

Safety of Journalists Country Report

Iceland

Generated on May 20, 2026

Report Authors

Valgerdur Johannsdottir (University of Iceland, Iceland)

Birgir Gudmundsson (University of Akureyri, Iceland)

Guðbjörg Hildur Kolbeins (University of Akureyri, Iceland)

Jon Gunnar Olafsson (University of Iceland, Iceland)

Journalists in Iceland are generally free from physical threats, operate within a legal system that protects press freedom, and have access to secure digital environments for their work. These factors are bolstered by the country's strong democratic institutions and commitment to the rule of law. Psychological safety is, however, a significant area of concern. Iceland is small and tightly-knit society which can amplify social pressures, leading to instances of verbal and personal abuse directed at journalists. Additionally, perceived political parallelism in the media—where outlets are seen as aligned with specific political interests—may undermine journalists' sense of independence and increase public scrutiny or criticism. Journalists' professionalism and integrity is often questioned in public debate and their work discredited. In addition, at the time the safety WJS index data was collected, high-profile legal cases and a police investigation involving journalists were underway. These proceedings may have heightened uncertainty and anxiety within the profession, contributing to lower scores in psychological safety. Financial safety also remains a challenge for journalists in Iceland. The country's small media market, combined with intense competition and limited advertising revenue, has led to job insecurity and economic instability across the profession.

Safety Index Scores

Overall Safety Score

81.83

Safety Dimensions

Physical Safety

89.95

Psychological Safety

71.68

Digital Safety

88.08

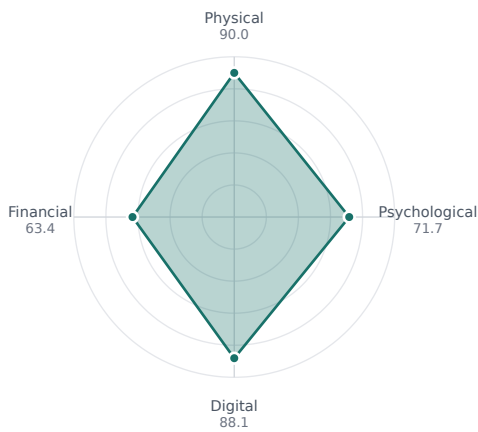
Financial Safety

63.42

Overview

The Safety of Journalists Index provides a comprehensive measurement of journalist safety across four dimensions. The charts below show how Iceland performs across each dimension and highlight any gender-based disparities.

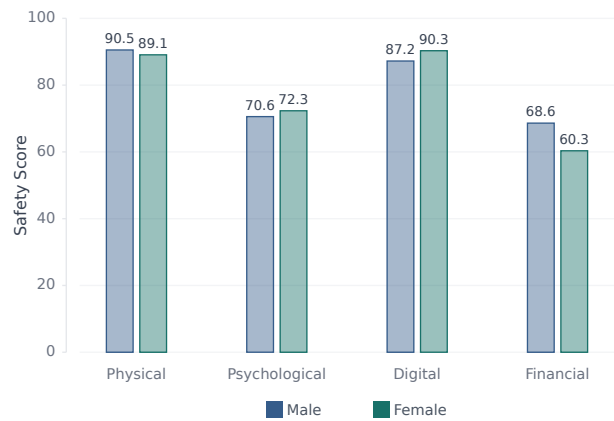
Safety Dimensions Overview



Safety Dimensions

This radar chart displays how the country performs across all four safety dimensions, revealing areas of strength and concern.

Gender Safety Gap by Dimension



Gender Safety Gap

This comparison highlights differences in safety experiences between male and female journalists, revealing potential gender-based disparities.

Physical Safety

The physical dimension carries **50% weight in the safety index**.

0

Journalist Killings

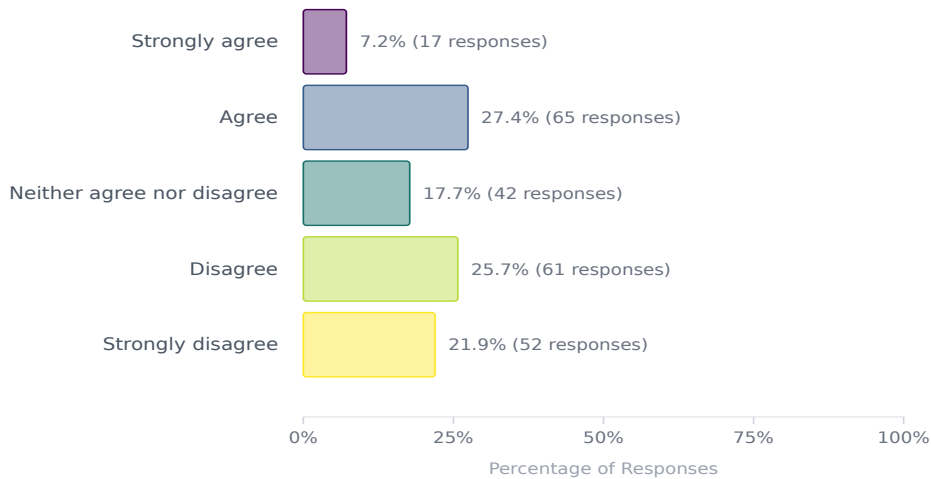
2016-2024

No journalist killings have been recorded in Iceland between 2016 and 2024.

