

Safety of Journalists Country Report

Sierra Leone

Generated on June 23, 2026

Report Authors

Sarah Bomkapre Koroma (LMU Munich, Germany)

Sierra Leone's overall ranking in the Global Index on Journalists' Safety reflects the serious and persistent challenges that journalists face in their professional duties. The relatively low scores across all four dimensions: physical safety, psychological safety, digital safety, and financial safety highlight a cause for concern on the appalling conditions media practitioners in Sierra Leone operate. The country's physical dimension ranking suggests that even though physical direct attacks on journalists are not prevalent, there is still the potential risk of journalists facing harassment, intimidation and violence. The ranking on psychological safety shows the journalists operate under immense stress leading to mental health concerns and the lack of support systems for journalists dealing with trauma or threats. The alarmingly low scores in the digital and financial safety in the current index are indicative of deeper structural and infrastructural issues in the environment in which the journalists operate. On the digital side, Sierra Leone still grapples with the lack of internet access and energy. This ranking also suggests insufficient digital literacy and limited protection from online surveillance, bullying and harassment. The least of the scores is the financial safety which highlights the precarious economic conditions many journalists in Sierra Leone are forced to endure. They earn relatively one of the lowest wages, face constant job insecurities, and limited access to professional development opportunities within their organisations and generally. These challenges do not only compromise the wellbeing of journalists but also undermine the quality of journalism practiced and largely hinders press freedom. Policy reforms and structural adjustments are needed to ensure the safety, rights and sustainability of journalists and journalism in Sierra Leone.

Safety Index Scores

Overall Safety Score

73.52

Safety Dimensions

Physical Safety

80.86

Psychological Safety

69.19

Digital Safety

74.42

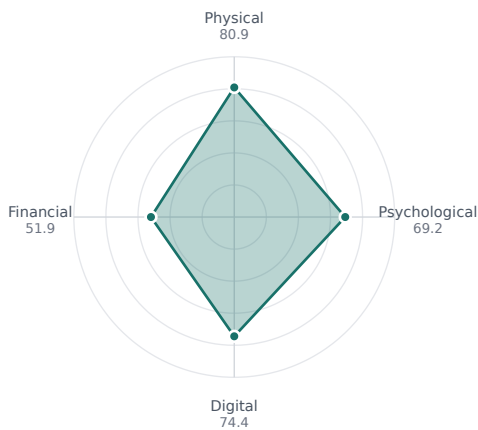
Financial Safety

51.92

Overview

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

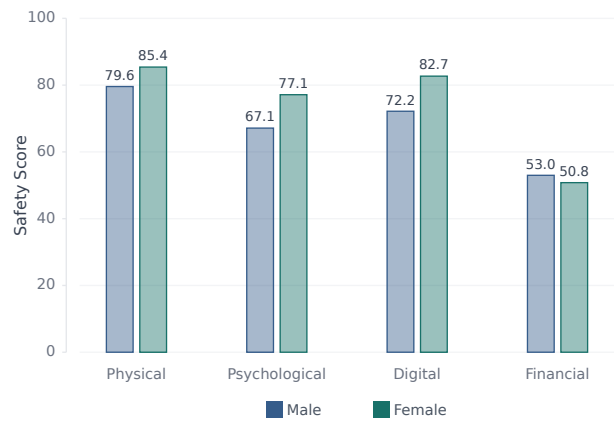
Safety Dimensions Overview



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

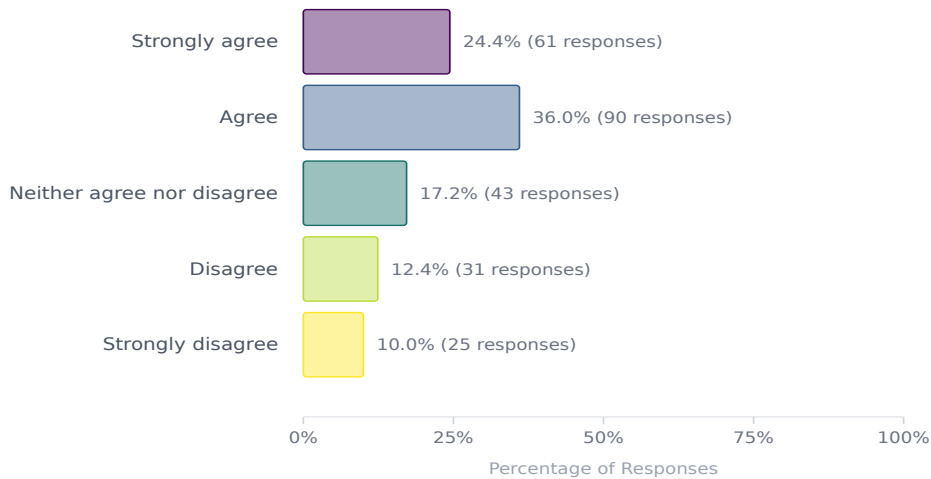
2016-2024

No journalist killings have been recorded in Sierra Leone 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.

