AT A CROSSROADS
SAFEGUARDING MEDIA FREEDOM TO PROTECT DEMOCRACY
9TH OSCE SOUTH EAST EUROPE MEDIA CONFERENCE
16-17 MAY 2023
SKOPJE

OSCE the representative on freedom of the media — THERE IS NO SECURITY WITHOUT MEDIA FREEDOM

OSCE Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe **Mission to Skopje**

AGENDA

DAY 1: TUESDAY, 16 MAY 2023

09:30 – 10:00

Registration

10:00 – 10:30

High-level opening panel

- **Moderator: Edina Secerovic**, freelance journalist

- **Teresa Ribeiro**, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

- **Fatmire Isaki,** Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of North Macedonia

- **Kilian Wahl**, Head of OSCE Mission to Skopje

Room: Diamond (ground floor)

10:30 – 11:15

Stage Interview: At a crossroads: Why we need to safeguard media freedom now

- **Moderator: Ton Van Den Brandt**, Principal Adviser to the RFoM

- **Teresa Ribeiro**, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

- **Damian Tambini**, distinguished Policy Fellow, Department of Media and Communications at the London School of Economics

Room: Diamond (ground floor)

11:15 – 11:30   *Coffee break*

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TO PROTECT DEMOCRACY

AGENDA

11:30 – 12:30		
Session 1	**Session 2**	**Side Event**
Media self-regulation and public trust in the digital age *Room: Platinum (floor – 1)*	**Freedom of expression in the age of algorithms and AI** *Room: Diamond (ground floor)*	**Protecting labour rights for media workers in South East Europe** *Room: Gold (floor – 1)*
Moderator: **Isabella Kurkowski**, media development expert & lecturer at the Erich Brost Institute for International Journalism **Speakers:** **Katerina Sinadinovska**, President, Council of Media Ethics (CMEM) **Maida Bahto Kestendzic**, Project Coordinator, Press and Online Media Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina **Gordana Novakovic**, Secretary General, Press Council in Serbia **Paula Petricevic**, Ombudswoman of daily 'Vijesti' and weekly 'Monitor'	**Moderator:** **Julia Haas**, Associate Project Officer, RFoM Office **Speakers:** **Noah Giansiracusa**, Professor of mathematics and data science, Bentley University **Bardhyl Jashari**, Executive Director, Metamorphosis Foundation **Bojana Kostic**, human rights and tech researcher	**Facilitator:** **Sanja Stankovic**, National Legal Officer, OSCE Mission to Serbia **Speakers:** **Tamara Filipovic**, Secretary General, Independent Journalists Association of Serbia **Pavle Belovski,** President, Independent Trade Union of Journalists and Media Workers

12:30 – 13:45   *Lunch*

13:45 – 14:45		
Session 3	**Side Event**	**SAIFE masterclass**
Mapping mechanisms and tools for the protection and safety of journalists in South East Europe *Room: Diamond (ground floor)*	**The Tirana Media Platform – youth-inspired initiatives** *Room: Gold (floor – 1)*	**Spotlight on the impact of AI on freedom of expression** *Room: Platinum (floor – 1)*
Moderator: **Dragan Sekulovski**, media expert, Executive Director, Association of Journalists (AJM) **Speakers:** **Iskra Hadji Vasileva**, Public Prosecutor, Basic Public Prosecutor's Office in Skopje	**Facilitator:** **Sihana Nebiu**, Head of Democratization Department, OSCE Presence in Albania **Panel of young journalists:** **Lazar Covs**, journalist at BBC Serbia	**Trainers:** **Noah Giansiracusa,** Professor of mathematics and data science at Bentley University **Krisztina Rozgonyi**, Professor at the Department of Communications, University of Vienna, and Senior Scientist at the Institute for