Note: This indicator carries 35% of the weight within the physical dimension of the Safety Index, making it the most significant factor in this category.

Data sourced from UNESCO Observatory of Killed Journalists.

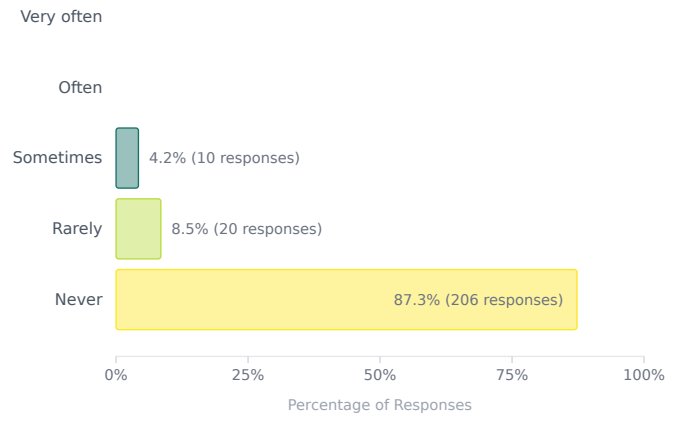
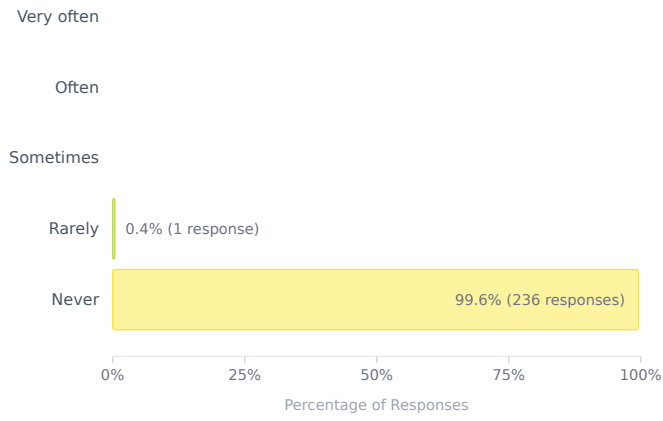
Responses to: "I am concerned about my physical wellbeing" (20% weight in physical dimension)



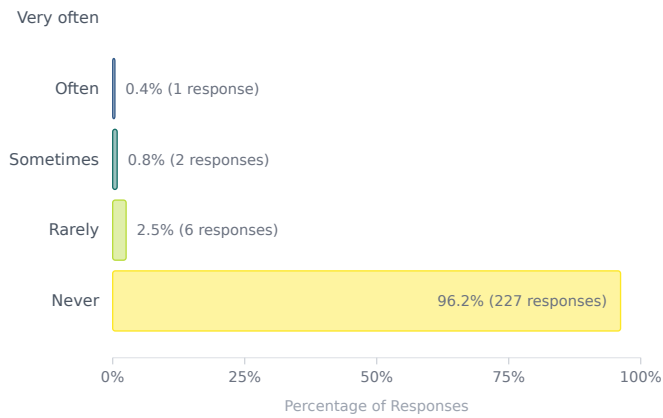
Responses to: "In the last five years, how often have you experienced any of the following actions related to your work as a journalist?"

Arrests, detentions or imprisonment (15% weight in physical dimension)

Sexual assault or sexual harassment (15% weight in physical dimension)

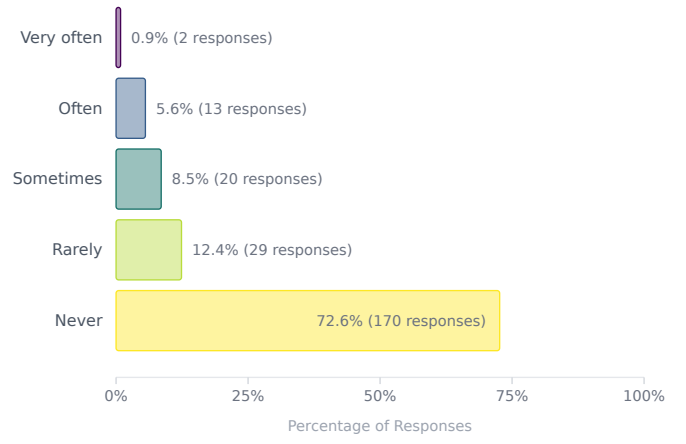
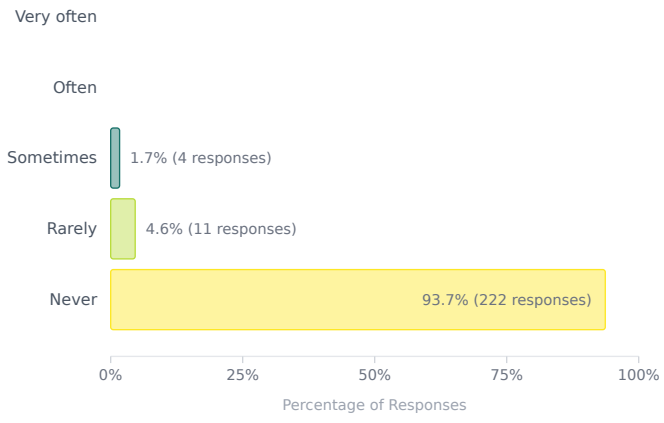


Other physical attacks (15% weight in physical dimension)



Office raids or seizures or damage of equipment (did not contribute to calculation)

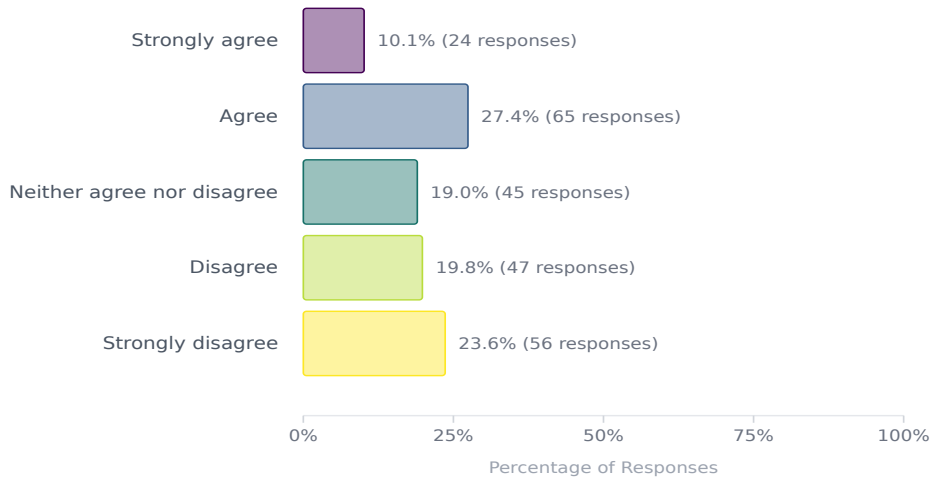
Being required to work in an environment where COVID-19 had easily spread (did not contribute to calculation)



Psychological Safety

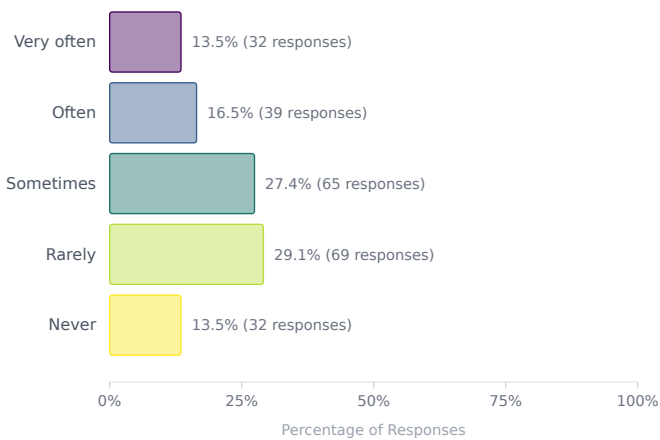
The psychological dimension carries **25% weight in the safety index**.

Responses to: "I am concerned about my emotional wellbeing" (20% weight in psychological dimension)

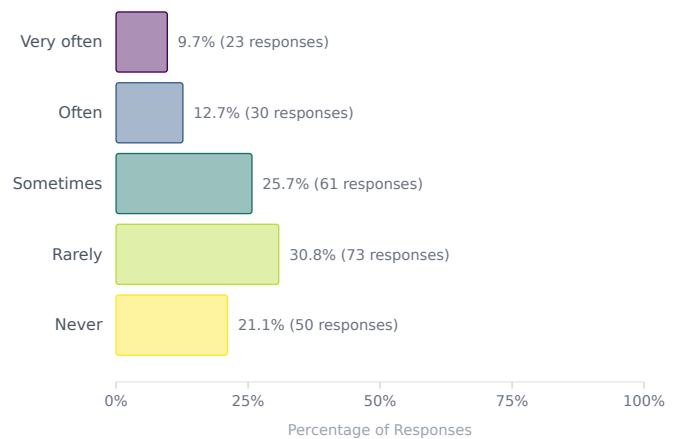


Responses to: "In the last five years, how often have you experienced any of the following actions related to your work as a journalist?"

Demeaning or hateful speech directed at you (16% weight in psychological dimension)



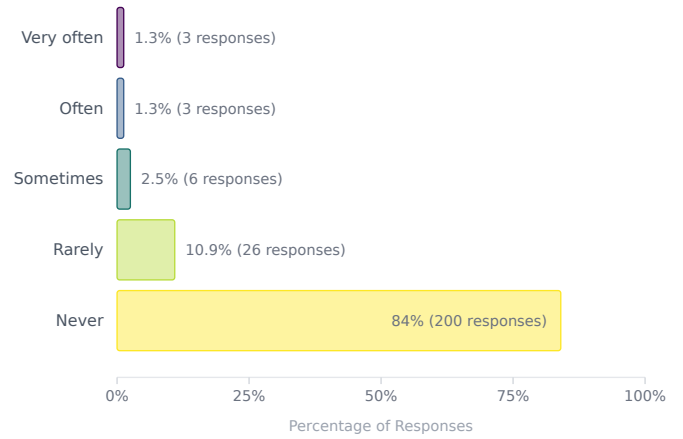
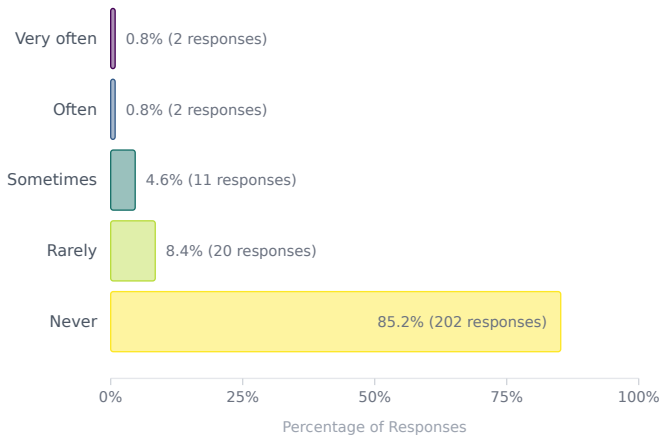
Public discrediting of your work (16% weight in psychological dimension)



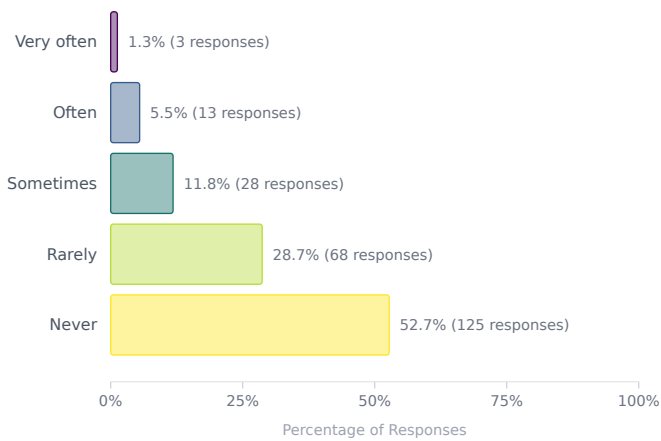
Legal actions against you because of your work (16% weight in psychological dimension)

Stalking (16% weight in psychological dimension)

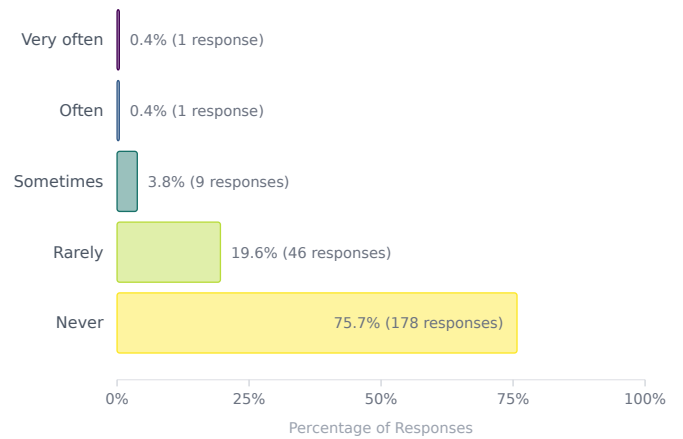
dimension)



Other threats or intimidation directed at you (16% weight in psychological dimension)

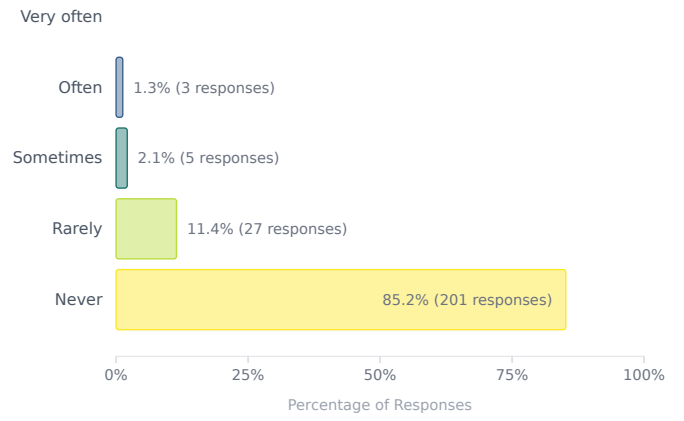
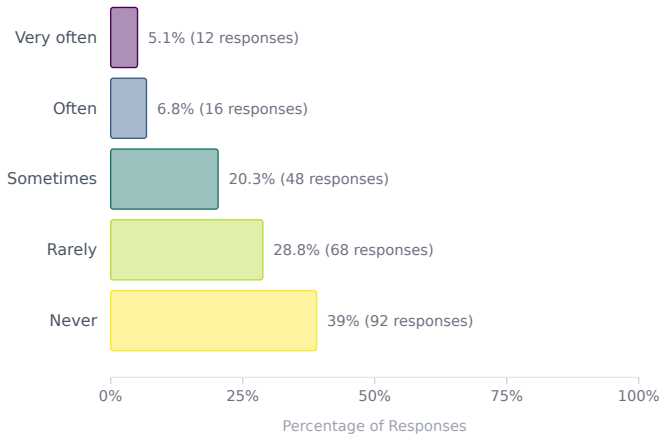


Coercion (did not contribute to calculation)

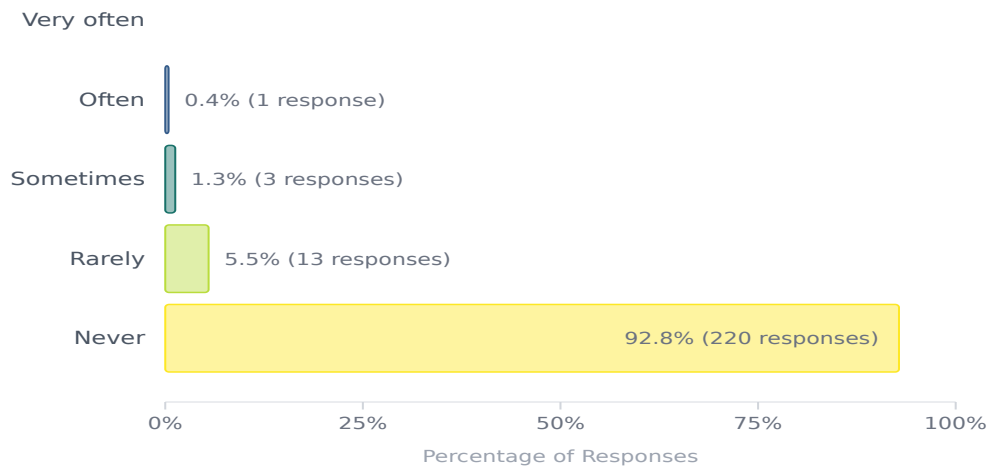


Questioning of your personal morality (did not contribute to calculation)

Workplace bullying (did not contribute to calculation)



Intimidation that targets your family or close associates (did not contribute to calculation)

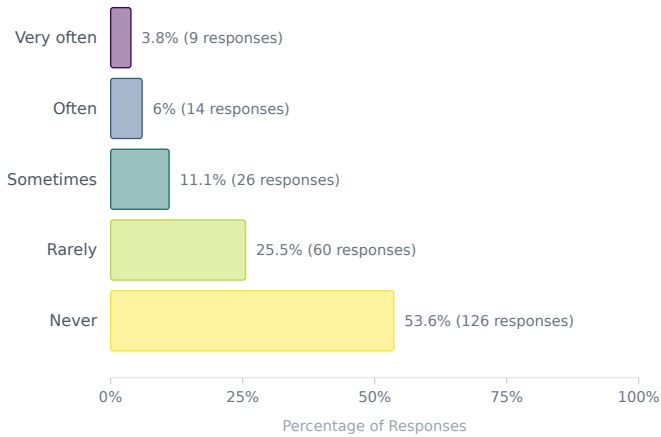


Digital Safety

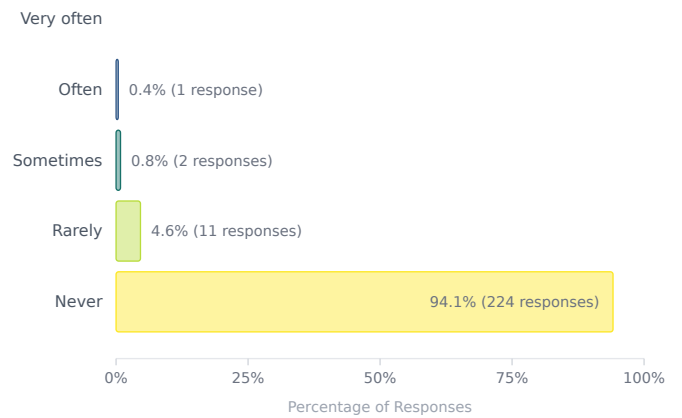
The digital dimension carries **12.5% weight in the safety index.**

Responses to: "In the last five years, how often have you experienced any of the following actions related to your work as a journalist?"