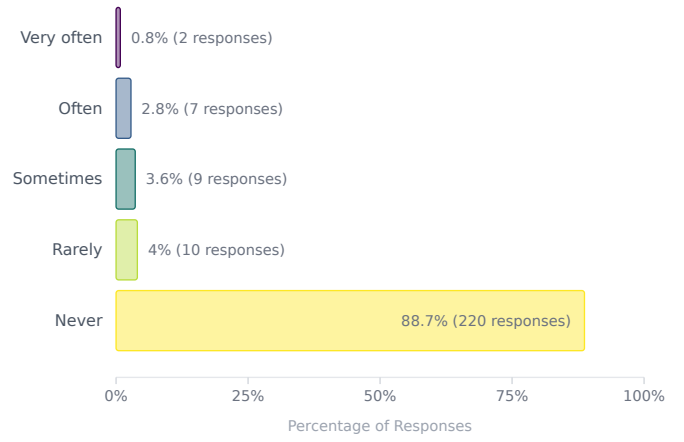
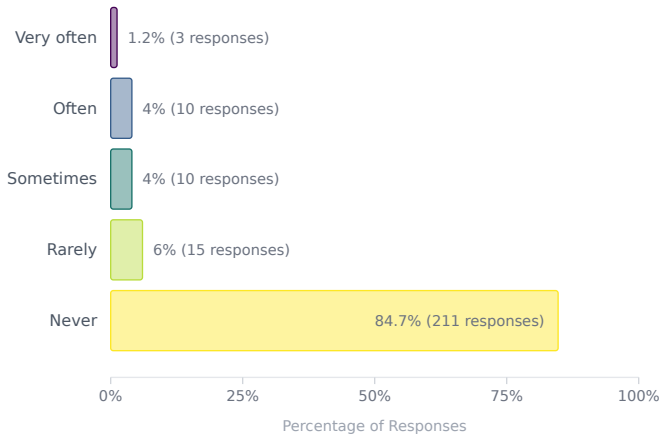
Responses to: "I am concerned about my physical wellbeing" (20% weight in physical dimension)



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

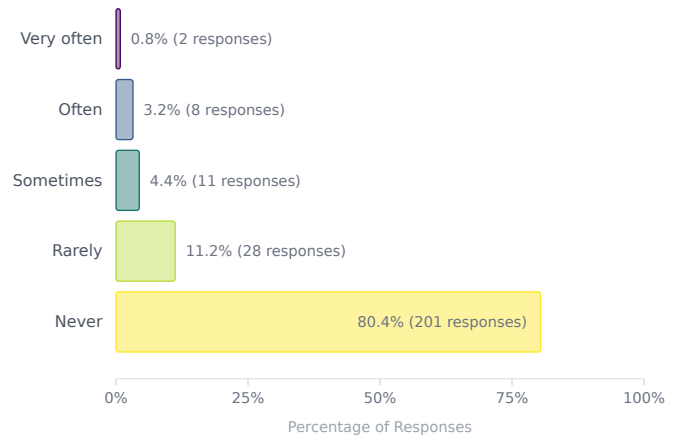
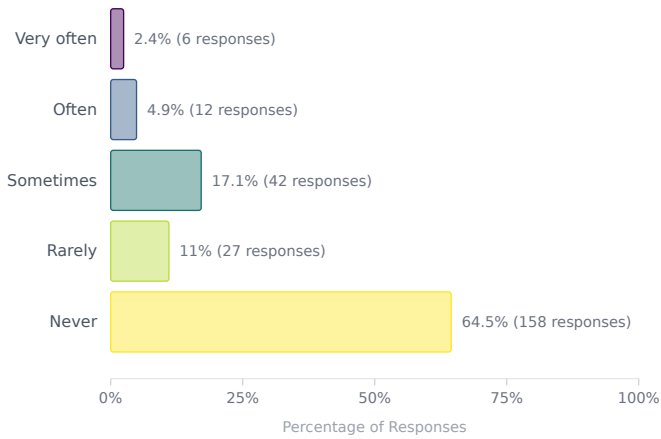
Arrests, detentions or imprisonment (15% weight in physical dimension)

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



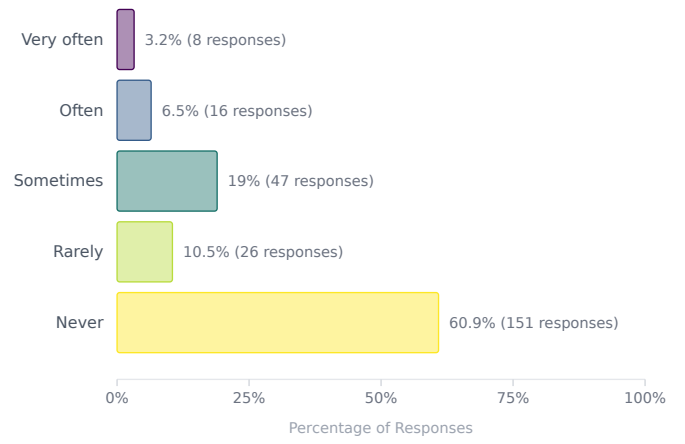
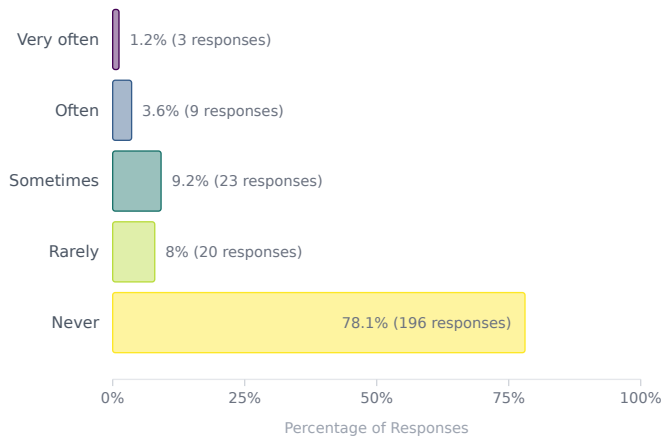
Other physical attacks (15% weight in physical dimension)

Abductions (did not contribute to calculation)



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

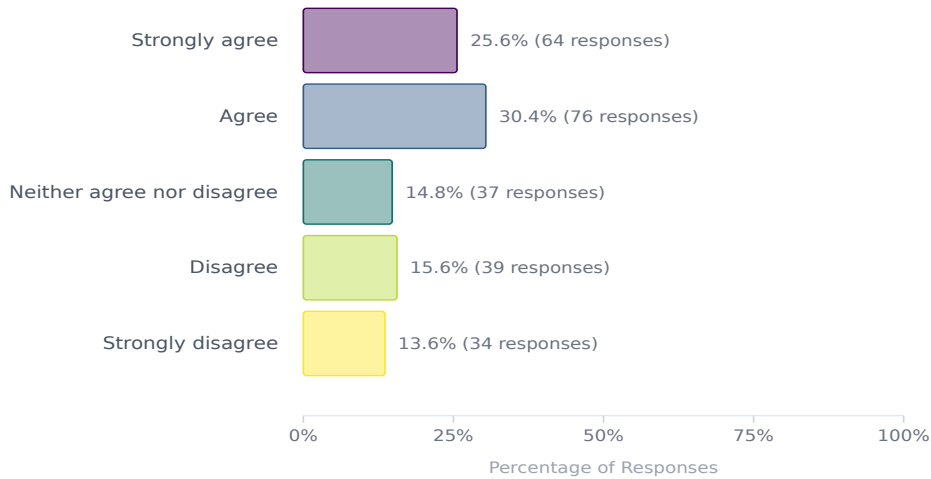
Being required to work in an environment where COVID-19 had easily spread (did not contribute to calculation)



Psychological Safety

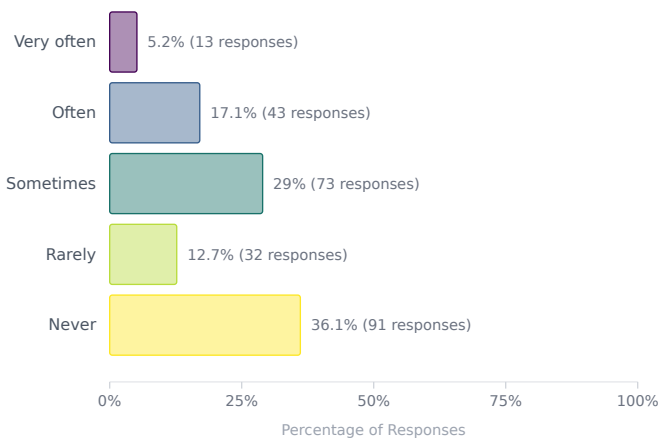
The psychological dimension carries **25% weight in the safety index**.

