SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS

Safety of Journalists Country Report

Mexico

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Mexico's alarming position among the bottom five of more than seventy countries for journalist safety reflects deep-rooted systemic failures and the persistent threats faced by those who inform the public. The country's disaggregated scores highlight the complexity of the problem: out of the 73 countries evaluated, Mexico ranks 69th in physical safety, 61st in psychological safety, 56th in digital safety, and 55th in financial safety.

This troubling reality stems from several intertwined factors that demand urgent attention. First, the pervasive impunity surrounding attacks on journalists act as a major driver of violence, particularly physical assaults. The chronic inability of the Mexican justice system to effectively investigate and prosecute threats or murders of journalists has created an environment in which such crimes are perceived as low risk. This lack of accountability encourages perpetrators, creating a vicious cycle in which physical attacks escalate there are few, if any, consequences. The message is clear: violence against the press rarely results in punishment. Second, precarious working conditions, especially in regional and local contexts, heighten journalists' exposure to financial risk. Many are forced to take on multiple assignments or second jobs due to low pay and the absence of stable contracts. Unlike those in larger media organizations, they often lack institutional support or access to safety measures. These conditions lead to excessive workloads, chronic stress and inadequate compensation, resulting in severe mental health challenges that potentially impair judgment and increase risks. In addition, the fear of reprisal and threat of being silenced contribute to an atmosphere of self-censorship and withdrawal from high-risk reporting areas. These protective strategies give rise to so-called "silence zones" where critical information fails to reach the public. In areas dominated by authoritarian practices or criminal control, journalists are often isolated and left unprotected when allies in the press or civil society are absent.

Finally, escalating political polarization and growing anti-press rhetoric, including from the president and ruling government, have added a dangerous dimension to the threats journalists face. Such discourse erodes public trust in the media and normalizes hostility towards journalists. One of the most pernicious effects is the proliferation of digital violence, including online harassment and hate speech, which increasingly affects journalists across all regions. These attacks are not confined to virtual spaces; they often precede or accompany physical aggression, blurring the boundaries between digital and real-world violence.

In conclusion, Mexico's troubling standing in the Global Index on Journalists' Safety reflects a combination of unchecked impunity, precarious working conditions, and a toxic political and media environment fueled by political polarization and mistrust. Addressing this crisis requires a multi-pronged approach: strengthening mechanisms to investigate and prosecute crimes against journalists, improving labour protections and institutional support, and confronting anti-media rhetoric and online violence head-on.

Safety Index Scores

Overall Safety Score

60.91

Safety Dimensions

Physical Safety

54.58

Psychological Safety

66.61

Digital Safety

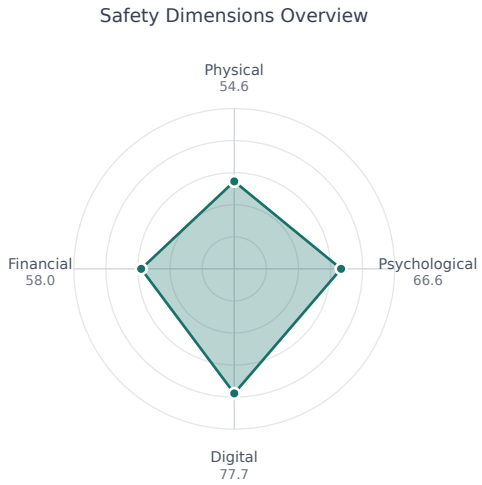
77.71

Financial Safety

58.01

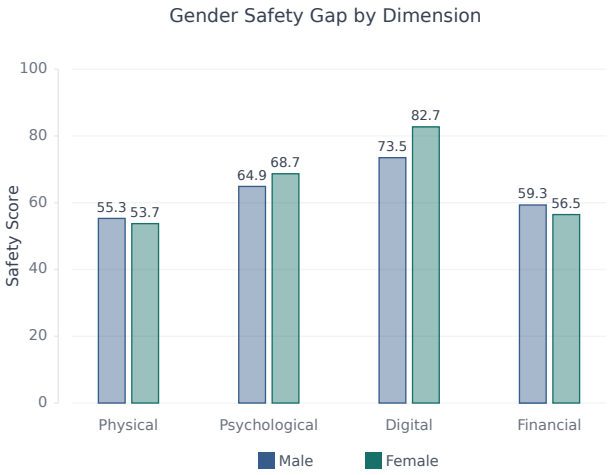
Overview

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



Safety Dimensions

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



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**.