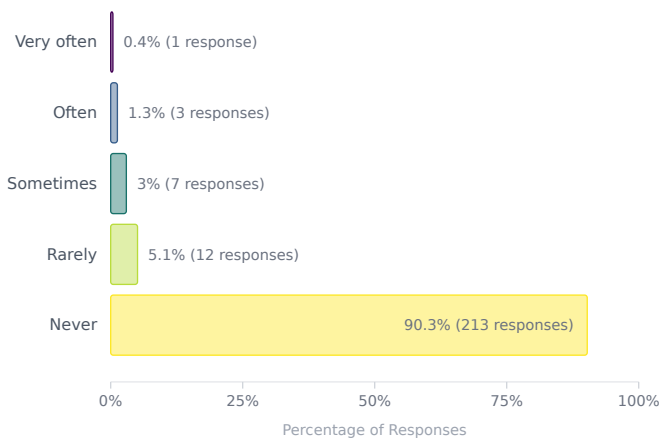
Surveillance (50% weight in digital dimension)



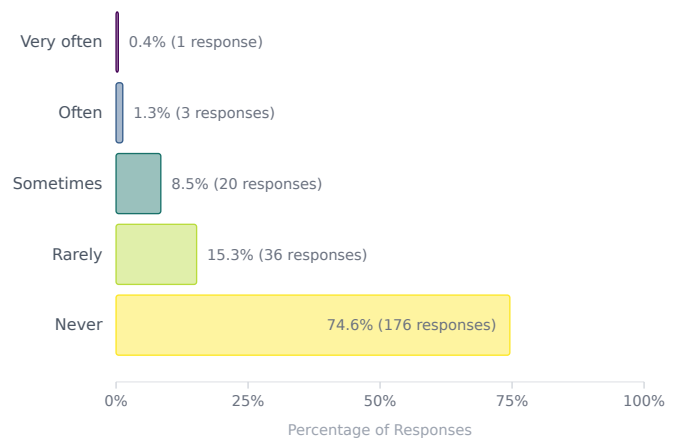
Hacking or blocking of social media accounts or websites (50% weight in digital dimension)



Others using your byline for fabricated or manipulated stories (did not contribute to calculation)



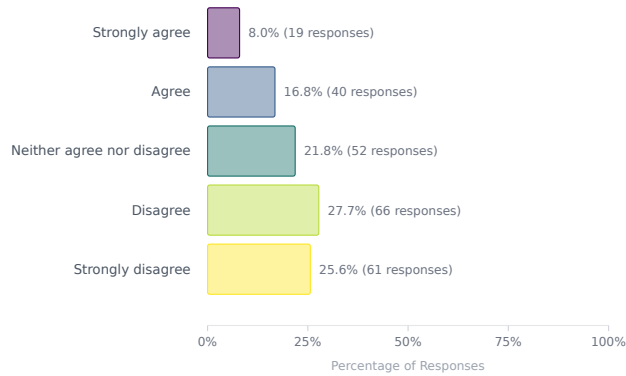
Others disseminating your personal information (did not contribute to calculation)



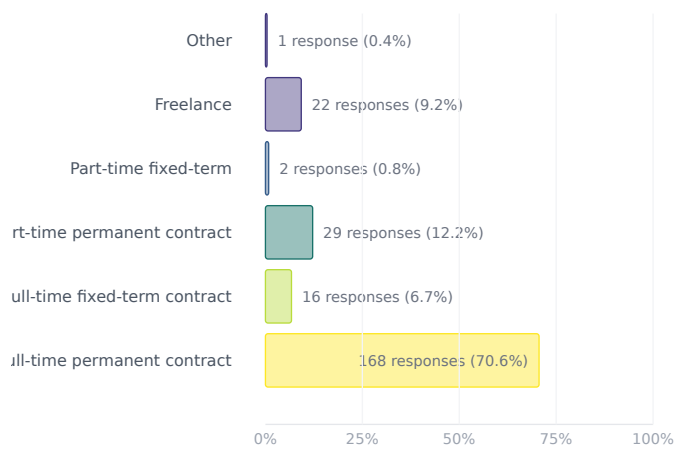
Financial Safety

The financial dimension carries **12.5% weight in the safety index.**

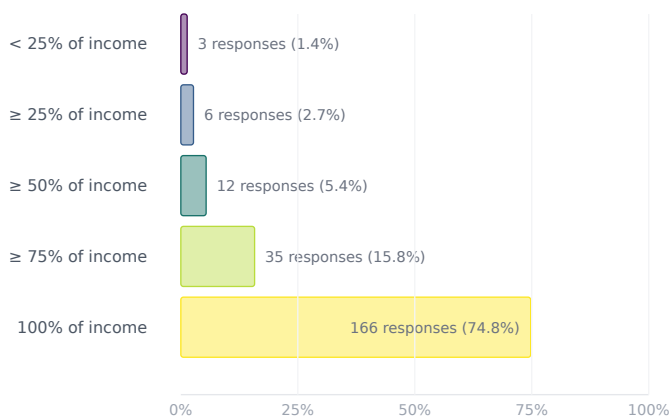
Responses to: "I am worried about losing my job in journalism within the next 12 months" (20% weight in financial dimension)



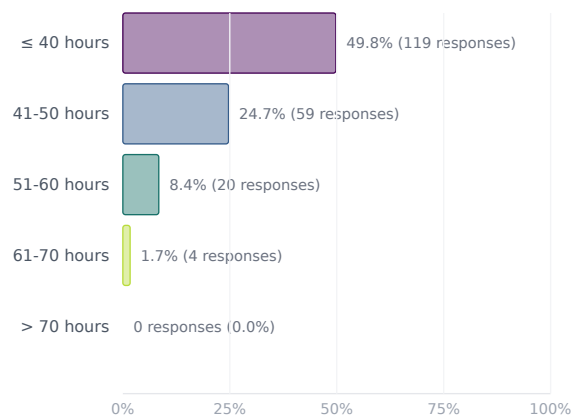
Responses to: "Which of the following categories best describes your current working situation as a journalist?" (20% weight in financial dimension)



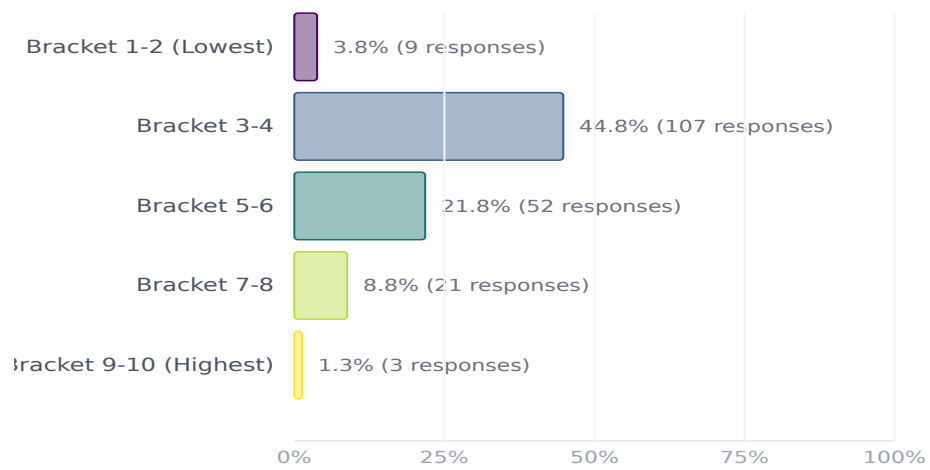
Responses to "Approximately what percentage of your overall work-related income comes from your work as a journalist?" (20% weight in financial dimension)



Responses to: "How many hours a week on average do you work as a journalist?" (20% weight in financial dimension)



Responses to: "In which of the following categories does your salary as a journalist fall?" (20% weight in financial dimension)



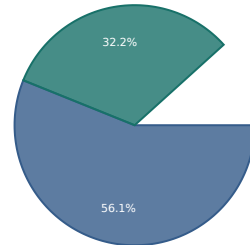
Options are given on a 10-point scale specific to each country.

Demographics

This section contains demographic information about survey respondents from Iceland.

