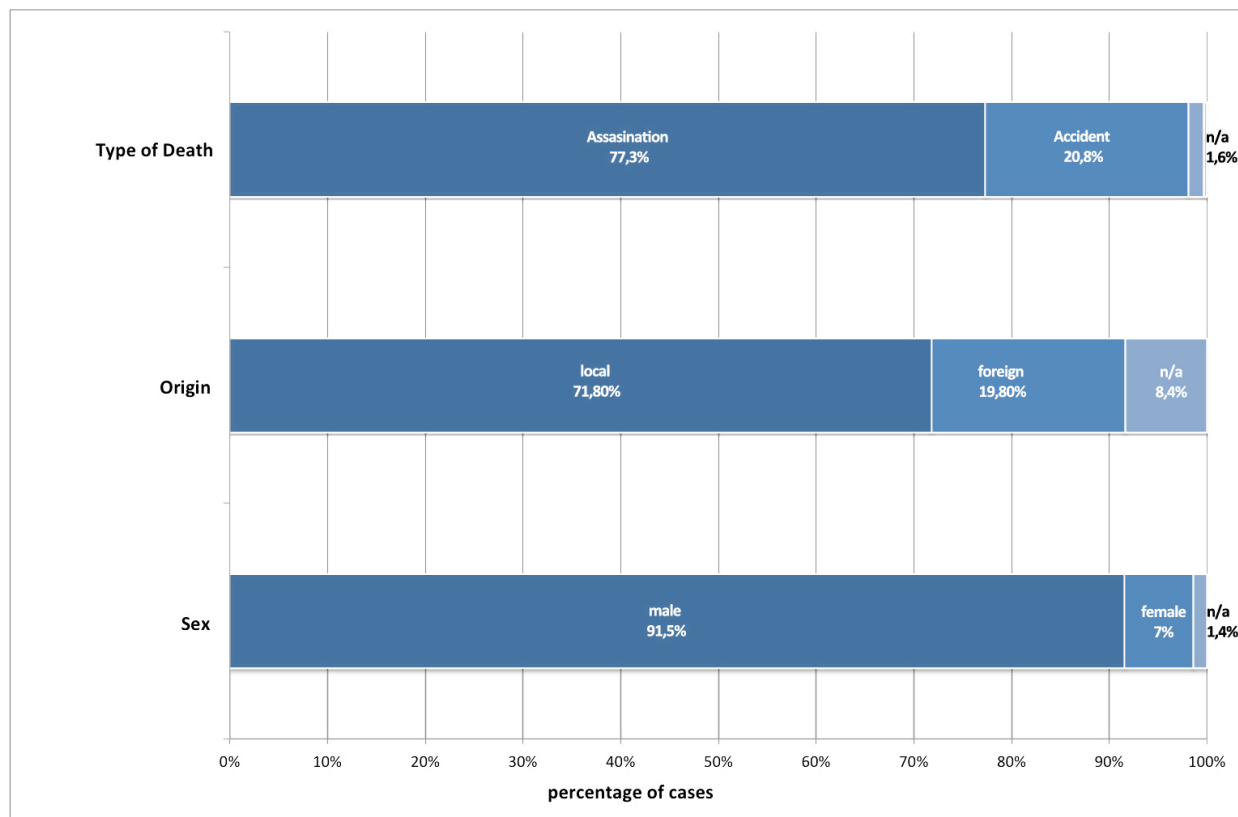
Image 3. Percentage of Type of Death, Origin and Sex. Total number: 2.294

In the database the type of death is recorded on two levels. When taking a closer look at the primary level, more than two thirds (77,3%, 1.173 cases) were assassinated, 21% (477 cases) of the deaths are recorded as accidents. It must be noted that in some cases (8,4 %) the cause of death was not clear because the official statement and the statement by witnesses differed or because no evidence was found.