103

Journalist Killings

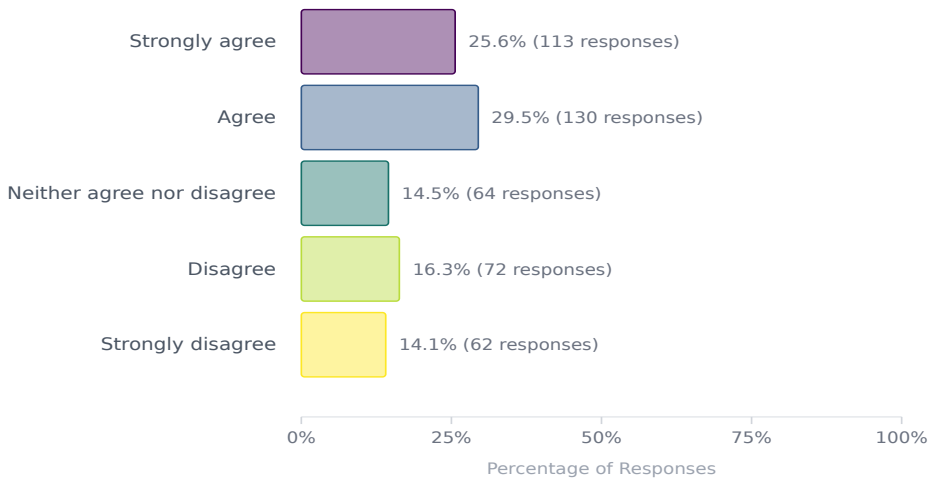
2016-2024

This figure represents the total number of journalist killings in Mexico 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.

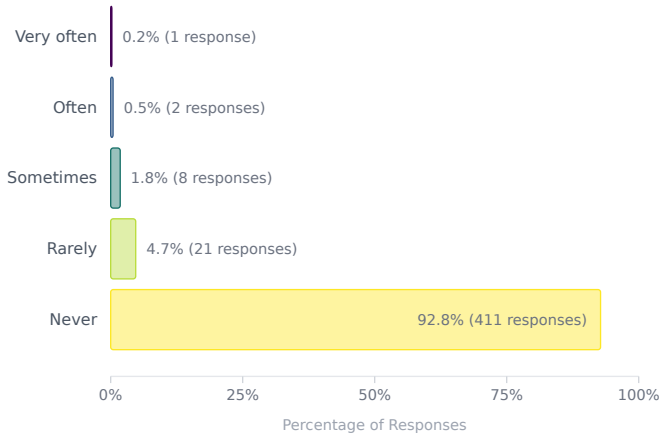
Responses to: "I am concerned about my physical wellbeing" (20% weight in physical dimension)

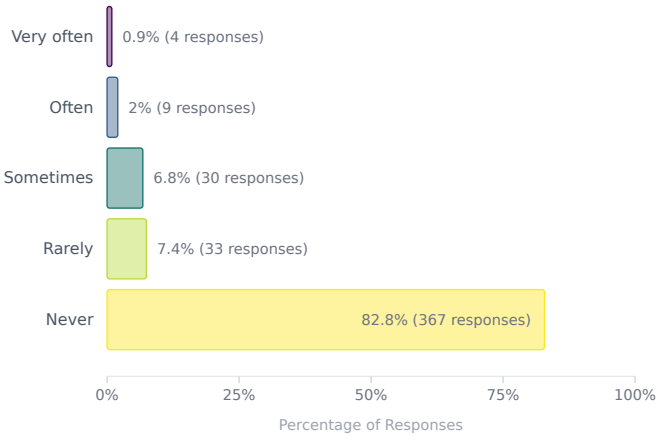


Responses to: "In the last five years, how often have you experienced any of the following actions related to your work as a journalist?"

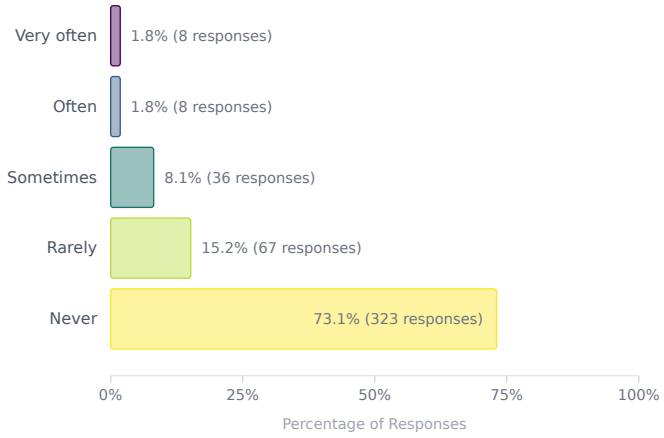
Arrests, detentions or imprisonment (15% weight in physical dimension)

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

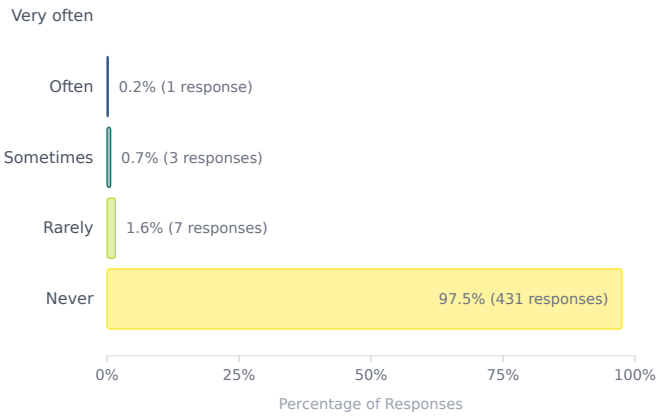




Other physical attacks (15% weight in physical dimension)

