

Safety of Journalists Country Report

Portugal

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Report Authors

Dr Rui Alexandre Novais (*Universidade Católica Portuguesa*)
Invited Auxiliary Professor and Researcher

Portugal is widely acknowledged as a secure environment for journalists, having risen in the 2024 World Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders (RSF). Journalists' work is broadly respected, and the media sector holds one of Europe's highest public trust ratings (RSF, 2024). The country's strong index performance is underscored by the rarity of documented physical or digital attacks on journalists during the assessment period. Threats like online surveillance, cyber-attacks, and social media harassment remain infrequent, aligning with earlier studies that categorize such risks as negligible or confined to contexts like football-related conflicts (Araújo, 2024; Fidalgo, 2021: 321). Recent research further highlights increasing politically motivated online targeting of investigative journalists, particularly from a radical-right-wing party during election campaigns (Novais, 2022; Novais, 2024: 12–13; RSF, 2024).

Despite robust constitutional and legal safeguards for press freedom, media outlets face persistent pressures. In March 2025, the government introduced the National Safety Plan for Journalists and Other Media Professionals (PNSJ), designed to reinforce societal recognition of journalists' roles and enhance protections against physical and online threats (Neves, 2024). However, systemic economic issues remain a critical concern. Portugal's mediocre standing in financial security aligns with a parallel study on journalists' working conditions, which uncovered pervasive challenges such as inadequate wages, job instability, chronic fatigue, and occupational stress (Neves, 2024). Further research highlights Portuguese journalists' growing sense of employment insecurity, frustration with stagnant salaries, and restricted prospects for professional growth (Araújo, 2024; Fidalgo, 2021). While surveyed journalists did not explicitly acknowledge emotional or mental health struggles—often dismissing them as occupational norms or manageable stressors—other studies emphasize significant burnout linked to journalistic workloads (Araújo, 2025; Neves, 2024). This latent concern became evident when professionals overwhelmingly endorsed a motion at the 2024 Congress of Portuguese Journalists, advocating for free psychological support systems to address these unspoken pressures.

References:

- Araújo, R. (2024). Who Wants to be a Journalist? Journalists' Exposure to Violence on the Job. *Journalism Practice*, 1–15.
- Araújo, R. (2025). Insulted and outraged: How do Portuguese journalists experience precarity. *Journalism*, 14648849251314786.