Suicides were hardly listed in the databases (below 1%, 8 cases in total). This might be explained by the lack of public debate and ambivalence around the phenomenon of suicide, often suicides are reported as accidents to avoid stigmatisation. Suicide as a form of silencing (or also arguably, conditionally, as a form of speech) is difficult to monitor, research and evaluate, not least because of the social limitations in handling this issue in the public debate. However, there is no information about the causes, triggers, and conditions of suicides of journalists. This is an area that urgently requires careful and systematic research.

The second level provides a more exact explanation of the circumstances of the death: 44,8 % of the killed journalists are reported to being shot or gunned down (1.028 cases) and 10,1 % (230 cases) to being bombed. Other causes of death that are detected to occur in more than 2% of the cases are: plane/helicopter crash (6 %), road accident (4,6 %), beaten to death (4,1 %) stabbed or slit (3,4 %) and crossfire (2,7 %) (Image 4).
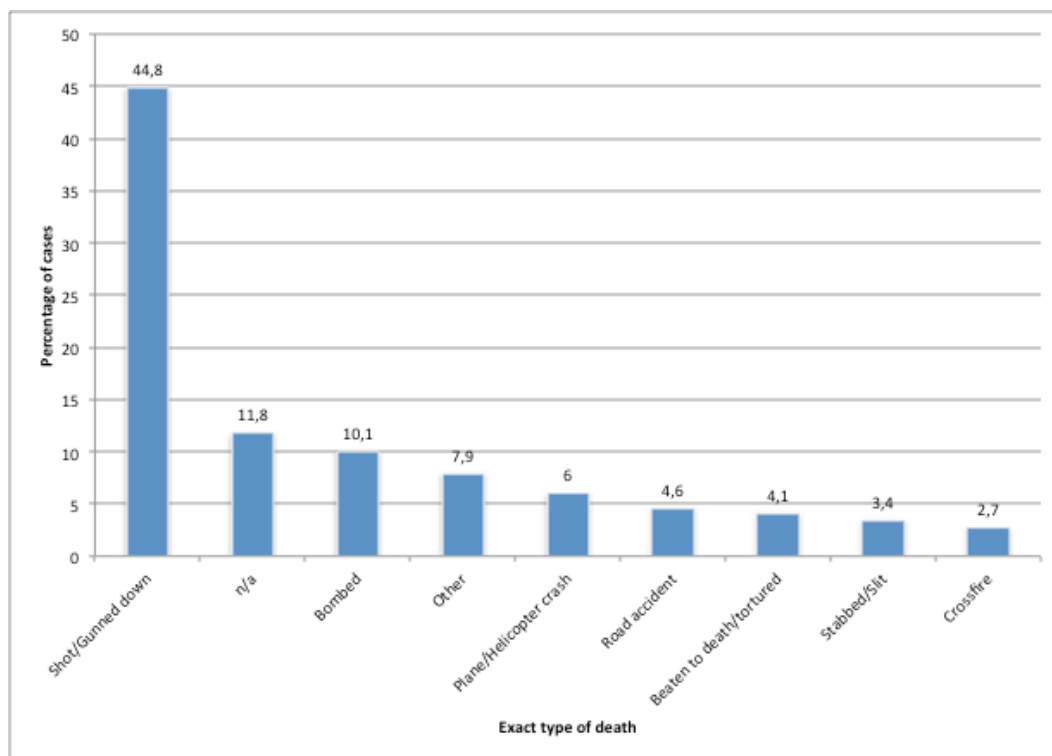

Image 4. Percentage of Exact Type of Death – excluding all cases below 2 %.

Findings:

⮑ A total of 2,294 journalists and media workers died because of their job between 2000 and 2016.

⮑ An increase in journalist deaths worldwide has been accompanied by increased attention on the part of the international community in terms of monitoring press freedom and publicising cases the deaths of journalists and media professionals.

➲ The increase in the number of deaths is particularly noticeable in conflict zones.

➲ Of the total number of journalists who died because of their job during the period researched, 92% (2,100) were men, 7% (161) were women and for 1% (33) there was no data regarding gender available.

➲ A total of 71.8% of the journalist deaths recorded occurred in the journalist's home country.