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

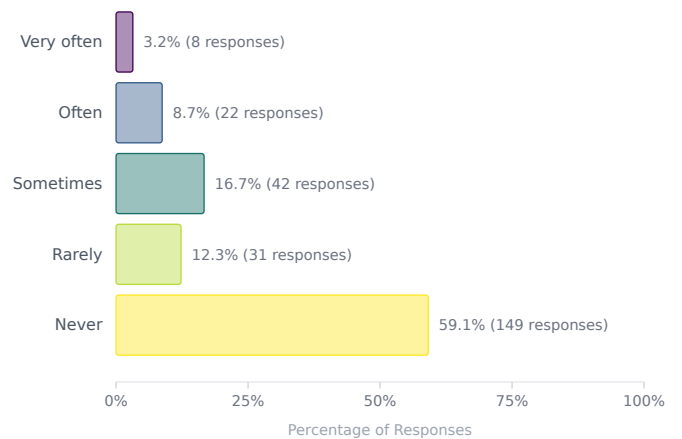


Responses to: "In the last five years, how often have you experienced any of the following actions related to your work as a journalist?"

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



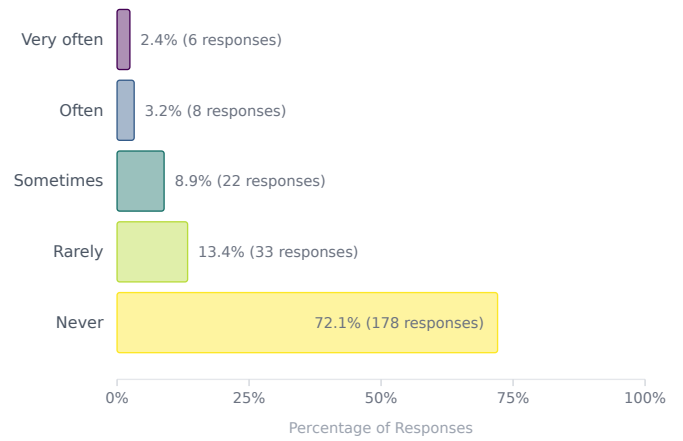
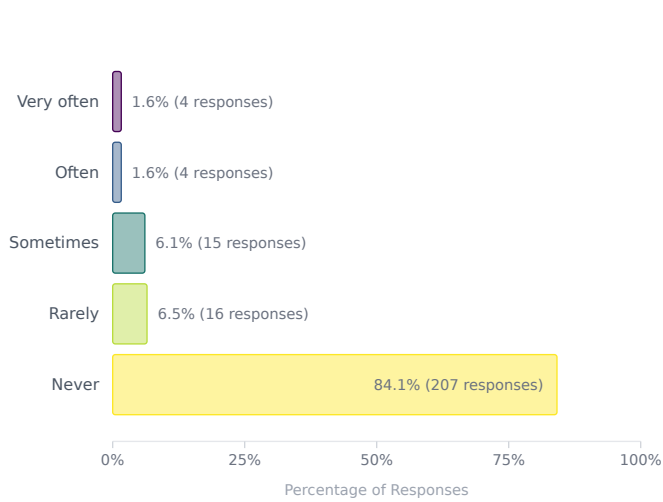
Public discrediting of your work (16% weight in psychological dimension)



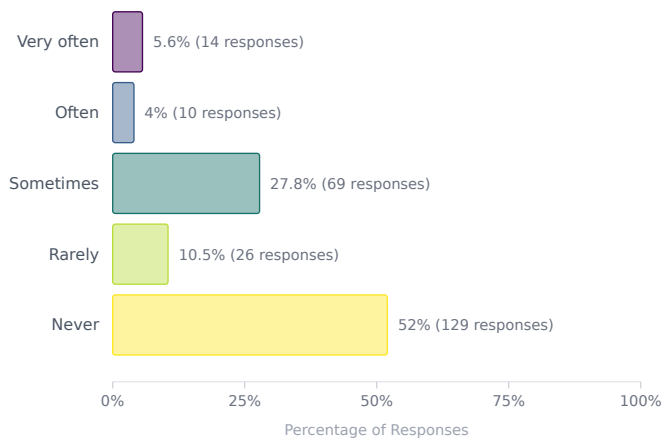
Legal actions against you because of your work (16% weight in psychological dimension)

Stalking (16% weight in psychological dimension)

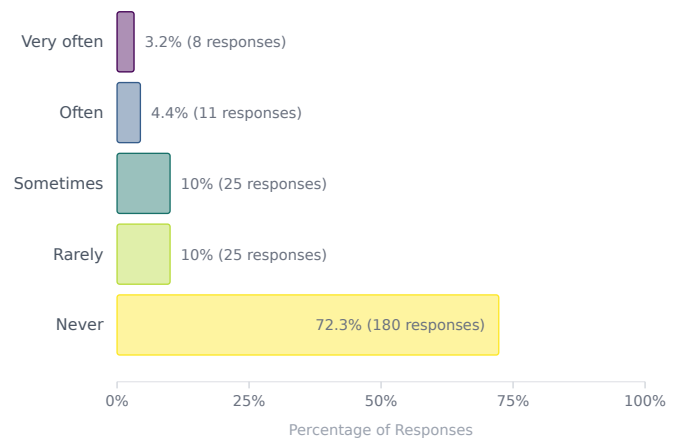
dimension)



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

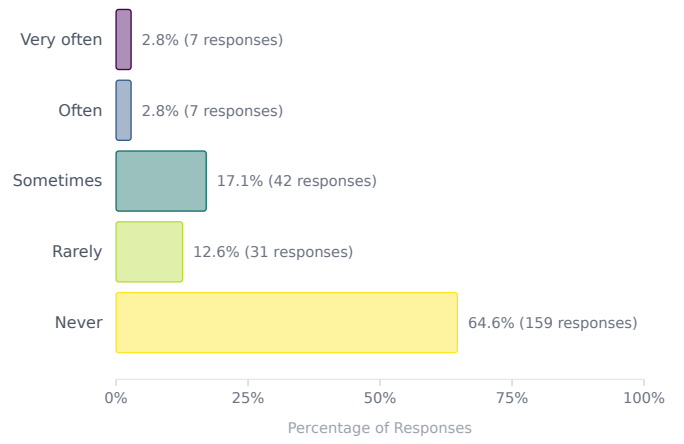
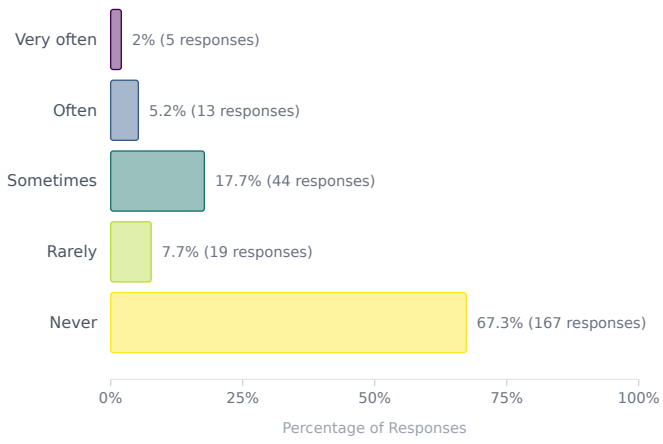


Coercion (did not contribute to calculation)

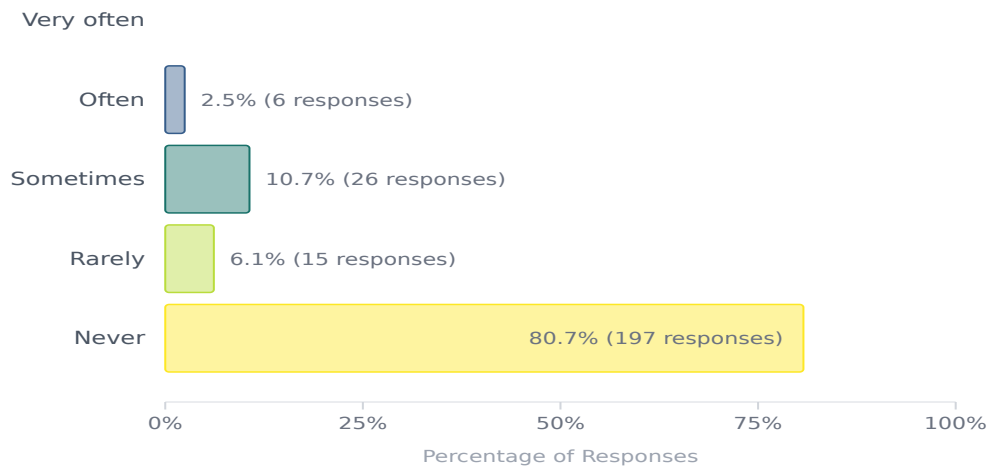


Questioning of your personal morality (did not contribute to calculation)

Workplace bullying (did not contribute to calculation)