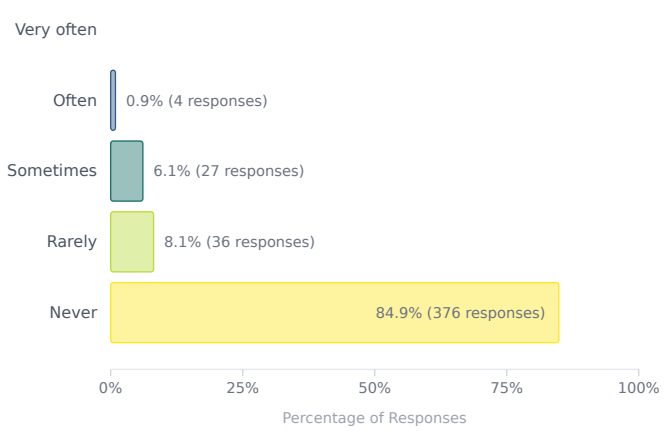


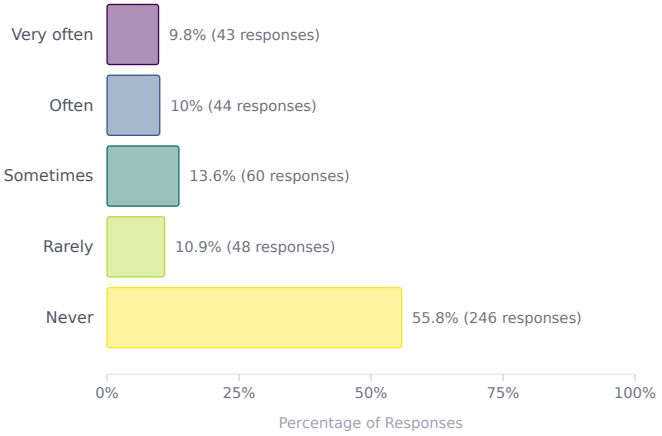
Abductions (did not contribute to calculation)



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)

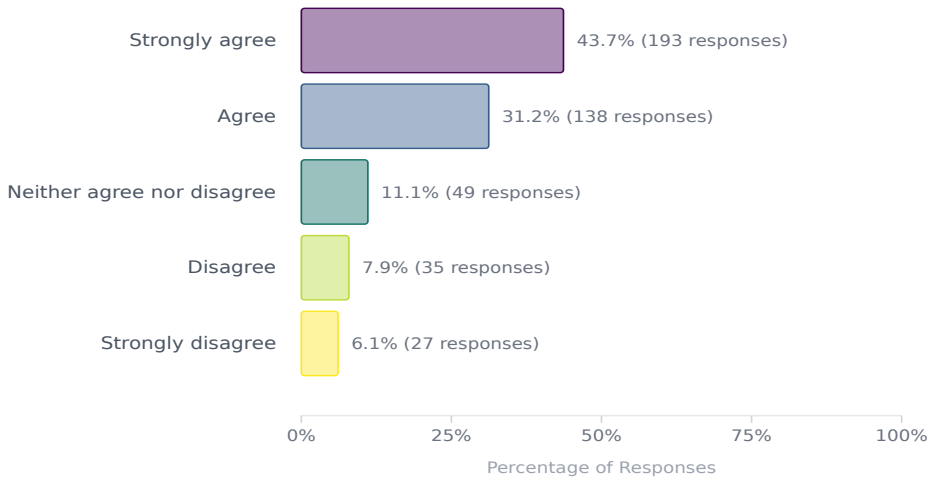

Very often
Often
0.9% (4 responses)
Sometimes
6.1% (27 responses)
Rarely
8.1% (36 responses)
Never
84.9% (376 responses)
0%
25%
50%
75%
100%
Percentage of Responses


Very often
9.8% (43 responses)
Often
10% (44 responses)
Sometimes
13.6% (60 responses)
Rarely
10.9% (48 responses)
Never
55.8% (246 responses)
0%
25%
50%
75%
100%
Percentage of Responses

Psychological Safety

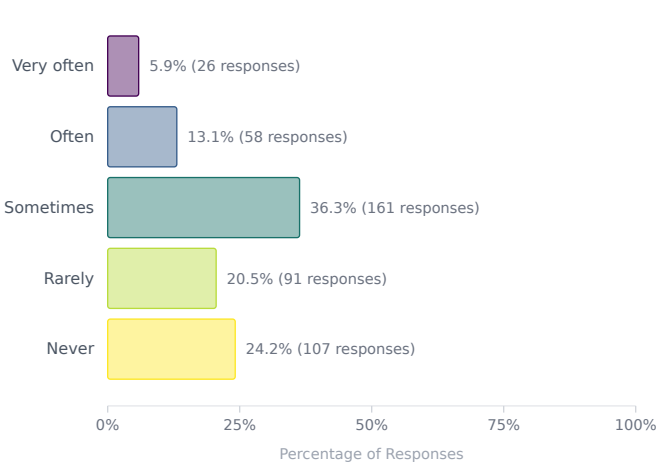
The psychological dimension carries **25% weight in the safety index**.