➲ More than two thirds of the journalists (77,3%; 1,173 cases) were assassinated, while 21% (477 cases) were recorded as accidents.

➲ *Suicides* were hardly listed (below 1%; 8 cases in total). Suicide as a form of silencing (or also arguably, conditionally, as a form of speech) is difficult to monitor, research and evaluate. This is an area that urgently requires careful and systematic research.

➲ **Covering dangerous topics**

In three of the original databases the topic covered by the journalist before their death has been included in the database. In the other databases this information was often additionally given in the reports.

In total the most dangerous topics to be covered were Politics (12, 9 %), War (9,8 %) and Crime (4,8 %). A total of 18,3 % of the cases cannot be specified because either the data was not available or the covered topics were varying, therefore no specification could be made (Image 4).

As approximately one third of the killed persons were media workers or camera operators, we do not know of the specific story they were covering at the time of death. The number of unknown cases is very low for Internet journalists, as their work is more accessible and does

not require physical archives that are often not open to public and can only be viewed with a special permission. [4]

Considerably more journalists and media workers reporting on the topic war and working for TV and Video (21,50 %) or Internet (21,20 %) production died during their work, than working on the same topic but for other media types (Image 5). This might indicate that those who were visibly carrying their cameras were more likely to be targets of shootings and bombings.
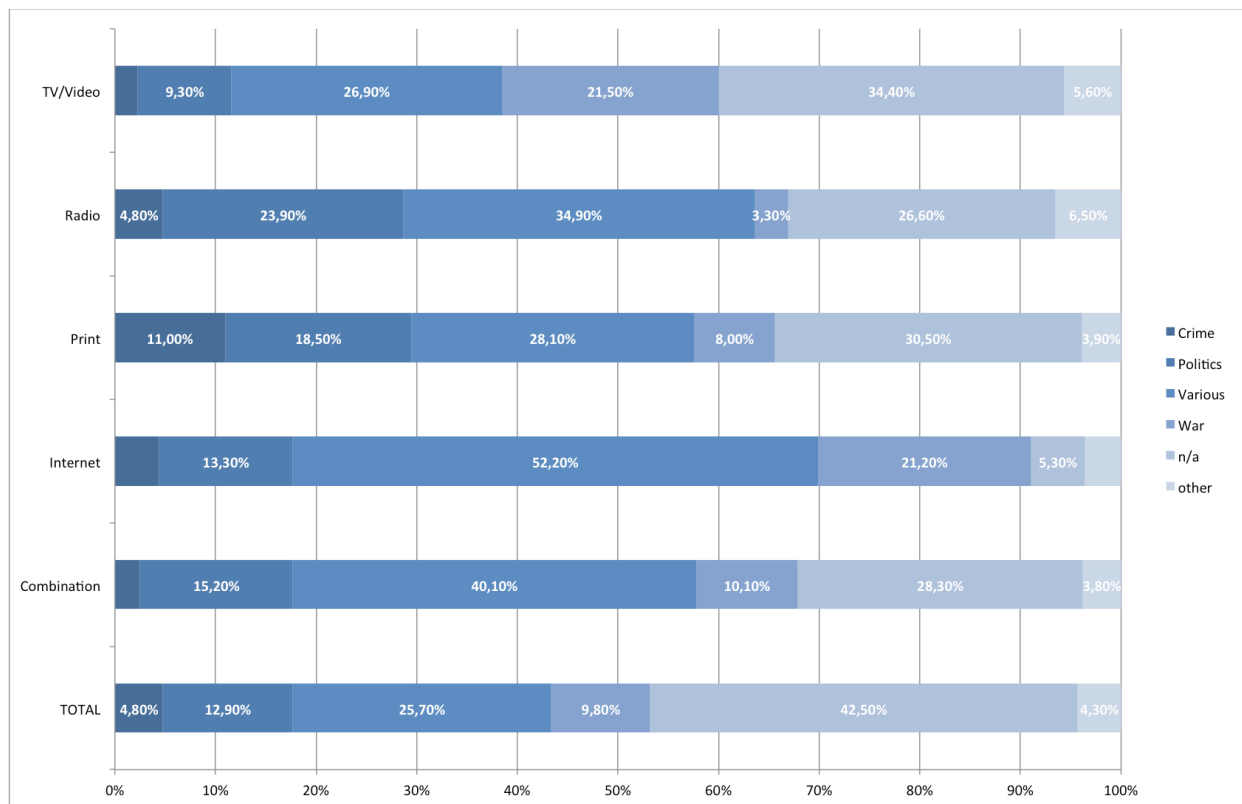
	Crime	Politics	Various	War	n/a	other
TV/Video		9,30%	26,90%	21,50%	34,40%	5,60%
Radio	4,80%	23,90%	34,90%	3,30%	26,60%	6,50%
Print	11,00%	18,50%	28,10%	8,00%	30,50%	3,90%
Internet		13,30%	52,20%		21,20%	5,30%
Combination		15,20%	40,10%	10,10%	28,30%	3,80%
TOTAL	4,80%	12,90%	25,70%	9,80%	42,50%	4,30%