Safety Index Scores

Overall Safety Score

89.72

Safety Dimensions

Physical Safety

98.15

Psychological Safety

79.31

Digital Safety

98.12

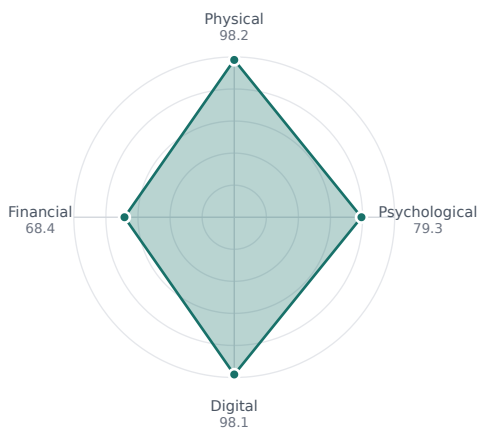
Financial Safety

68.42

Overview

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

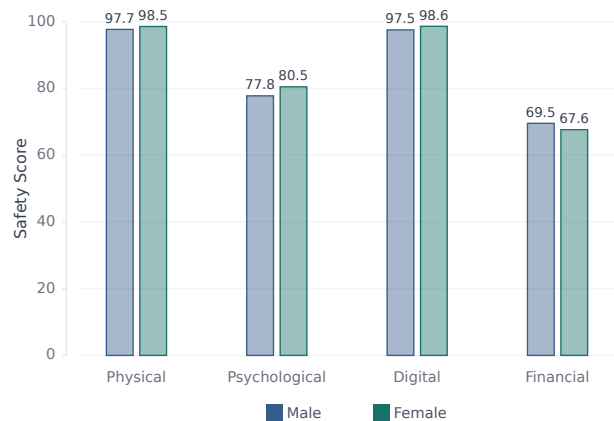
Safety Dimensions Overview



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

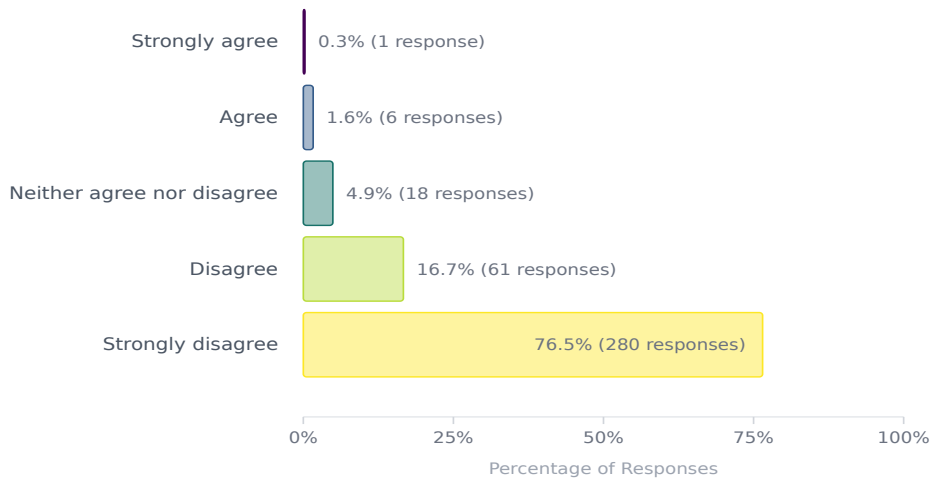
2016-2024

No journalist killings have been recorded in Portugal 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.

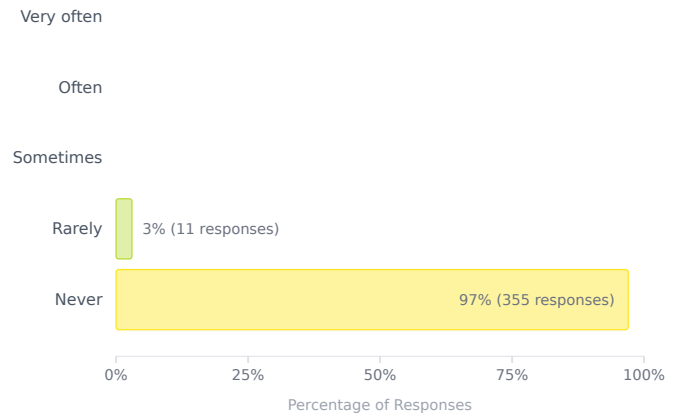
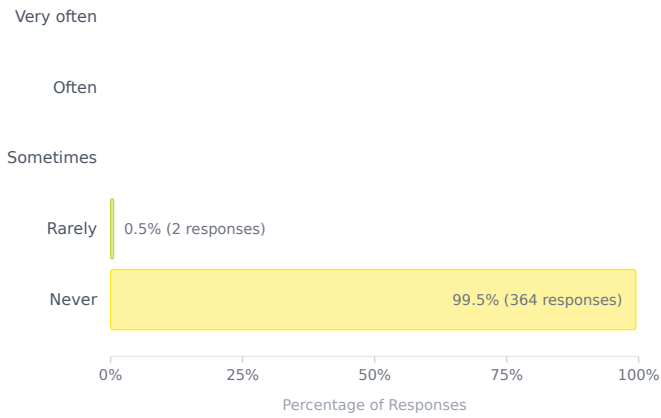
Responses to: "I am concerned about my physical wellbeing" (20% weight in physical dimension)



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

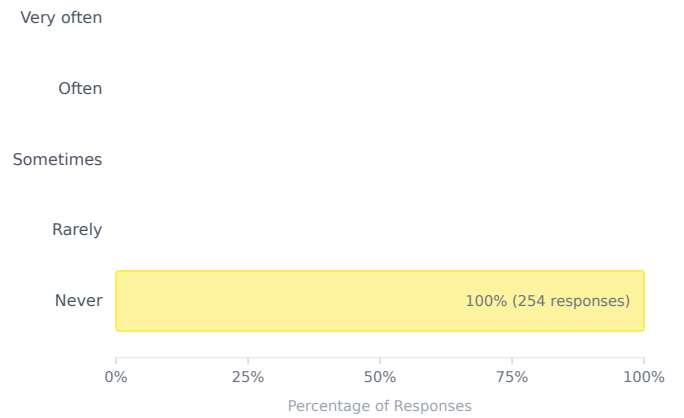
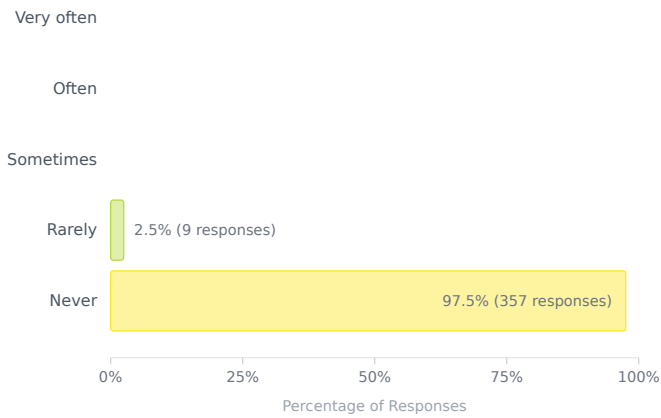
Arrests, detentions or imprisonment (15% weight in physical dimension)

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



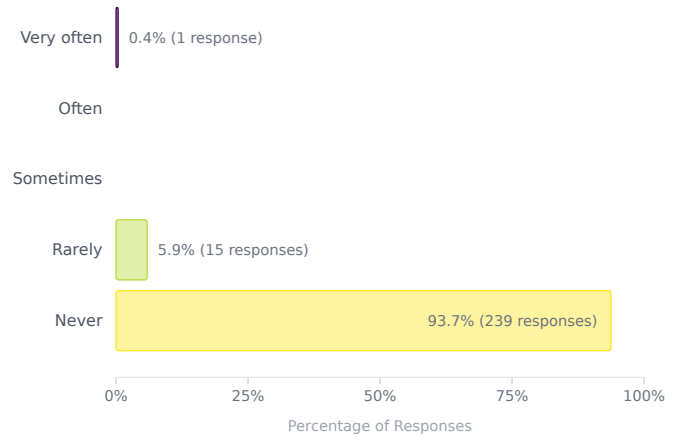
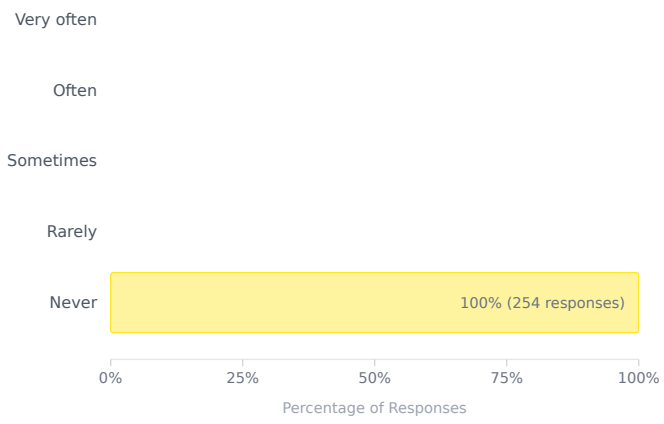
Other physical attacks (15% weight in physical dimension)

Abductions (did not contribute to calculation)



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

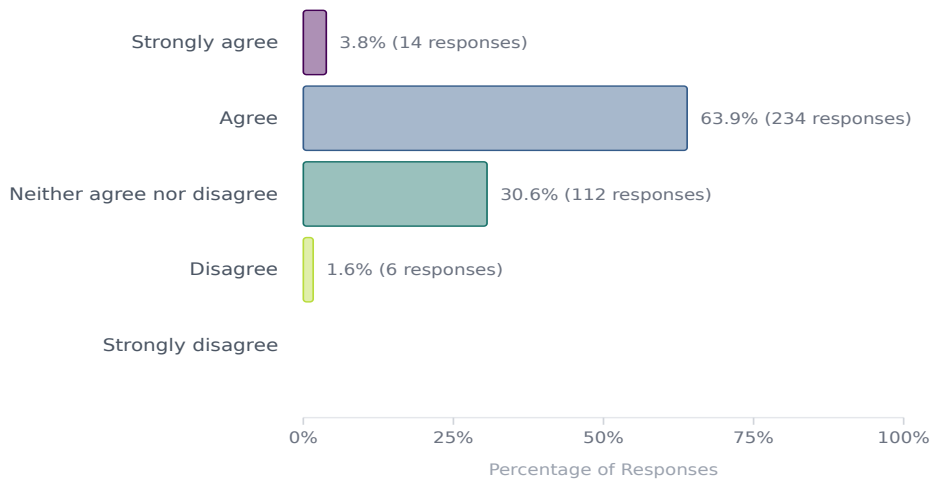
Being required to work in an environment where COVID-19 had easily spread (did not contribute to calculation)



Psychological Safety

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

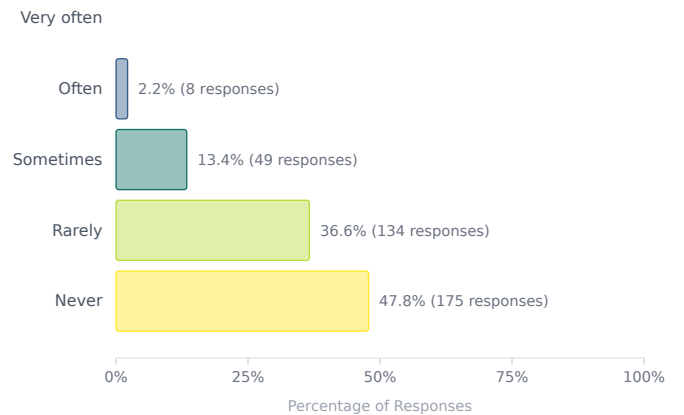
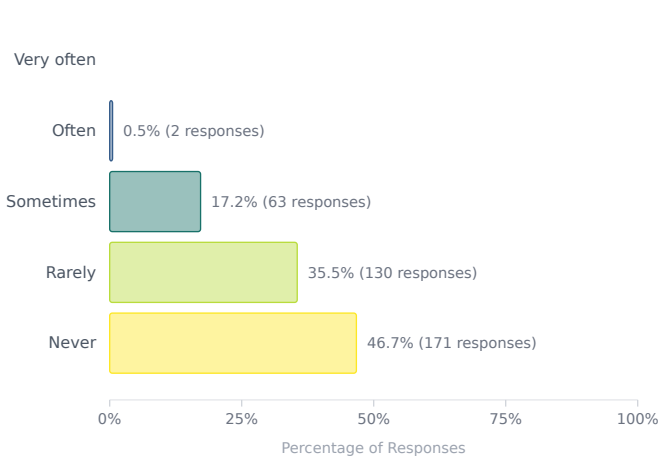
Responses to: "I am concerned about my emotional wellbeing" (20% weight in psychological dimension)