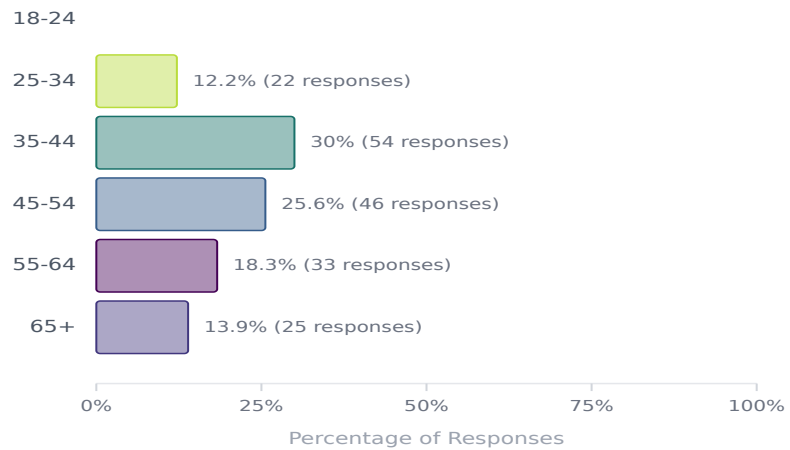
Gender Breakdown of Respondents

Survey Participation

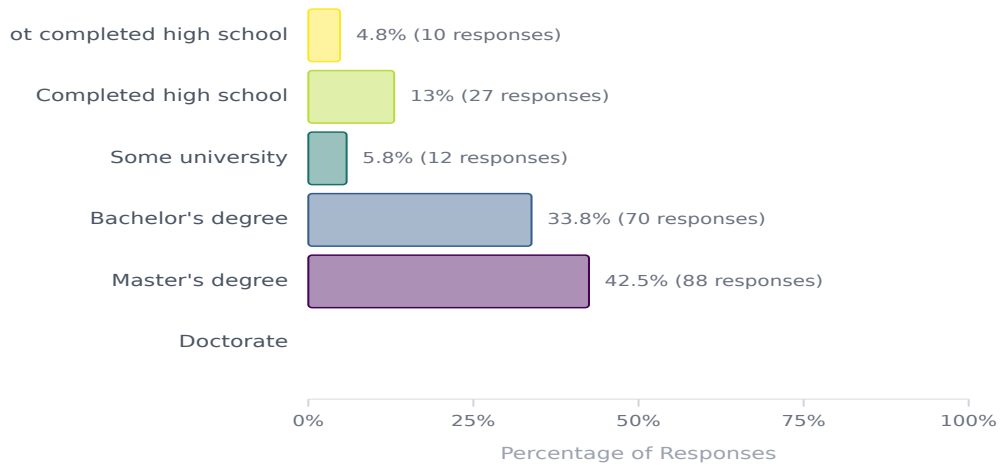


■ Male (134, 56.1%) ■ Female (77, 32.2%) ■ Other (0, 0.0%)

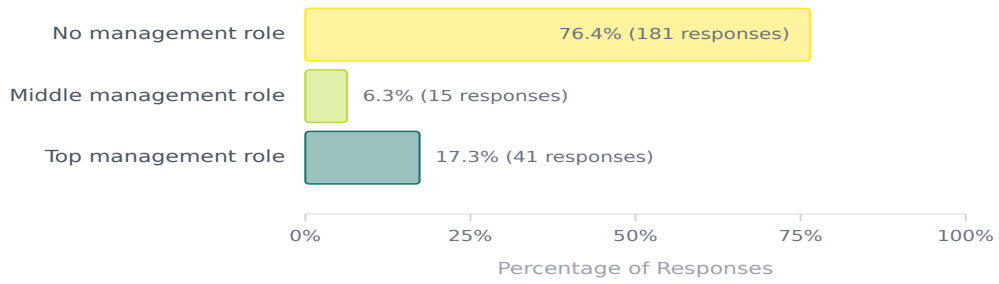
Age Distribution of Respondents



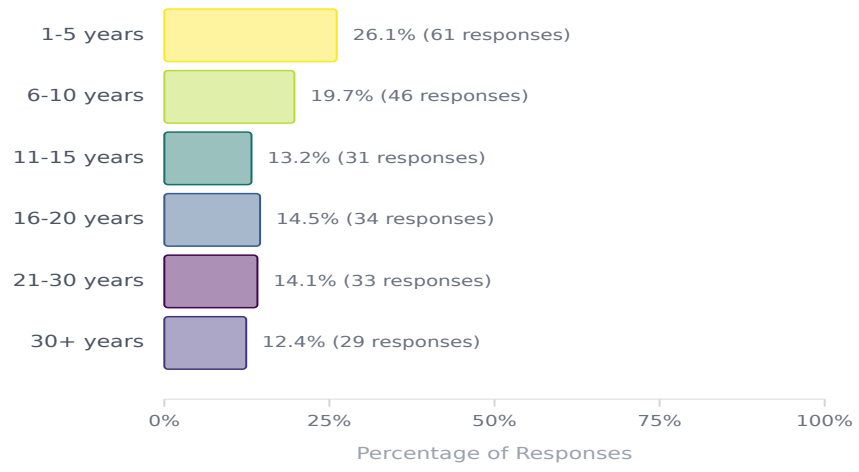
Education Level of Respondents



Workplace Position of Respondents



Years of Experience as Journalist



For more detailed information about the methodology and complete findings, please visit the full country page at: <https://safetyofjournalists.org/index/country/iceland>

© 2026 - A joint initiative between the University of Liverpool and the Worlds of Journalism Study, in co-operation with UNESCO

For more information, visit safetyofjournalists.org

Document generated automatically on May 20, 2026 at 05:16