Image 5. Topics covered and type of media

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[4] For reasons of visualisation in Image 4 cases, which did not specify the type of media were excluded from the columns. However, they are represented in the total amount of cases. This explains the high number of unknown (n/a) cases in the total column as 96,7 % of the cases where the media type is unknown also the topic covered is unknown.

Findings:

⮑ The most dangerous topics, in terms of recorded deaths, were politics (12, 9 %), war (9,8 %) and crime (4,8 %).

⮑ Considerably more journalists and media workers reporting on the topic of war and working for TV and video (21,50 %) or Internet (21,20 %) production died during their work, than working on the same topic but for other media types (Image 5).

⮑ **Most dangerous countries**

The worldwide deadliest country for people working in the media between 2000 and 2016 was Iraq with 344 total deaths (table 5), followed by Syria (163 cases) and the Philippines (154 cases). In the database, in total 133 countries record at least one killed journalist or media worker. In 47,4 % of the countries less than four journalists were killed.

Country	Number of Cases	Percentage
Iraq	344	15,0 %
Syria	163	7,1 %
Philippines	154	6,7 %
Pakistan	130	5,7 %
Mexico	123	5,4 %
India	100	4,4 %
Colombia	100	4,4 %
Somalia	75	3,3 %
Brazil	71	3,1 %
Russia	70	3,1 %
Afghanistan	56	2,4 %
Iran	52	2,3 %
Honduras	43	1,9 %
Bangladesh	40	1,7 %
USA	38	1,7 %