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)

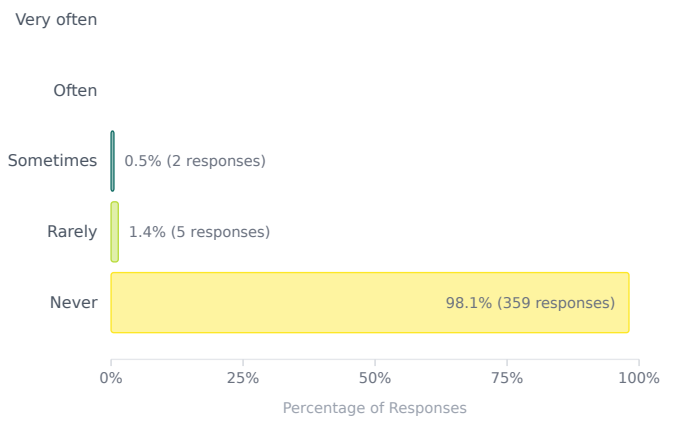
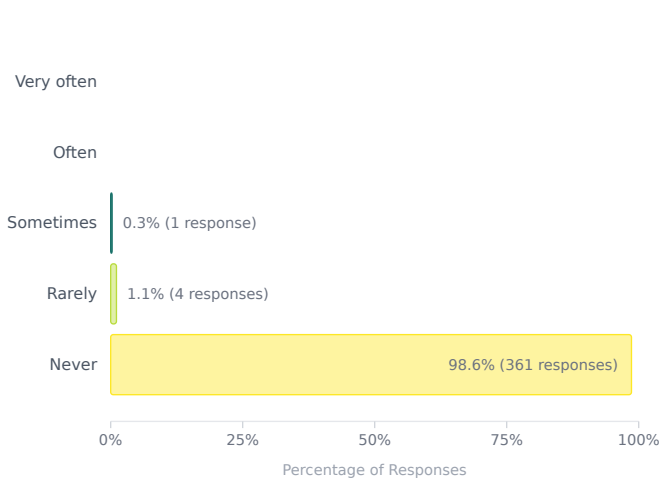
Public discrediting of your work (16% weight in psychological dimension)



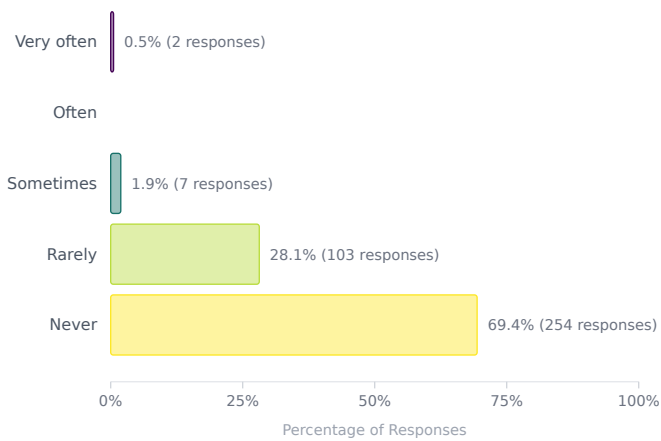
Legal actions against you because of your work (16% weight in psychological dimension)

Stalking (16% weight in psychological dimension)

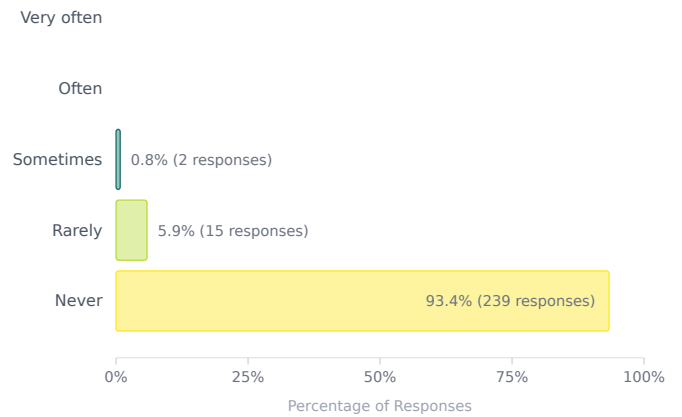
dimension)