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

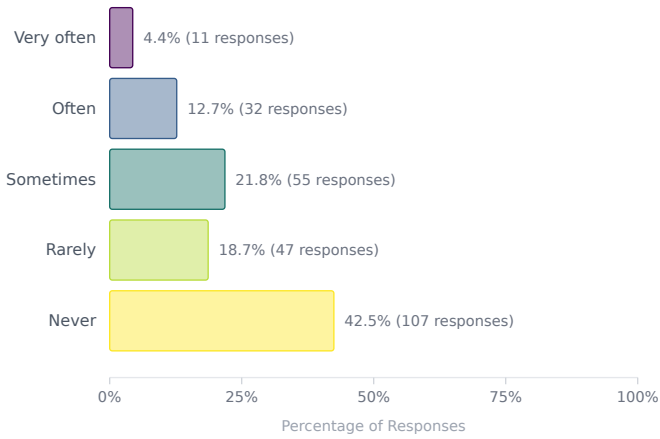


Digital Safety

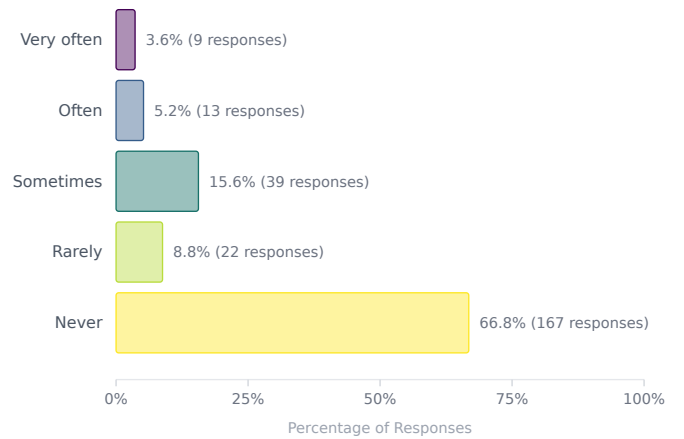
The digital dimension carries **12.5% weight in the safety index.**

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

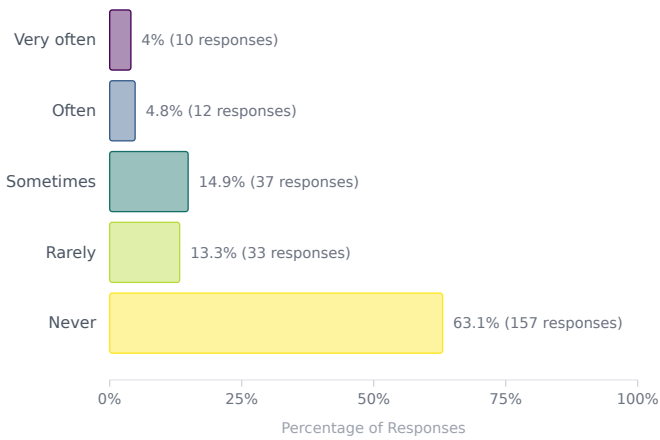
Surveillance (50% weight in digital dimension)



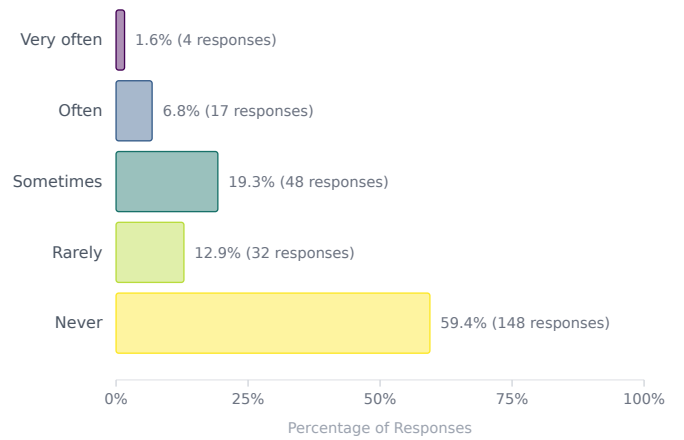
Hacking or blocking of social media accounts or websites (50% weight in digital dimension)



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



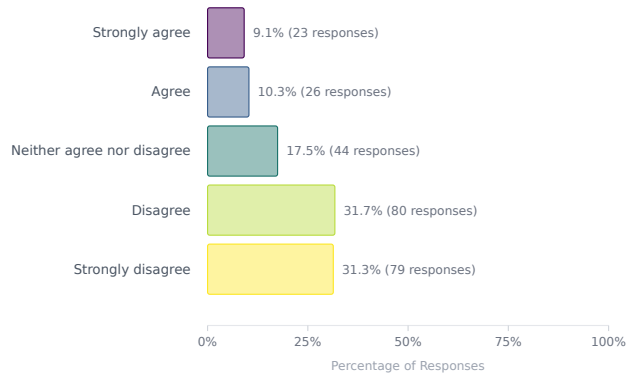
Others disseminating your personal information (did not contribute to calculation)