Table 5. 15 most dangerous Countries for Journalists and Media Workers

Images 6 shows all countries with at least one killed journalist or media worker are highlighted. The grey parts indicate that in the period 2000 – 2016 no journalist or media worker was killed. The shades show the amount of killings in total. The above mentioned 15 most dangerous countries can be found in dark shades of blue.
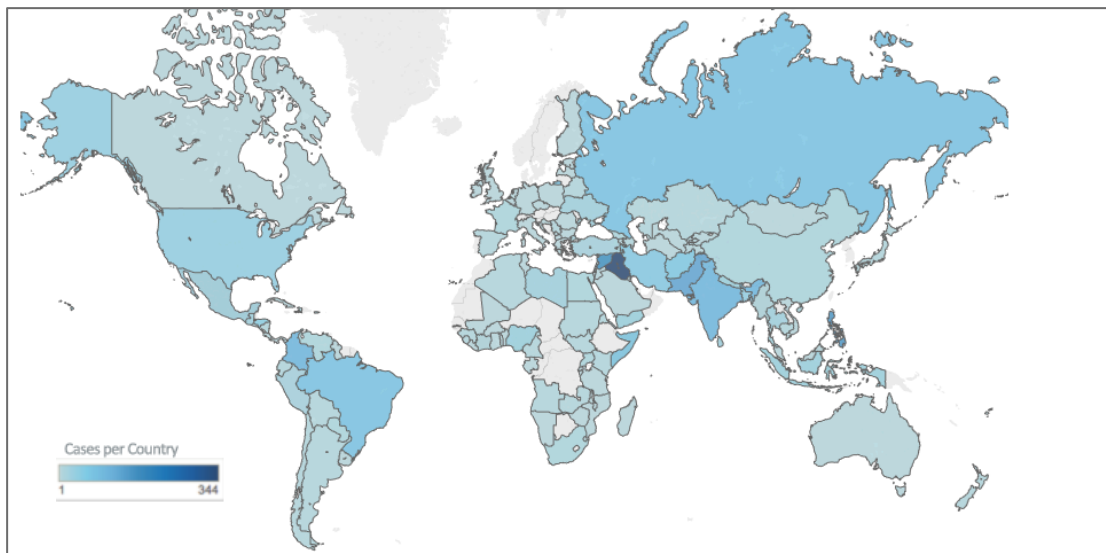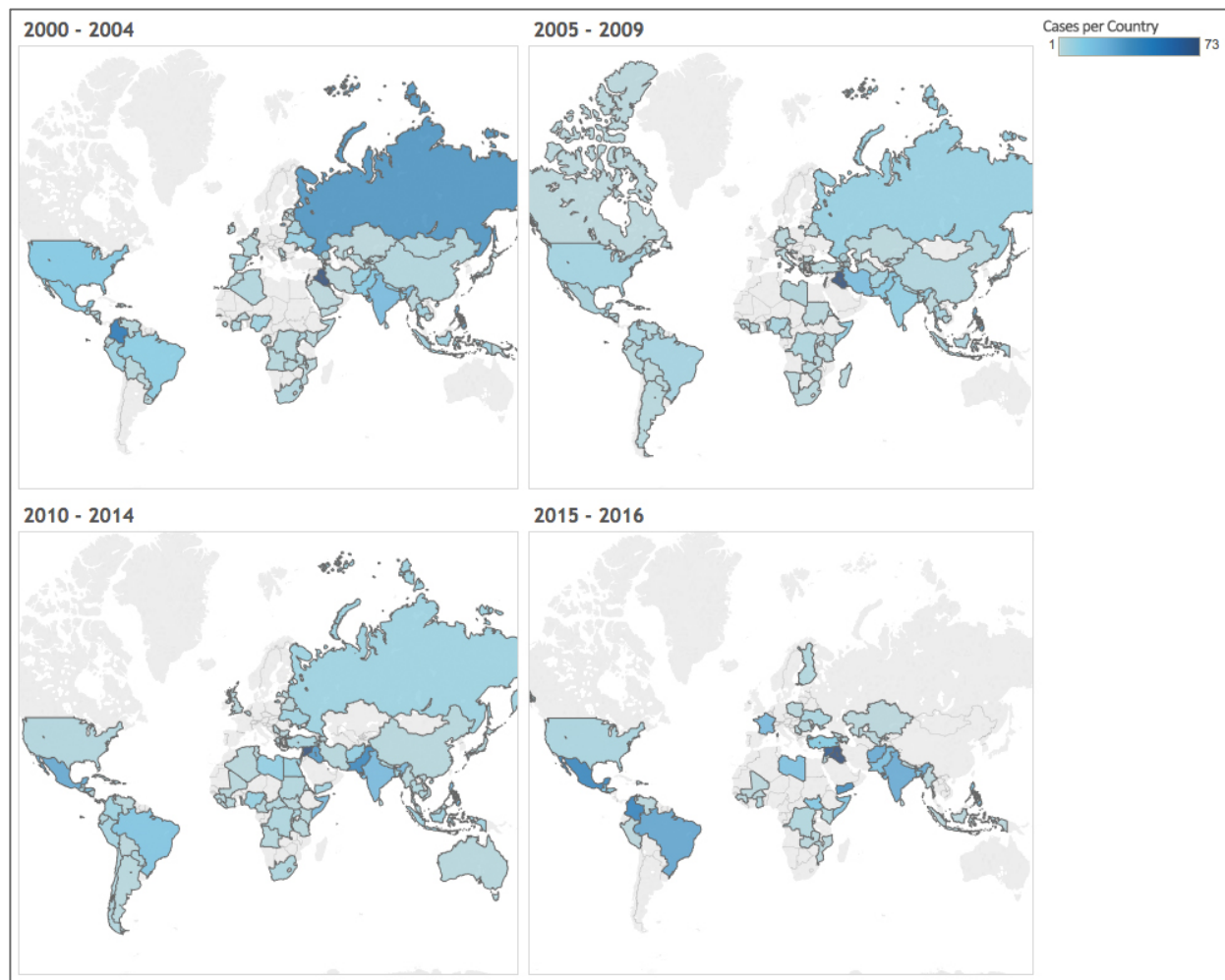