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Darko Martincevic, Cantonal Prosecutor, Cantonal Prosecutor's Office of Sarajevo Canton **Stevan Ristic**, General Manager, Vreme newspaper, Member of the Permanent Working Group for Safety of Journalists in Serbia **Mladen Milutinovic**, Executive Director and Editor-in Chief, Dan newspaper *Presentation of the 'OSCE Guidelines for monitoring online violence against female journalists' by the co-author:* **Julie Posetti**, Deputy Vice President and Global Director of Research, International Center for Journalists	**Azem Kurtic**, journalist at Balkan Insight **Fjoralba Sinoruka**, journalist at BIRN Albania **Alma Baxhaku**, journalist at Gazeta Express **Ljubica Ivanova**, journalist at Vidi Vaka *tbc* **Biljana Rocen-Knezevic**, journalist at Vijesti	Comparative Media and Communication Studies (online) **Bojana Kostic**, human rights and tech researcher

14:45 – 15:15   *Coffee break*

15:15 – 16:15

Session 4	SOJ Roundtable	SAIFE masterclass
Media and digital literacy initiatives in South East Europe *Room: Diamond (ground floor)*	**Safety of Journalists Roundtable on Legal Harassment** *Room: Gold (floor – 1)*	**Spotlight on the impact of AI on freedom of expression** *Room: Platinum (floor – 1)*
<u>Moderator:</u> **Mihajlo Lahtov**, Project Director, IREX <u>Speakers:</u> **Besa Luci**, Editor-in-Chief, Kosovo 2.0 **Dorentina Hysa**, MiL Project Coordinator, Albanian Media Institute **Filip Stojanovski**, Director of Partnership and Resource Development, Metamorphosis Foundation **Emir Povlakic**, Head of Department of Audiovisual Media Services,	<u>Moderator:</u> **Ton Van Den Brandt**, Principal Adviser, RFoM Office <u>Speakers:</u> **Flutura Kusari**, Senior Legal Adviser, European Centre for Press and Media Freedom **Laura Prather**, Head of Media Law Practice Group at Haynes Boone **Charlie Holt**, Legal Counsel at Greenpeace International, sitting on the CASE Steering Committee and co-chair of the UK Anti-SLAPP Coalition **Jovana Kisin Zagajac**, Lawyer	<u>Trainers:</u> **Noah Giansiracusa,** Professor of mathematics and data science at Bentley University **Krisztina Rozgonyi**, Professor at the Department of Communications, University of Vienna, and Senior Scientist at the Institute for Comparative Media and Communication Studies (online) **Bojana Kostic**, human rights and tech researcher

Communications Regulatory Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina	**Milica Vojinovic**, Investigative Reporter, Crime and Corruption Reporting Network **Alexander Kashumov**, human rights lawyer specialized on SLAPP cases, Executive Director of the Access to Information Programmme in Bulgaria	

16:45 – 17:45

Debate	Movie screening
Countering disinformation: the delicate balance between security and media freedom *Room: Diamond (ground floor)*	**Movie screening: Made to Measure** *Room: Platinum (floor – 1)*
<u>**Moderator:**</u> **Nazim Rashidi**, Journalist and Editor, Alsat-M TV <u>**Speakers:**</u> **Zaneta Trajkoska**, Executive Director, Institute for Communications Studies **Liliana Vitu**, Chair of the Audio-visual Council, Republic of Moldova	<u>**Facilitator:**</u> **Julia Haas**, Associate Project Officer, RFoM Office

18:00 – 21:00 **Conference Reception Dinner (Venue: Double Tree by Hilton Hotel)**