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

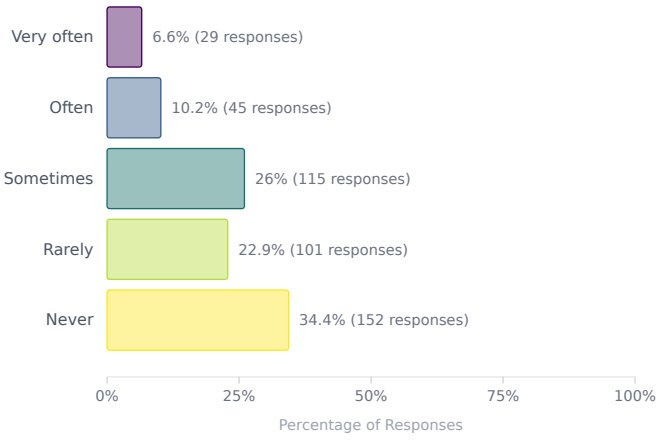


Responses to: "In the last five years, how often have you experienced any of the following actions related to your work as a journalist?"

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



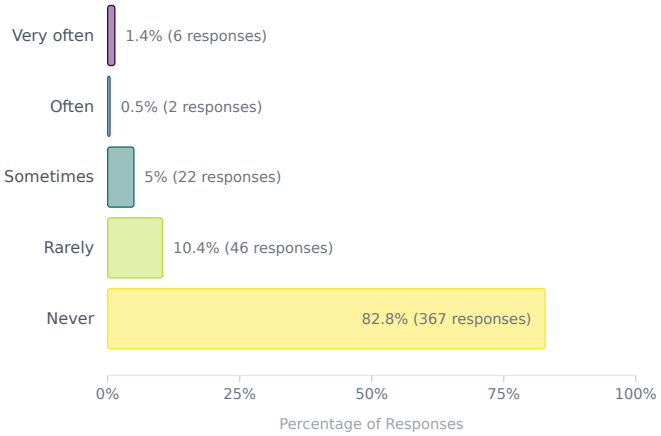
Public discrediting of your work (16% weight in psychological dimension)

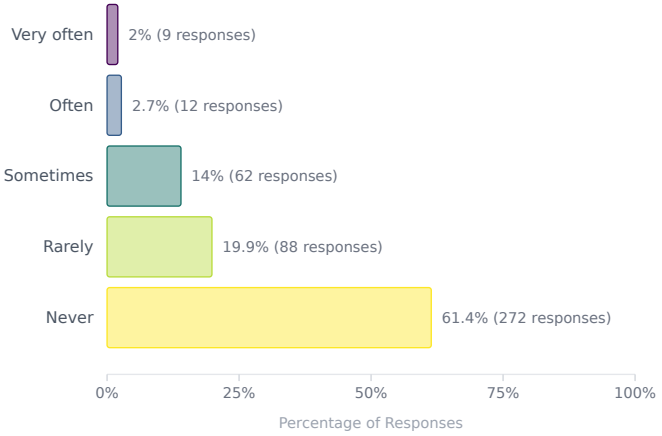


Legal actions against you because of your work (16% weight in psychological

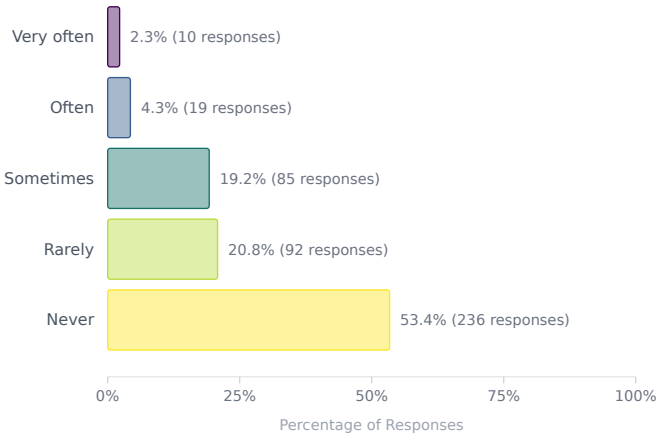
Stalking (16% weight in psychological dimension)

dimension)