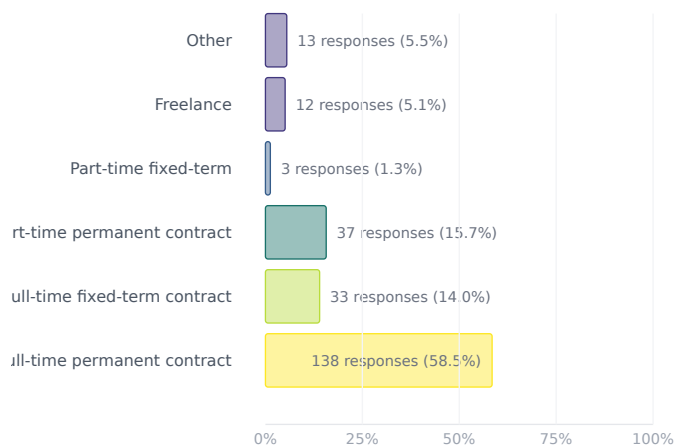
Financial Safety

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

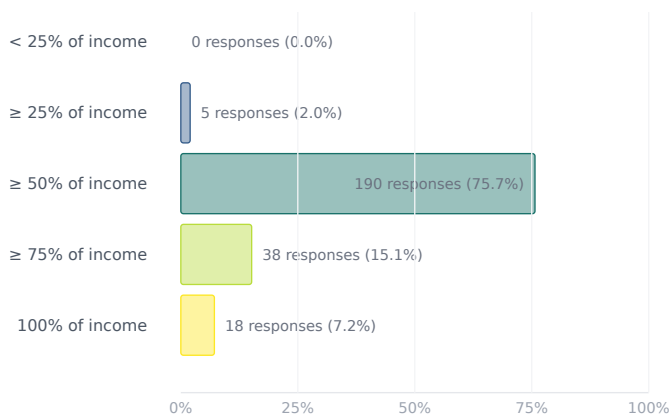
Responses to: "I am worried about losing my job in journalism within the next 12 months" (20% weight in financial dimension)



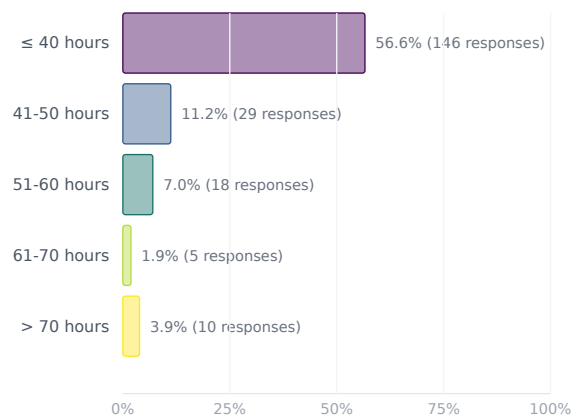
Responses to: "Which of the following categories best describes your current working situation as a journalist?" (20% weight in financial dimension)



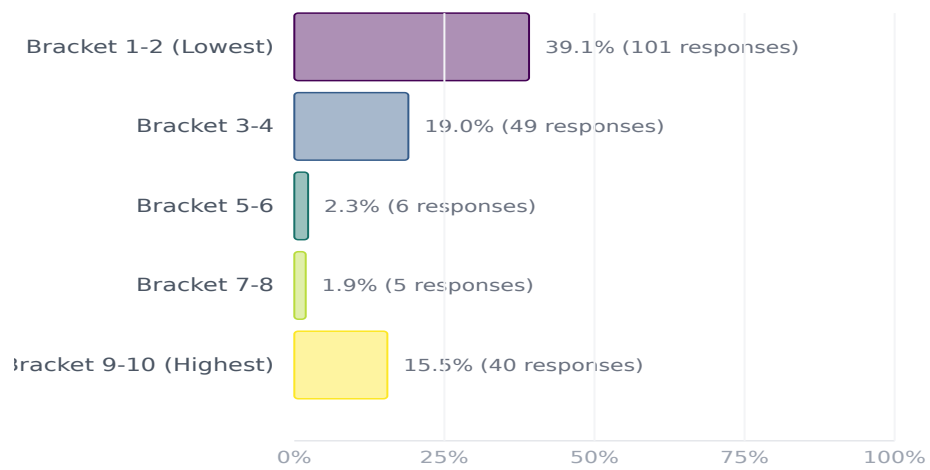
Responses to "Approximately what percentage of your overall work-related income comes from your work as a journalist?" (20% weight in financial dimension)



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)



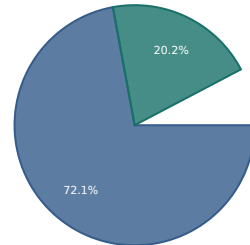
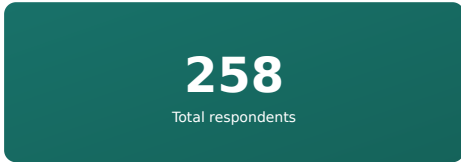
Options are given on a 10-point scale specific to each country.