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AGENDA

DAY 2: WEDNESDAY, 17 MAY 2023

10:00 – 11:00

Session 5	Session 6	Side Event
Media ownership transparency as an essential component of pluralistic media *Room: Gold (floor – 1)*	**Hate speech – Are approaches and regulatory frameworks in South East Europe working and are they compatible with OSCE commitments?** *Room: Diamond (ground floor)*	**Movie screening on legal harassment** *Room: Platinum (floor – 1)*
Moderator: **Josef Trappel**, Professor of media policy and media economics, University of Salzburg **Speakers:** **Olaf Steenfadt,** Founder and Managing Director, Global Media Registry **Faruk Rexhaj**, Chief Executive Officer, Independent Media Commission **Roberta Carlini**, Assistant Part Time Professor, European University Institute **Besar Likmeta**, Editor-in-Chief, BIRN Albania	**Moderator:** **Antonina Cherevko**, Senior Adviser, RFoM Office **Speakers:** **Aneta Spaic**, Law Professor and Dean of Faculty of Law, University of Montenegro **Slobodan Kremenjak**, Lawyer **Jennifer Jackson-Preece**, Associate Professor in Nationalism, the European Institute and the Department of International Relations, London School of Economics **Anida Sokol**, Media Researcher, Mediacentar Sarajevo	**Title: 'Rise in defamation cases against media restricts freedom'** – produced by the OSCE Mission to BiH in co-operation with the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network BiH (BIRN BiH) (duration: 23 min) **Facilitators:** **Sejla Maslo Cerkic**, National Legal Officer, OSCE Mission to BiH **Katarina Zrinjski**, Project Manager, BIRN BiH *Screening followed by a Q&A session*

11:00 – 11:30 *Coffee break*

11:30–12:30

Session 7	Side Event	Workshop
Bolstering media viability in South East Europe *Room: Diamond (ground floor)*	**Movie screenings on safety of journalists** *Room: Platinum (floor – 1)*	**Shaping a practical toolbox for the safety of journalists** *Room: Gold (floor – 1)*
Moderator: **Jakov Leon**, Digital Media Consultant, DW Akademie **Speakers:** **Bojana Mrkic**, Chief of Party, Internews BiH	**(1) Title: 'Dangerous Network'** – focusing on the safety of female journalists, produced by the OSCE Mission to Skopje in co-operation with the Platform for Investigative Journalism and Analyses (PINA) (duration: 12.5 min)	**Facilitator:** **Daliborka Jankovic**, Senior Adviser, RFoM Office **Trainer:** **Velimir Delovski**, Human rights lawyer

Jamie Wiseman, Advocacy Officer, International Press Institute **Maja Fićovic**, Editor-in-Chief, Radio Mitrovica Sever **Vojislav Raonic**, Senior Media and Communications Adviser at UNOPS	**Facilitators:** **Dimitar Dimitrovski**, Media Assistant, OSCE Mission to Skopje **Marina Lazarevska**, Journalist and Co-founder, PINA **(2) Title: 'Journalism is not a crime: Bosnian journalists speak out'** – produced by the OSCE Mission to BiH in co-operation with BIRN BiH (duration: 34 min) **Facilitators:** **Zlatan Music**, National Programme Officer, OSCE Mission to BiH **Katarina Zrinjski**, Project Manager, BIRN BiH *Screenings followed by a Q&A session*	

12:30 – 12:50

Stage Talk: *A Look Inside the Algorithms Shaping the News Environment*
- **Noah Giansiracusa**, , Professor of mathematics and data science, Bentley University

Room: Diamond (ground floor)

12:50 – 13:30

Takeaways from the Conference
- **Edina Secerovic**, freelance journalist
- **Teresa Ribeiro**, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media

Room: Diamond (ground floor)