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

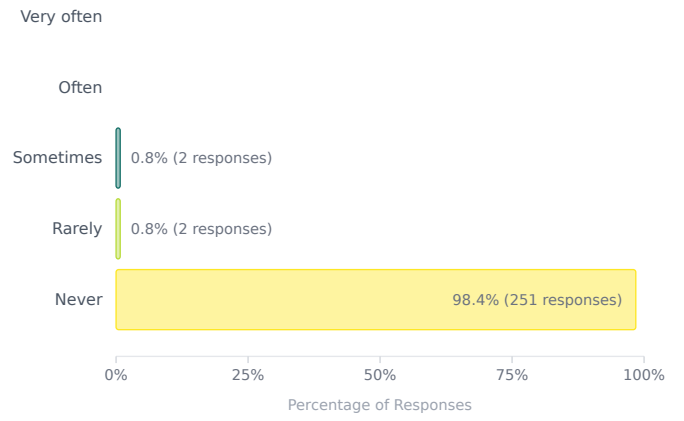
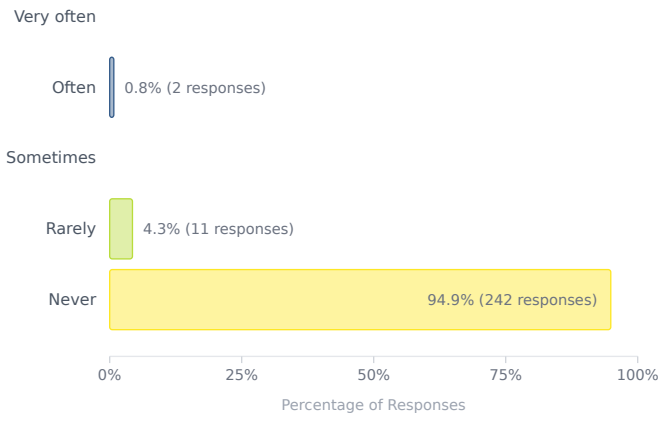


Coercion (did not contribute to calculation)

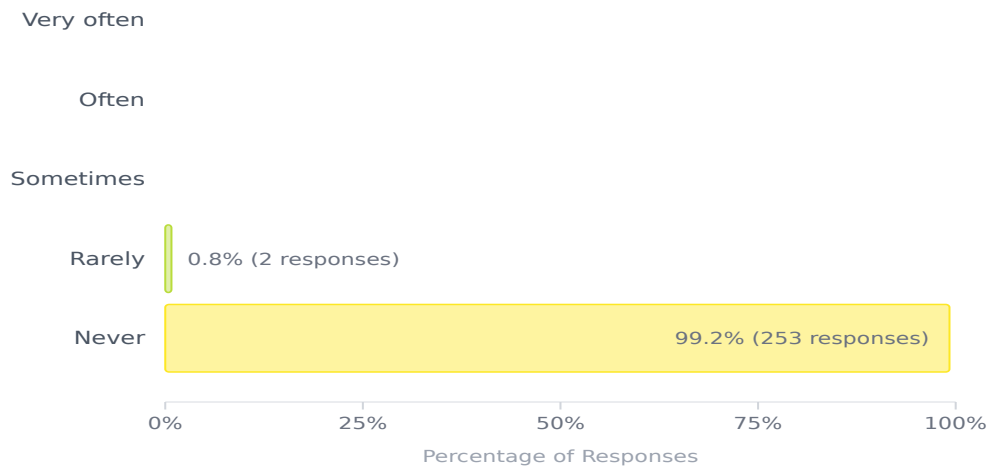


Questioning of your personal morality (did not contribute to calculation)

Workplace bullying (did not contribute to calculation)



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

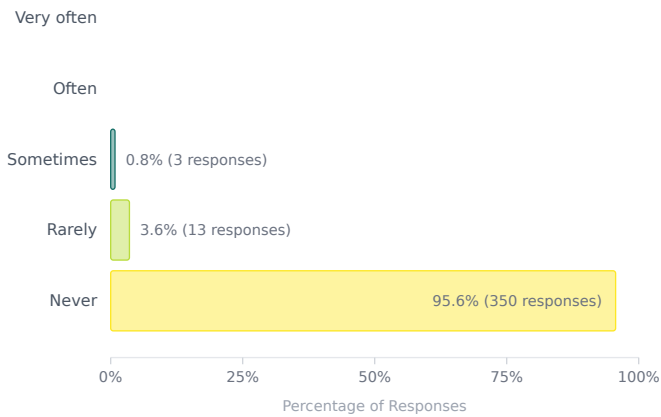


Digital Safety

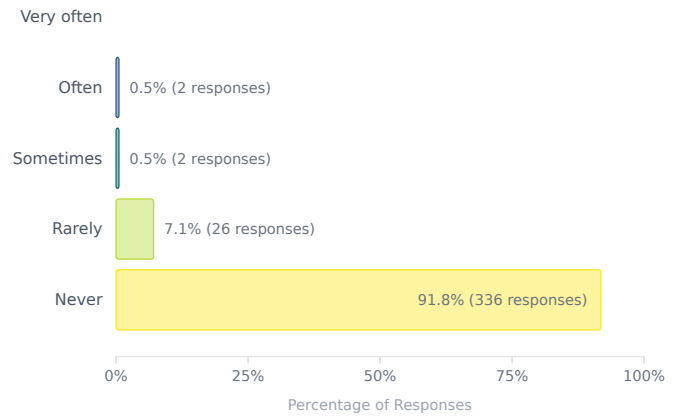
The digital dimension carries **12.5% weight in the safety index**.

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

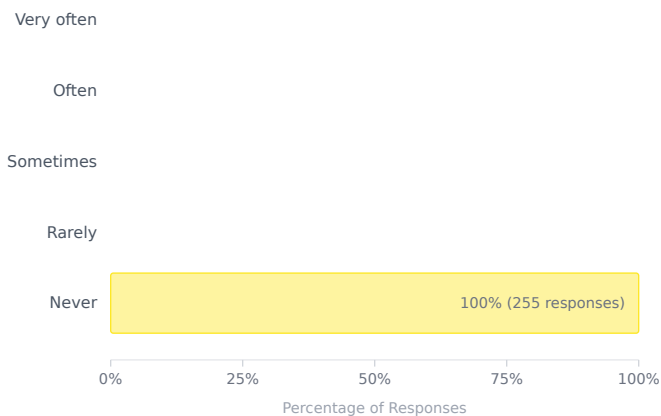
Surveillance (50% weight in digital dimension)



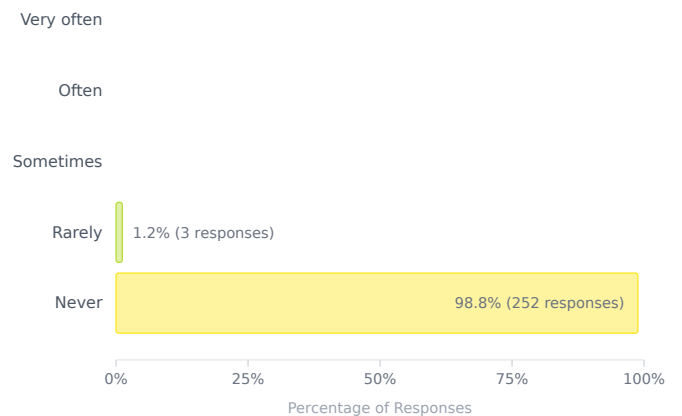
Hacking or blocking of social media accounts or websites (50% weight in digital dimension)



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



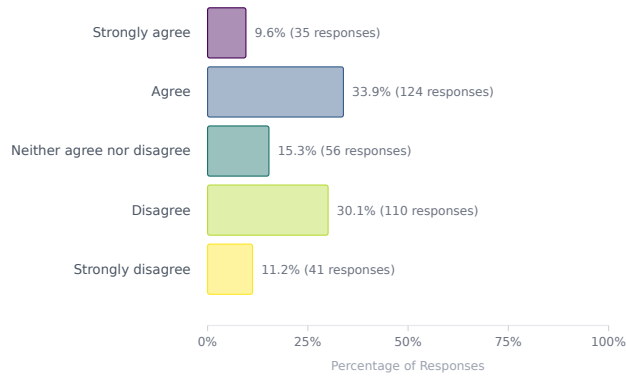
Others disseminating your personal information (did not contribute to calculation)



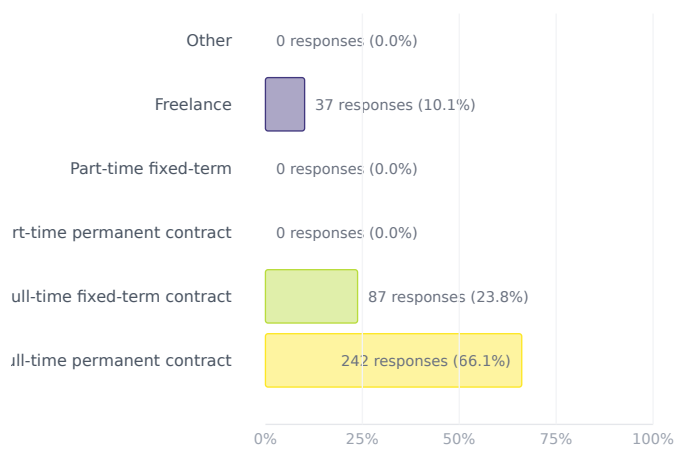
Financial Safety

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

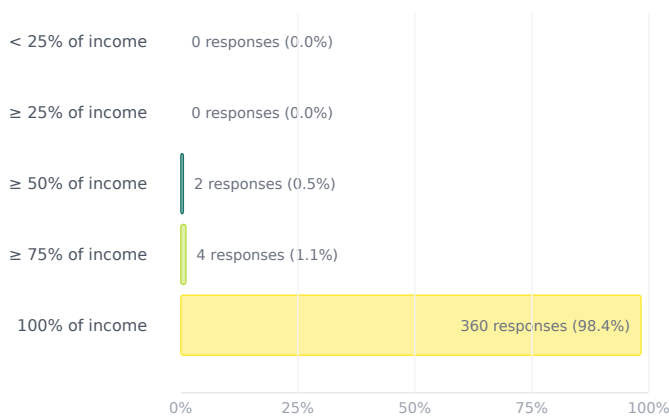
Responses to: "I am worried about losing my job in journalism within the next 12 months" (20% weight in financial dimension)



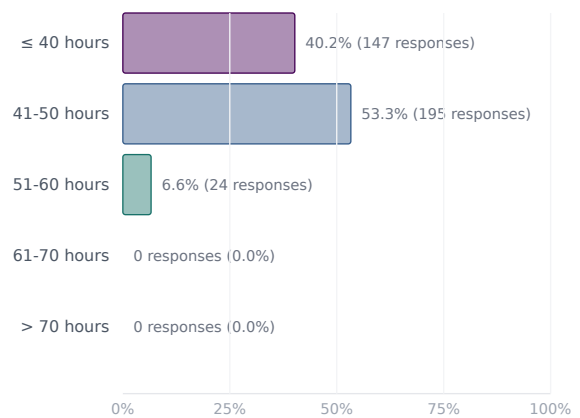
Responses to: "Which of the following categories best describes your current working situation as a journalist?" (20% weight in financial dimension)



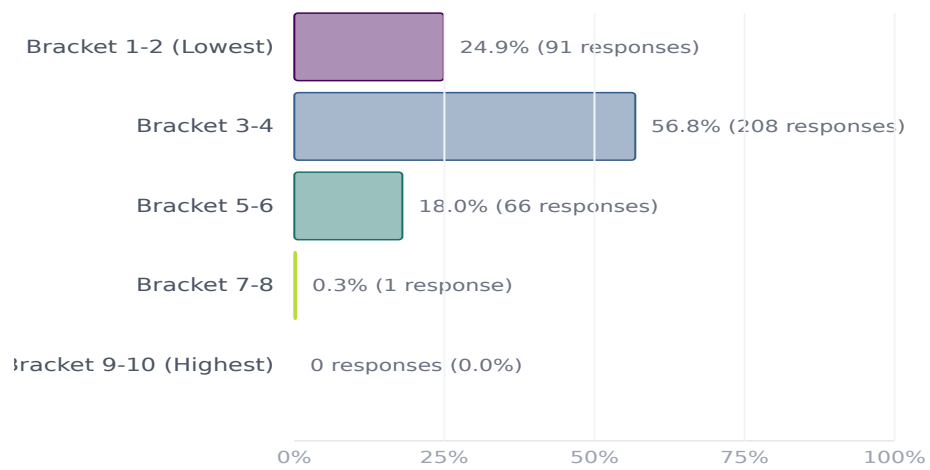
Responses to "Approximately what percentage of your overall work-related income comes from your work as a journalist?" (20% weight in financial dimension)



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)



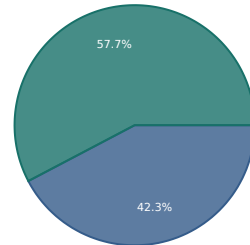
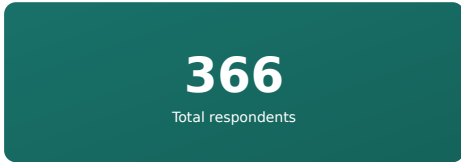
Options are given on a 10-point scale specific to each country.

Demographics

This section contains demographic information about survey respondents from Portugal.

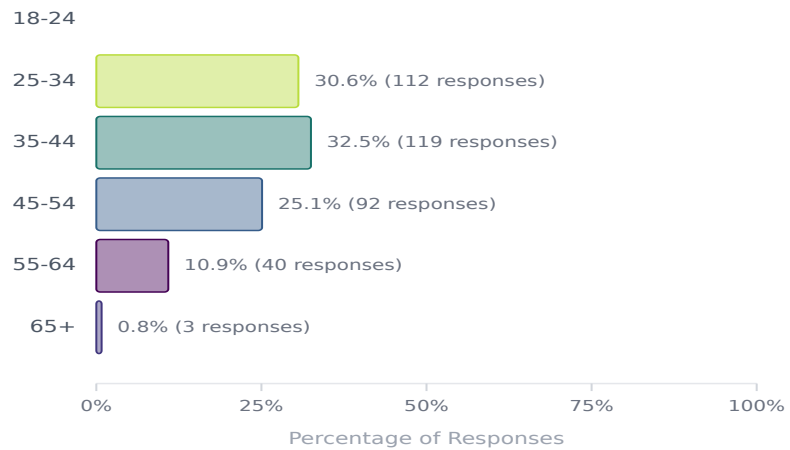
Gender Breakdown of Respondents

Survey Participation

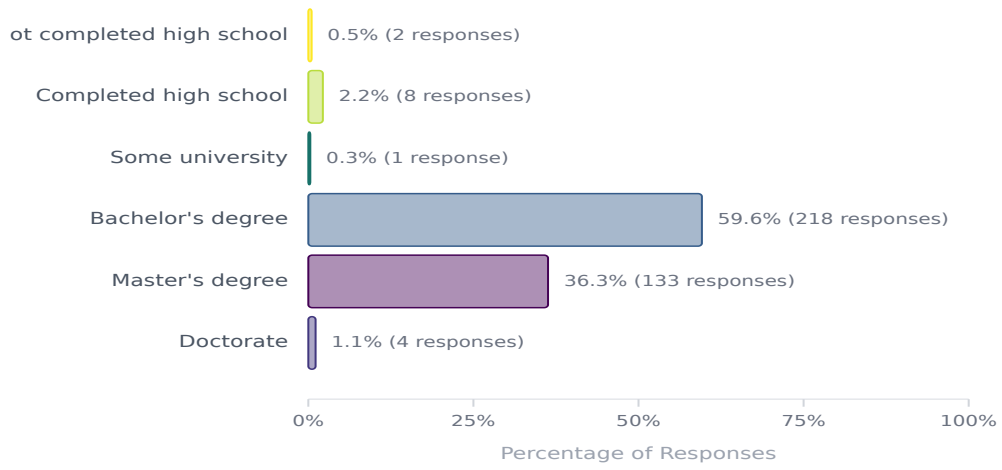


Male (155, 42.3%) Female (211, 57.7%) Other (0, 0.0%)

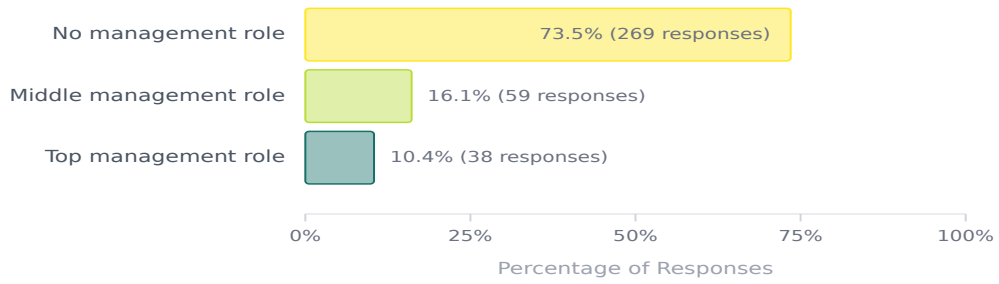
Age Distribution of Respondents



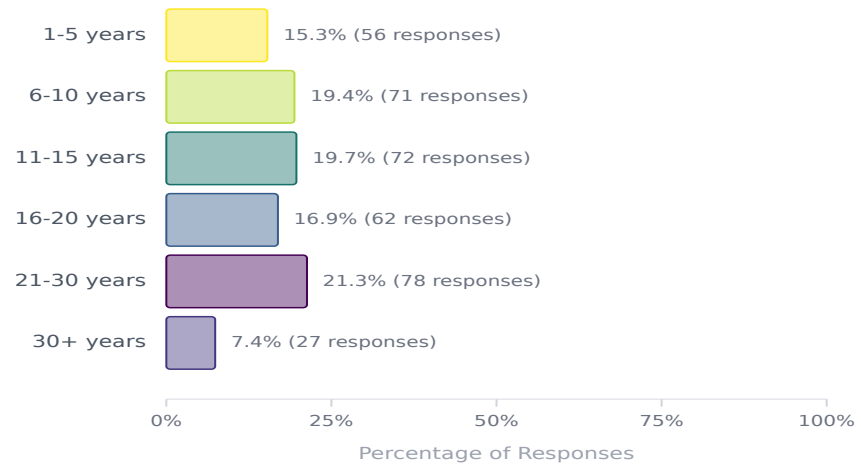
Education Level of Respondents



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/portugal>

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