Image 6. Map of Deaths per Country

Image 7. Maps comparing Deaths per Country in 5 year steps.

In Image 7[5] the changes during the last 17 years can be tracked. Some countries have had no deaths in the beginning of the records like Libya or Syria (which will be examined below) and then show a rapid increase over time while other countries have had a decrease of recorded deaths over the last 17 years. Russia registered 36 deaths in the period 2000-2004 and 13 deaths of journalists or media workers in the period 2010-2014.

This image also shows the continuity of violence against journalists and media workers worldwide. Although not all countries have a systematic tradition to silence journalists the number of countries that are included is high.

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[5] For reasons of visualisation the periods are 5 years except the last one (2015-2016) as there is no data available.
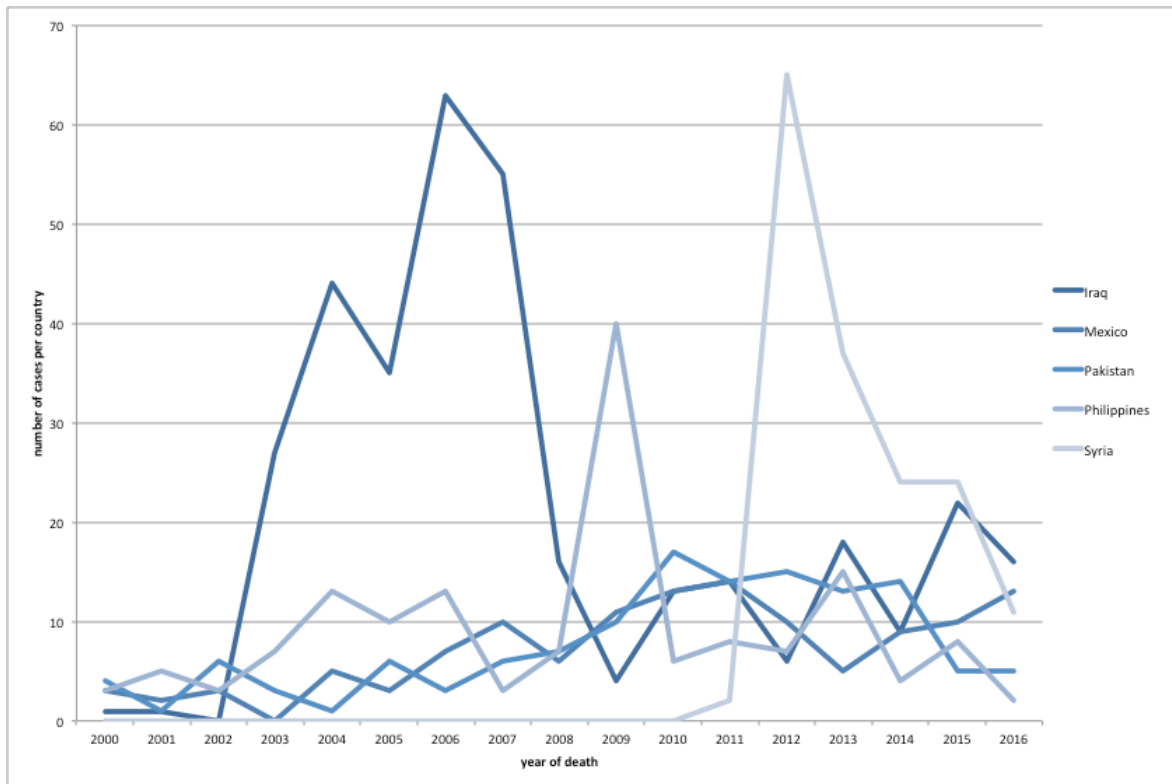
Image 8. Number of deaths in five most dangerous countries.

There are differences in the frequency of killings per year, especially in the 5 most dangerous countries large discrepancies can be identified when examining each year separately. For example, Syria has no listed death until 2011, but then the number exceeds all others in 2012. Similarly, Iraq's line graph shows high peaks in 2004 and 2006-2007 that are in connection with the war at that time.

In Pakistan and Mexico the lines show a slow increase of cases each year, which show that systematically journalists and media workers are attacked during their work. In the Philippines, the number of cases is also high each year, including the high peak in 2009 – when the so-called Maguindanao Massacre caused 58 victims – including 34 journalists.

Findings:

⮞ The worldwide deadliest country for people working in the media between 2000 and 2016 was Iraq with 344 total deaths (table 5), followed by Syria (163 cases) and the Philippines (154 cases).

⮞ Russia registered 36 deaths in the period 2000-2004 and 13 deaths of journalists or media workers in the period 2010-2014.

⮞ Syria had no listed death until 2011, but then the number exceeded that for all other countries in 2012. Similarly, Iraq's graph shows peaks in 2004 and 2006-2007, in connection with spikes in conflict in those periods.

⮞ In the Philippines, includes a peak in 2009 – when the so-called Maguindanao Massacre resulted in the deaths of 58 victims – including 34 journalists.

⊃ **Media organisations**

When examining media organisations killed journalists and media workers worked before their deaths, we found that five media organisations have more than 10 cases of killings in total. Most of the media organisations record one death (1344 organisations) or two deaths (147 organisations) (Image 9). It should be noted, that in some cases (101 cases) no information on the media organisation was provided and also in some cases only "freelance" was stated as organisation (114 cases). Still, the total number of killed freelancers in total is higher, namely 307 cases (13,4 %), of journalists multiple positions.
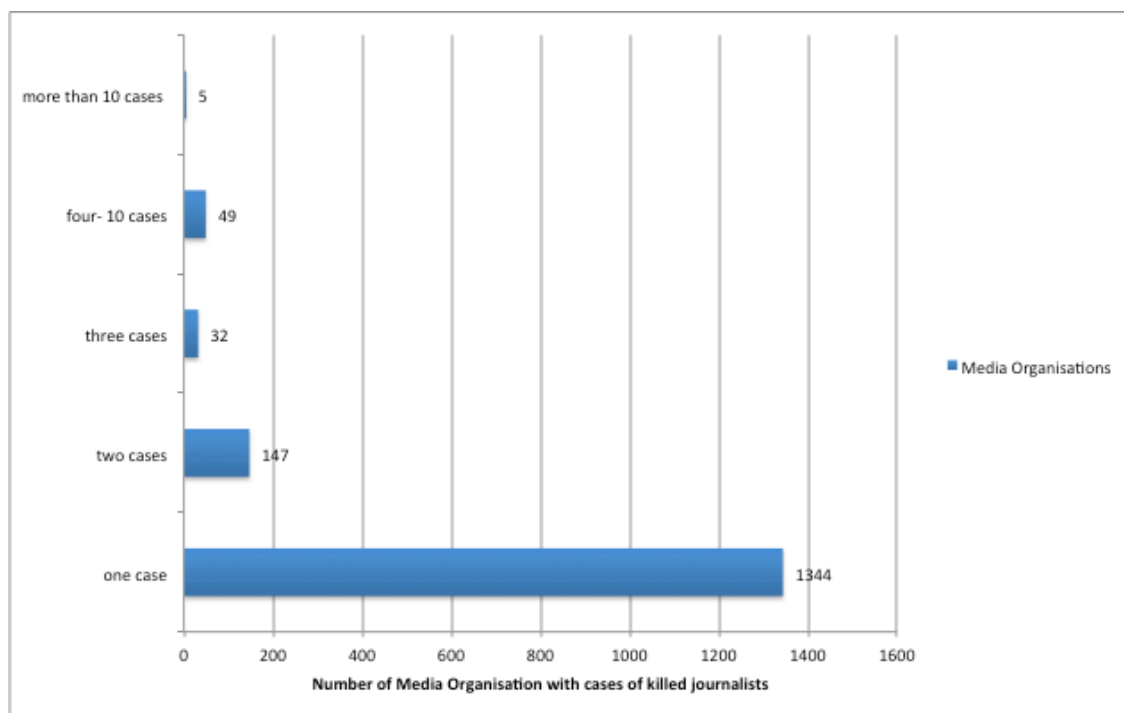

