



MEDIA FREEDOM RAPID RESPONSE

Serbia: ARTICLE 19 and Media Freedom Rapid Response's Advocacy Mission and Findings

ARTICLE 19 and the Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) will present the findings of its recent online fact-finding mission to Serbia at a webinar on Tuesday, 11th May at h.12:00-13:30 CEST.

The event will also look at the growing use of Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs) to silence journalists in Serbia, which ARTICLE 19, the Center for Human Rights–American Bar Association and the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) have investigated as part of their work in Serbia and the wider region.

The event, focused on the findings of this mission and research, will highlight:

- The need for the Serbian government to take urgent action to support media freedom and enshrine the protection of journalists and media workers in its policies and practices;
- Increasing use of legal avenues to threaten journalists and other media workers in Serbia;
- Demands for greater access to information by journalists;
- The role of public officials in polarising media, including demonisation of independent media through direct verbal attacks and in pro-government tabloids;
- Urgent recommendations for the government of Serbia and international organisations to improve media freedom and the safety of journalists and media workers in Serbia.

The mission and the report are Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) initiatives. The MFRR is organised by an alliance of the International Press Institute (IPI), the European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF), the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), Free Press Unlimited (FPU), the Institute for Applied Informatics at the University of Leipzig (InfAI), and the Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso Transeuropa (OBC Transeuropa). The mission was organized in collaboration with the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) and was joined by the Center for Human Rights — American Bar Association and the South East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO).

Mission partners met with key media freedom stakeholders in Serbia, including representatives from journalists and media associations, the Standing Working Group on

Safety of Journalists, a selected group of Serbian journalists who have been targets of legal, physical or verbal threats or harassment, the Serbian Ombudsman, officials from the Serbian Government and representatives of international organisations.

Read the full MFRR Serbia mission report in English or Serbian:
<https://www.article19.org/resources/serbia-media-freedom-and-journalists-must-be-protected/>

Register to join the launch of the MFRR Serbia mission report:
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/media-freedom-and-safety-of-journalists-in-serbia-tickets-152384280485>

For press interviews please contact:
ARTICLE 19: press@article19.org



Signatories:

ARTICLE 19

International Press Institute (IPI)

Free Press Unlimited (FPU)

European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)

European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF)

Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS)