

World Press Freedom Index - Methodology

The press freedom index that Reporters Without Borders publishes every year measures the level of freedom of information in 180 countries. It reflects the degree of freedom that journalists, news organizations and netizens enjoy in each country, and the efforts made by the authorities to respect and ensure respect for this freedom.

It is based partly on a questionnaire that is sent to our partner organizations (18 freedom of expression NGOs located in all five continents), to our network of 150 correspondents, and to journalists, researchers, jurists and human rights activists.

The 180 countries ranked in this year's index are those for which Reporters Without Borders received completed questionnaires from various sources. Some countries were not included because of a lack of reliable, confirmed data.

There has been a major change in the method used to compile the index in 2013, including the use of a new [questionnaire](#). Quantitative questions about the number of violations of different kinds are handled by our staff. They include the number of journalists, media assistants and netizens who were jailed or killed in the connection with their activities, the number of journalists abducted, the number that fled into exile, the number of physical attacks and arrests, and the number of media censored. In the event of a military occupation of one or more territories, any violations by representatives of the occupying force are treated as violations of the right to information in foreign territory and are incorporated into the score of the occupying force's country.

The rest of the questionnaire, which is sent to outside experts and members of the RWB network, concentrates on issues that are hard to quantify such as the degree to which news providers censor themselves, government interference in editorial content, or the transparency of government decision-making. Legislation and its effectiveness are the subject of more detailed questions. Questions have been added or expanded, for example, questions about concentration of media ownership and favouritism in the allocation of subsidies or state advertising. Similarly, discrimination in access to journalism and journalism training is also included.

A score and a position are assigned to each country in the final ranking. They are complementary indicators that together assess the state of press freedom. In order to make the index more informative and make it easier to compare different years, scores will henceforth range from 0 to 100, with 0 being the best possible score and 100 the worst. The index does not look at human rights violations in general, just violations of freedom of information.

The index should in no way be taken as an indication of the quality of the media in the countries concerned.

How we score countries

The questions consider six general criteria. Using a system of weighting for each possible response, countries are given a score of between 0 and 100 for each of the six overall criteria. These scores are then used as indicators in calculating each country's final score.

- Pluralism [indicator Plu]
 - *Mesure le degré de représentation des opinions dans l'espace médiatique*
- Media independence [indicator Ind]
 - *Measures the degree to which the media are able to function independently of the authorities*
- Environment and self-censorship [indicator EnA]
 - *Analyses the environment in which journalists work*
- Legislative framework [indicator CaL]
 - *Analyses the quality of the legislative framework and measures its effectiveness*
- Transparency [indicator Tra]
 - *Measures the transparency of the institutions and procedures that affect the production of news and information*
- Infrastructure [indicateur Inf]
 - *Measures the quality of the infrastructure that supports the production of news and information*

Reporters Without Borders meanwhile calculates a score of between 0 and 100 reflecting the level of violence against journalists during the period considered. The score is based on the monitoring carried out by RWB's own staff.

The overall score, the one that determines a country's ranking, is calculated on the basis of these seven scores in a three-step process. A first score is calculated on the basis of the questionnaire alone, using the following weighting:

$$COA = \frac{1}{3} \cdot Plu + \frac{1}{6} \cdot (Ind + EnA + CaL) + \frac{1}{12} \cdot (Tra + Inf)$$

A second score uses the first score but incorporates the violence score, giving it a weight of 20%:

$$COB = \frac{1}{5} \cdot Exa + \frac{4}{15} \cdot Plu + \frac{2}{15} \cdot (Ind + EnA + CaL) + \frac{1}{15} \cdot (Tra + Inf)$$

The final score is determined as follows: $coreFinal = \max(SCOA, COB)$

The violence score is calculated according to the following formula:

$$scoreExa = 10 * \log(90 * Mor + Coeff_i * Emp_i + 10 * Enl + 5 * Med + 3 * Exi + Arr + Agr + noteHT)^1$$

The longer a journalist, netizen or media assistant is imprisoned, the more this imprisonment penalizes the country concerned. The weighting coefficient $Coeff_i$ has the following values, based on the length of imprisonment in years :

i	1 -	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10 +
$Coeff_i$	10	20	35	60	80	85	87	88	89	89,5	$\lim_{\infty} Coeff_i = 90$

¹ Mor : number of dead, Emp_i : number of imprisoned since i years, Enl : number of kidnapped, Med : number of media attacked and ransacked, Exi : number who have fled the country, Arr : number of arrests, Agr : number of physical attacks, $noteHT$: score on respect for freedom of information in foreign territory