Image 9. Number of death cases in Media Organisations

Not only big media organisations operating in war regions like "Islamic Republic Newsagency" or "Reuters" record a high number of deaths, but also media organisations like Charlie Hebdo can be found in this table, which has been the aim of a terror attack in 2015. Although the number of "not provided" seems to be the highest in this table, it must be noted that this is represents only 4,4 % of all cases. The organisations with the most killed journalists can be found in the following table:

Media Organisation	Number of Cases
not provided	101
freelance	114
Islamic Republic Newsagency	41
Al-Arabiya	15
Reuters	14
Al-Iraqiya	12
Al-Shaabiya	12
Al-Sharqiya	8
Baghdad TV	8
Charlie Hebdo	8
Thai Rath	8

Table 6. Media organisations with most recorded deaths

Accordingly to the findings of the previous section the following image (Image 10) shows a word cloud of all media organisations that have been affected by killings of journalist and media workers. The size of the words shows the frequency of the word in the database – connected words have been split up.

Image 10. Word cloud of Names of Media Organisations

Findings:

- ⮲ Five media organisations registered more than 10 journalist deaths in total between 2000 and 2016.

- ⮲ Not only big media organisations operating in conflict regions recorded a high number of deaths, but also media organisations like Paris-based Charlie Hebdo, which was the target of a terror attack in 2015.

- ⮲ In terms of data Media organisation is the most available item, the information is missing in only 4,4 % of the cases whereas for other items the frequency of missing cases reaches up to one third.

5. Conclusions

Our investigation indicates that journalists and the international community would benefit from a closer synergy and harmonisation of methodological approaches to monitoring, while allowing for more methodological approaches and changes to be implemented in addition to a core (but not minimal) set of methodological tools and furthermore, strategies.

Accurate monitoring of the killings of journalists is a crucial responsibility for the protection of journalists and democracy.

The purposes of such data are the following (IFEX 2011):
- ➲ To identify tendencies
- ➲ To highlight dangers in specific countries or regions
- ➲ To collect facts and provide data that can support lobbying efforts to bring attention to the issue of journalists' safety and freedom of expression
- ➲ To increase pressure for an immediate investigation, for this reason immediate publication of cases even if only little information available is necessary.

The recorded cases far exceed the database of the best organised and most comprehensive and updated database maintained, including total numbers of confirmed and unconfirmed motives as well as type of media worker, since 2000[6]. By far, in the examined period, the most dangerous countries for journalists have been war and conflict zones. However, to assume that journalists are safe in their work in Europe, as a region of stability and prosperity and robust legal frameworks for the protection of free speech and free press, would be misleading. Our data shows that we have recorded deaths of journalists in most countries in the world.

In financially challenging times for news organisations and a rapidly developing 24-hour virtually instantaneous information environment, news outlets rely increasingly on local stringers and freelancers than on persons from their own bureaus. This, and the rapid development in dangerous regions such as the Middle East in the past 20 years of private media outlets that cover conflict but also corruption, politics and war explains some of the reasons why the numbers of those killed who are local is so high.

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[6] CPJ provides total numbers of 1371 cases until December 15, 2016.

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