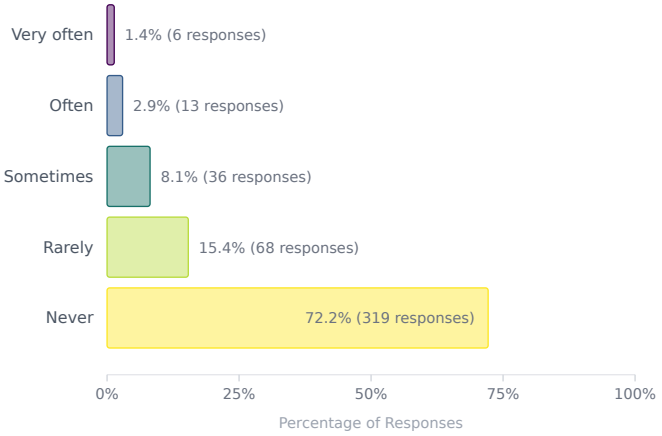




Other threats or intimidation directed at you (16% weight in psychological dimension)

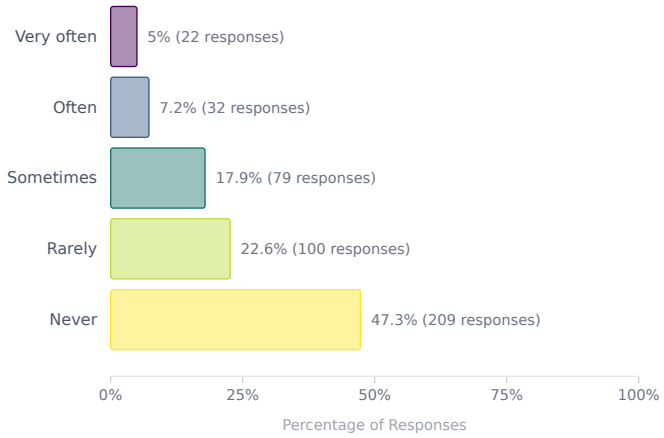


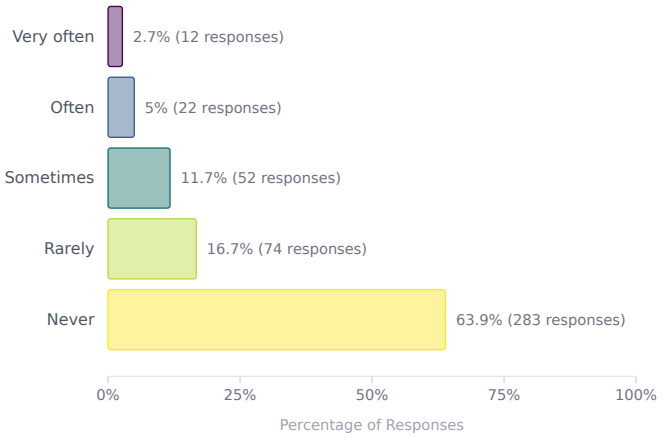
Coercion (did not contribute to calculation)



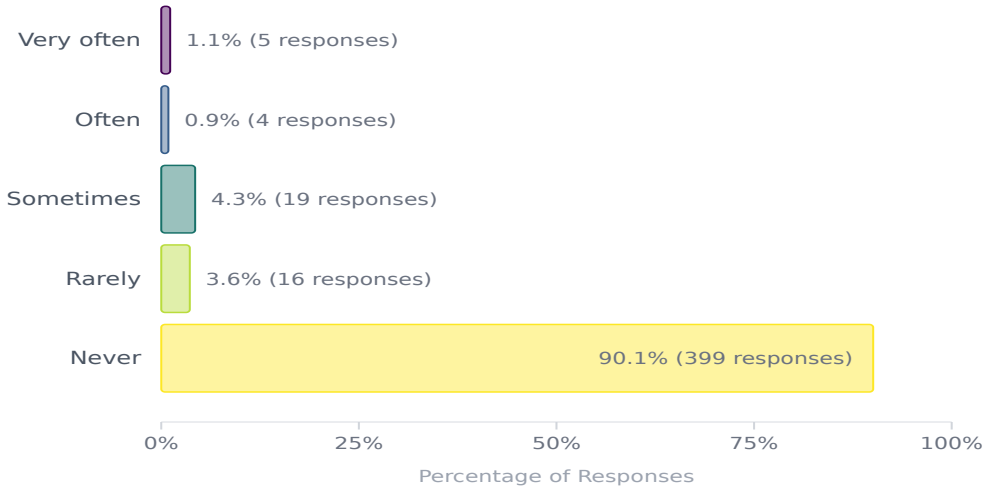
Questioning of your personal morality (did not contribute to calculation)

Workplace bullying (did not contribute to calculation)





