
Freedom of the press: Pejcinovic Buric (Council of Europe), urgent measures required from the European member states to protect the journalists' safety

In a statement to coincide with World Press Freedom Day on May 3rd, Marija Pejčinović Burić, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, urged European governments to make the protection of journalism and the safety of journalists and other media actors a political priority. “As journalists and other media actors are increasingly subject to undue pressure, intimidation, violence and other forms of interference with their work in many European countries, it has become urgent to devise national action plans for the safety of journalists”. According to Pejčinović Burić, “governments should address the need to strengthen the protection of journalists, effectively prosecute perpetrators of crimes against them, and to raise awareness in our societies about the crucial role diverse and independent media play to preserve true democracy”. She adds: “to protect our democratic freedoms, it is essential that states create a favourable environment for plural and independent media to flourish and play their essential “watchdog” role. And for this to be possible, they must be able to hold governments and other actors to account, by disseminating information, promoting the participation in the public debate and the expression of ideas and opinions without fear”.

Valentina Bombelli