13:30 – 14:30   *Lunch*

End of conference

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SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Stage Interview: **At a crossroads: Why we need to safeguard media freedom now**	Exploring the overarching theme of this conference, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Teresa Ribeiro, and the distinguished expert in media and communications policy and law, Damian Tambini, will be interviewed live on stage. Why are we at a crossroads? What constitutes media freedom in these turbulent times? And what are the ways forward to guarantee secure societies and thriving democracies?
PANEL SESSIONS	
Session 1: **Media self-regulation and public trust in the digital age**	A growing shift from print to online media has created challenges for media self-regulatory bodies. This is especially true for the South East Europe region, with its numerous media outlets on different platforms; a varying degree of adherence to journalistic standards; a relatively low level of ownership transparency; and an increasing spread of hate speech, disinformation and intolerance online, combined with a decline in trust in media. Panellists will discuss these challenges, while exploring ways to further quality reporting and rebuild trust in the media.
Session 2: **Freedom of expression in the age of algorithms and AI**	The online information spaces is ever more shaped and arbitrated by platforms and digital technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), which has a large impact on freedom of expression, media pluralism, democracy and comprehensive security. This panel will explore regional implications and identify policy responses to safeguard access to reliable, diverse, and public interest information in the digital age. The RFoM's SAIFE project, which puts a spotlight on the impact of AI on freedom of expression, will be place in the context of the South East Europe region.
Session 3: **Mapping mechanisms and tools for the protection and safety of journalists in South East Europe**	Throughout the South East Europe region, journalists continue to face attacks, online threats and harassment in connection to their work. This session will dive into regional trends, current challenges and persisting gaps, while mapping recent response efforts, including legislative measures, and other mechanisms and tools, for enhancing the protection and safety of journalists, and combatting impunity. The recently developed 'OSCE Guidance Tool for Monitoring Online Violence Against Female Journalists' will be presented and discussed.
Session 4: **Media and digital literacy initiatives in South East Europe**	We live in an increasingly saturate and invasive information ecosystem. To be able to navigate, media and digital literacy are an essential constellation of skills – necessary for freedom of expression and access to information, and for building pluralistic and well-informed democratic societies. This panel session will explore inspiring and impactful regional projects and initiatives in South East Europa that contribute for citizens to better understand the role of media and think critically about the news they receive.

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Session 5: **Media ownership transparency as an essential component of pluralistic media**	Transparency of media ownership is an essential component of any democratic media system – especially in times of proliferation of on- and offline information sources that are increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few owners. Ensuring clear, accurate and publicly available up-to-date data on who owns the media does not only strengthen the accountability and trustworthiness of media service providers, it can also help determine and prevent potential influences and abuses of media power.
Session 6: **Hate speech – Are approaches and regulatory frameworks in South east Europe working and are they compatible with OSCE commitments?**	Hate speech can seriously undermine social cohesion, pluralism and peaceful co-existence in diverse societies. With the emergence of new digital technologies in the recent decades, it has become a viral phenomenon across the South East Europe region and beyond. While important to counter, legal responses should be carefully balanced and must not be misused to suppress open democratic debate on sensitive or controversial issues of public interest. This panel session will explore what constitutes the notion of hate speech in the region and where the line is drawn between "prohibited" and "allowed".
Session 7: **Bolstering media viability in South East Europe**	Amidst technological, social, political and economic disruptions that define our current media ecosystems, pubic interest journalism in the South East Europe region and beyond is facing significant existential challenges to its financial independence and sustainability. With the advent of new digital technologies and the economic aftershocks of the COVID-19 pandemic, the media have grappled with creating innovative ways of generating income for sustainable media business models, as well as maintaining quality journalism. Has anyone found the silver bullet?

OTHER SESSIONS AND SIDE-EVENTS	
Debate: **Countering disinformation: the delicate balance between security and media freedom**	Disinformation is plaguing our media and our societies, more than ever before. Countering it, however, is not an easy task. There is a delicate balance between security considerations and media freedom as a central pillar of our democratic societies. In a debate between two experts in the field, we will try to walk this thin line.
Stage talk:	"A Look Inside the Algorithms Shaping the News Environment" by Noah Giansiracusa
Side event: **Protecting labour rights for media workers in South East Europe**	Journalists and other media workers are key to informing the public about their rights and freedoms. At the same time, however, the labour rights of those working in the media are oftentimes trampled upon, further deepening the already precarious nature of the job. This side event will present one out of seven video podcasts on labour rights of journalists and media workers – developed as a self-learning tool for media professionals by the OSCE Mission to Serbia, followed by a public discussion.