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

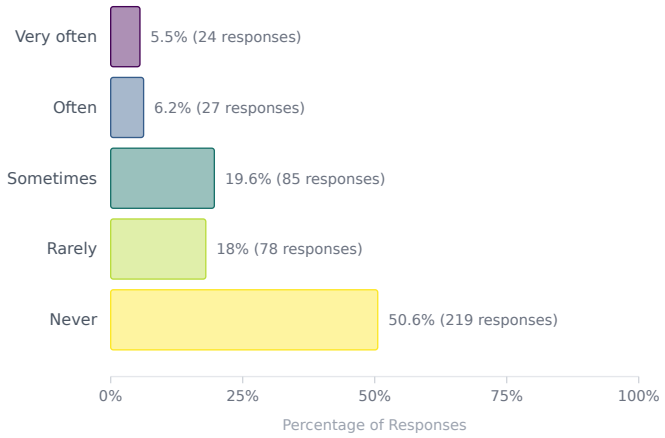


Digital Safety

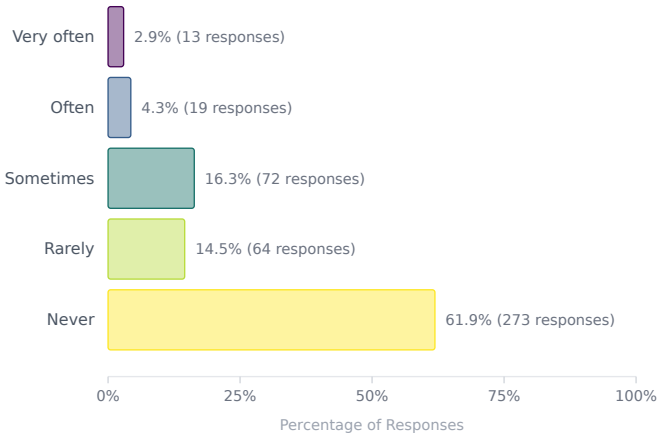
The digital dimension carries **12.5% weight in the safety index**.

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

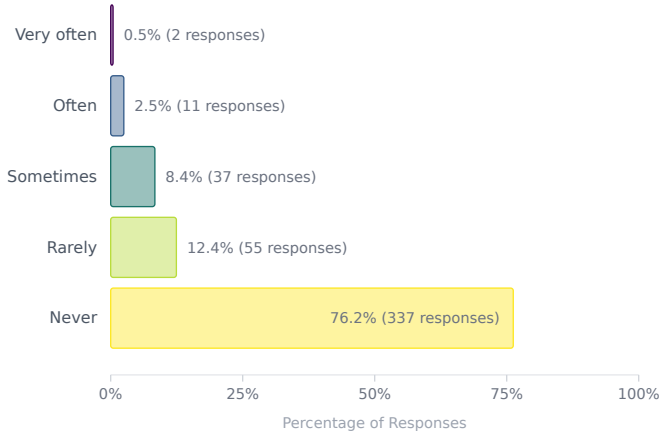
Surveillance (50% weight in digital dimension)



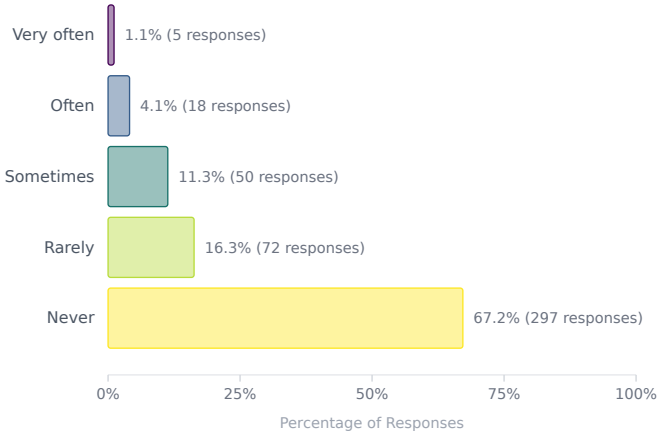
Hacking or blocking of social media accounts or websites (50% weight in digital dimension)



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



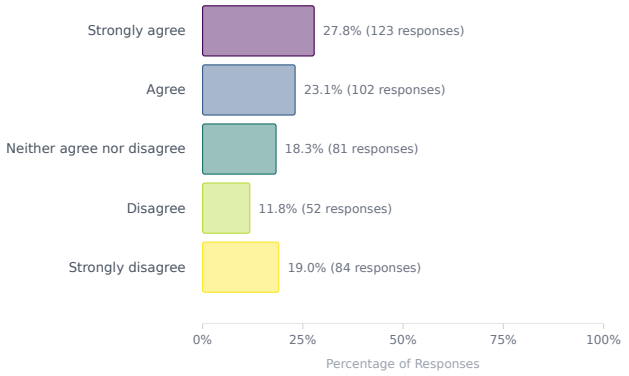
Others disseminating your personal information (did not contribute to calculation)