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Side event: **The Tirana Media Platform – youth-inspired perspectives on the future of media**	Creative perspectives and innovative solutions on key media freedom issues. During this event the participants will dig deeper into the Tirana Media Platform: the joint-declaration that a group of young journalists from the Western Balkans developed within the margins of the 2021 SEEMC conference in Tirana. It highlights innovations in new media and technology platforms, inventions that have significantly affected the way populations – especially youth – communicate today. It will explore the range of digital tools and media channels that the youth use, their effect on journalistic reporting and the way that younger audiences consume information.
Workshop: **Shaping a practical toolbox for the safety of journalists**	With the guidance of an expert trainer, this workshop aims to gather innovative ideas and insights on how to shape and design a toolbox for the safety of journalists. This toolbox is being developed by the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, aiming to provide an accessible set of guiding tools on how to improve the safety of journalists, combining good practice examples of national measures and recommendations for the OSCE participating States, as well as media outlets, journalists and civil society.
SAIFE Masterclass: **Spotlight on the impact of AI on freedom of expression**	Building on the morning-session "Freedom of expression in the age of algorithms and AI", this half-day SAIFE training will exemplify how the use of AI in information spaces affects free speech and media freedom; explore necessary safeguards to ensure healthy information and media ecosystems; and build capacity of state and non-state actors, in particular NHRIs and regulators. Renowned expert trainers will unfold key principles around transparency, accountability and democratic oversight, while participants will have an opportunity to assess and address human rights challenges stemming from the use of AI through scenario-based case studies.
Safety of Journalists Roundtable on Legal Harassment	This roundtable is the fifth in the Safety of Journalists project of the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and will focus on the use of legal instruments and procedures to harass, intimidate, hinder and stifle journalistic work, including by targeting their financial reserves. These practices range from the use of criminal and administrative law to the use of private law, sometimes also described as Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation (SLAPP). Six renowned experts will discuss this topic and develop concrete recommendations on how best to prevent these attacks on the legal safety of media.
MOVIE SCREENINGS	
Made to Measure	Screening of the award-winning interactive storytelling documentary 'Made to Measure' by Laokoon, co-produced by the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. The film experiment creates a doppelganger of a person based solely on their online data, illustrating how a fraction of a person's data is sufficient to identify their interests, intimate personality traits, and opinions, and to

	predict – or even manipulate – their thoughts and behaviour. The documentary screening will be followed by a Q&A session.
Legal harassment: **'Rise in defamation cases against media restricts freedom'** *(duration: 23 min)*	The short documentary "Rise in defamation cases against media restricts freedom" (produced in 2020 by the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in co-operation with the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina) depicts the increasing use of defamation lawsuits to silence journalists in BiH and the impact this has on their ability to work. A recent analysis revealed that politicians and other public officials, including judges and prosecutors are the main claimants in these cases. With verdicts often delivered without adequate explanation and without complying with the standards of the European Court of Human Rights. The screening will be followed by a Q&A session.
Safety of journalists: **'Dangerous Network'** *(duration: 12.5 min)*	The short documentary "Dangerous Network" released in 2022, features fist-hand experiences of female journalists from North Macedonia targeted with online abuse and attacks, and the impact this has had on their personal and work life. It is based on a countrywide survey involving over 100 female journalists, conducted by the Platform for Investigative Journalism and Analysis (PINA) with the support of the OSCE Mission to Skopje.
Journalism is not a crime: **'Bosnian journalists speak out'** *(duration: 34 min)*	The documentary film "Journalism is not a crime: The voice of journalists in BiH" was produced by the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIRN BiH), in co-operation with the OSCE Mission to BiH. It narrates the stories of journalists from BiH who have experienced physical, verbal and online attacks, and the difficulties they face in achieving proper protection and timely and effective justice for crimes committed against them.
The documentary screenings will be followed by a Q&A session.	

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