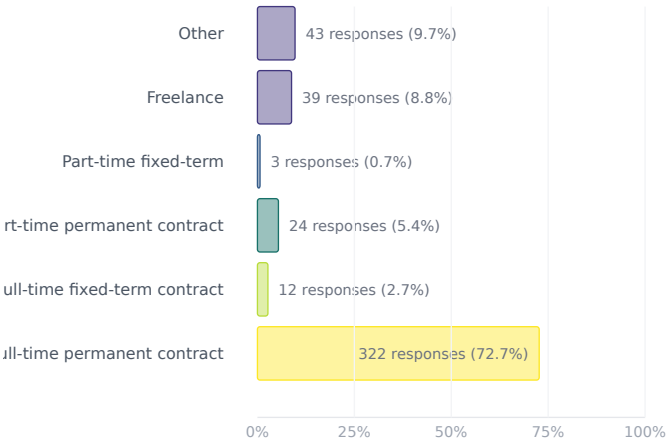
Financial Safety

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

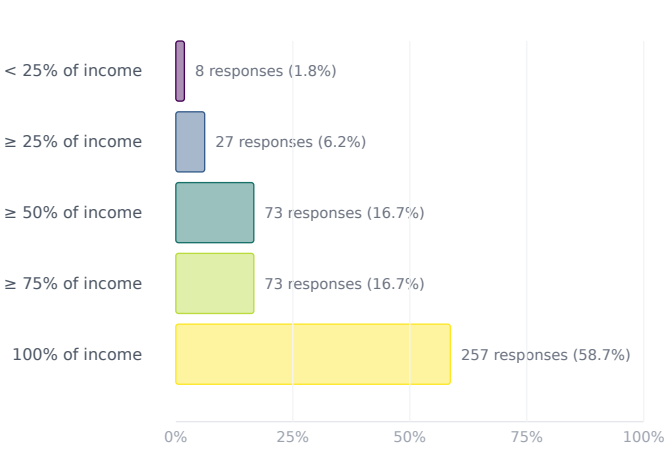
Responses to: "I am worried about losing my job in journalism within the next 12 months" (20% weight in financial dimension)



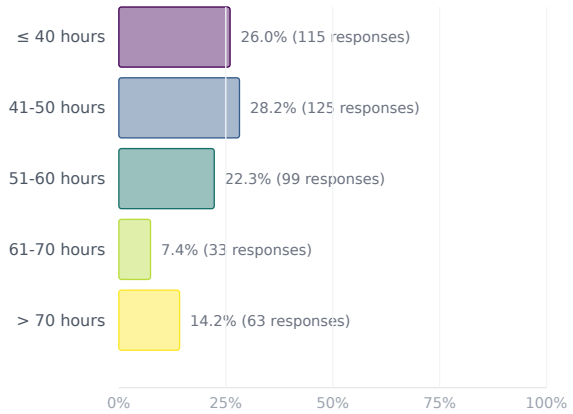
Responses to: "Which of the following categories best describes your current working situation as a journalist?" (20% weight in financial dimension)



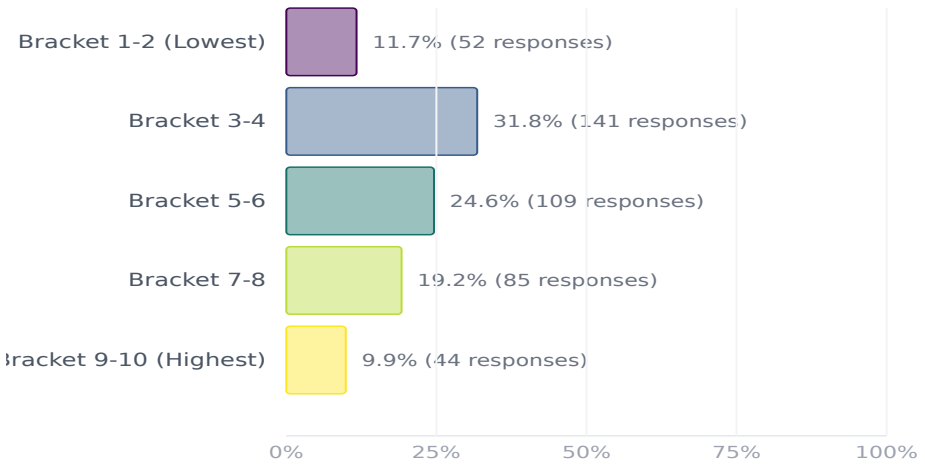
Responses to "Approximately what percentage of your overall work-related income comes from your work as a journalist?" (20% weight in financial dimension)



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

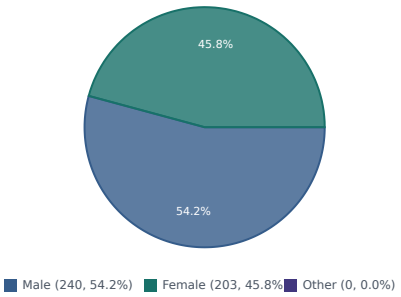
This section contains demographic information about survey respondents from Mexico.

Survey Participation

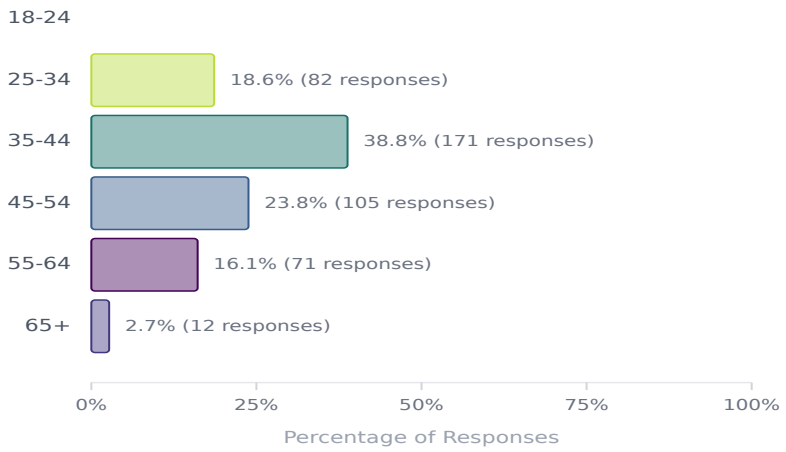
443

Total respondents

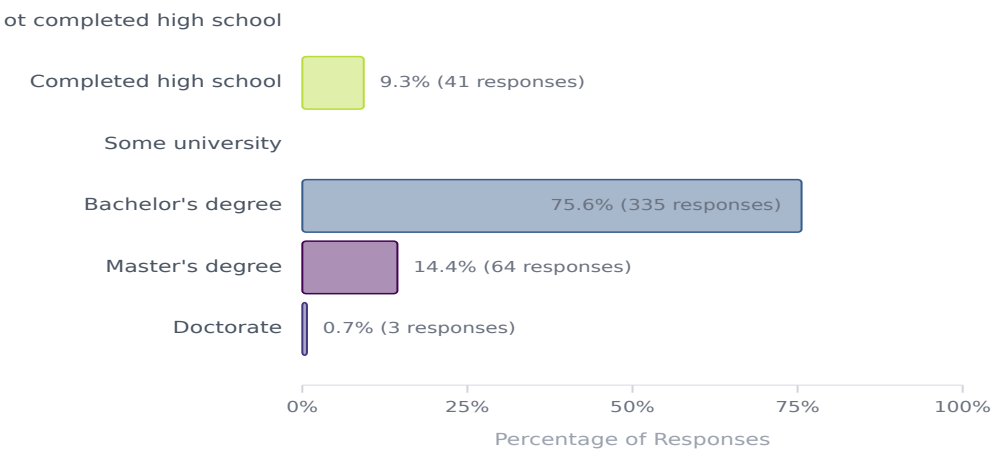
Gender Breakdown of Respondents



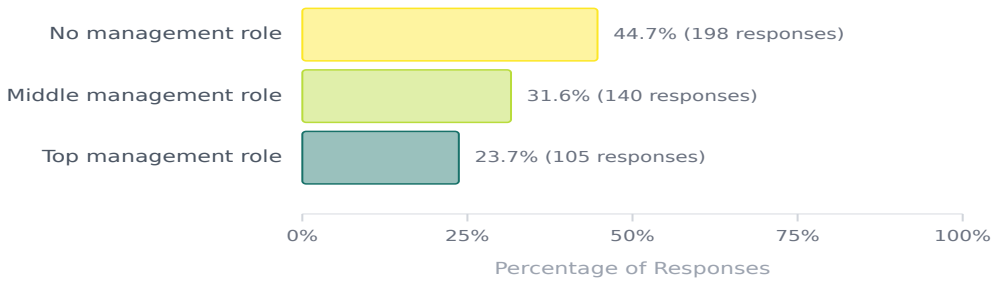
Age Distribution of Respondents



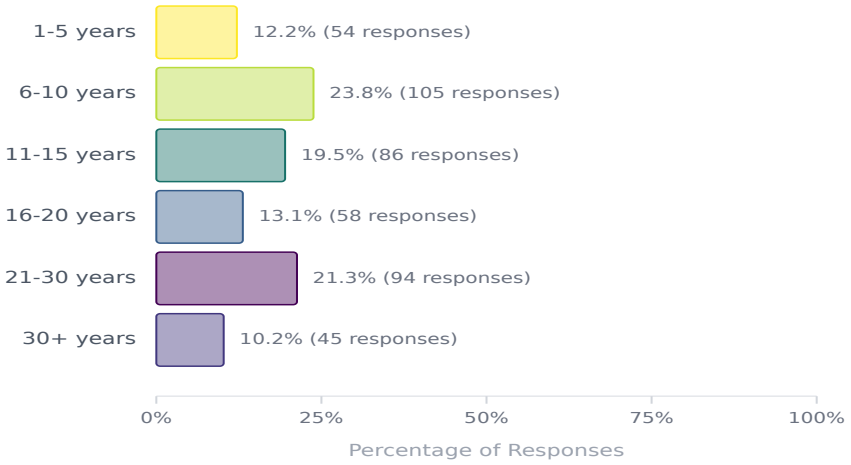
Education Level of Respondents



Workplace Position of Respondents



Years of Experience as Journalist


1-5 years
12.2% (54 responses)
6-10 years
23.8% (105 responses)
11-15 years
19.5% (86 responses)
16-20 years
13.1% (58 responses)
21-30 years
21.3% (94 responses)
30+ years
10.2% (45 responses)
0%
25%
50%
75%
100%
Percentage of Responses

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

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For more information, visit safetyofjournalists.org

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