Demographics

This section contains demographic information about survey respondents from Sierra Leone.

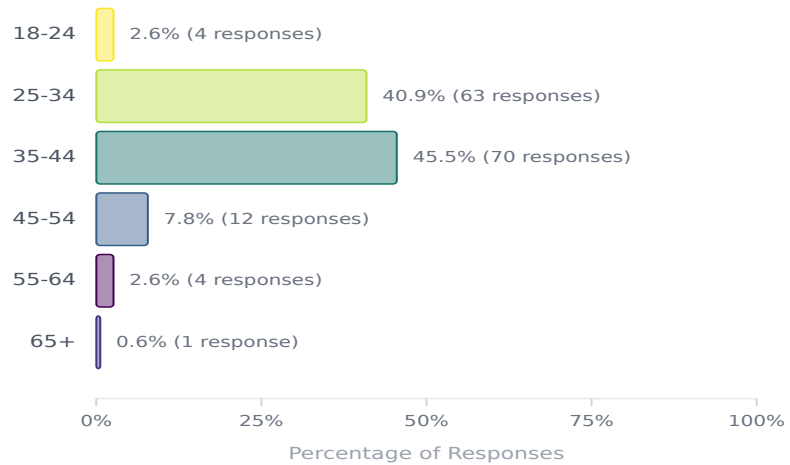
Gender Breakdown of Respondents

Survey Participation

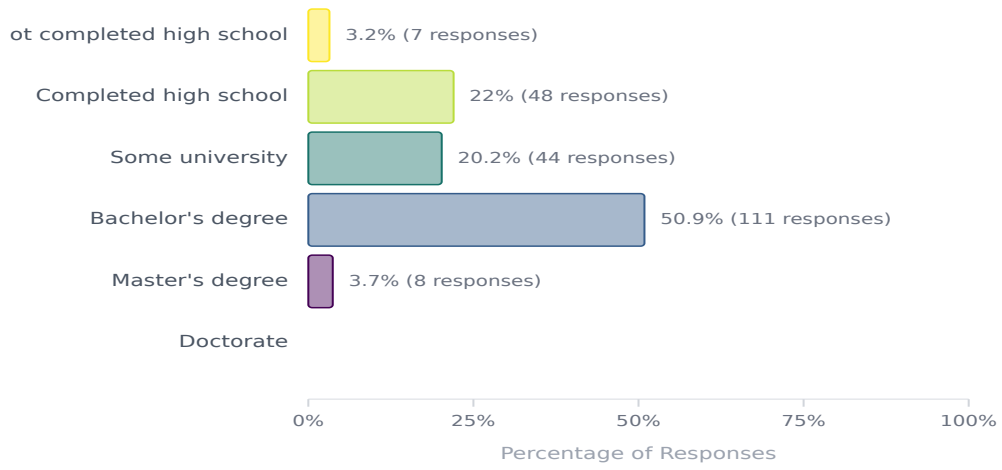


■ Male (186, 72.1%) ■ Female (52, 20.2%) ■ Other (0, 0.0%)

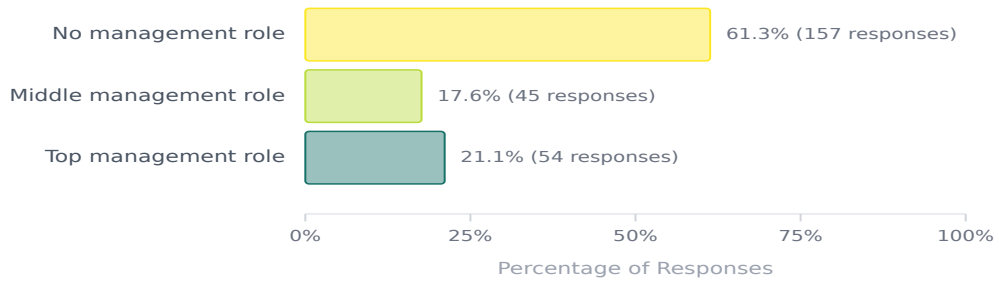
Age Distribution of Respondents



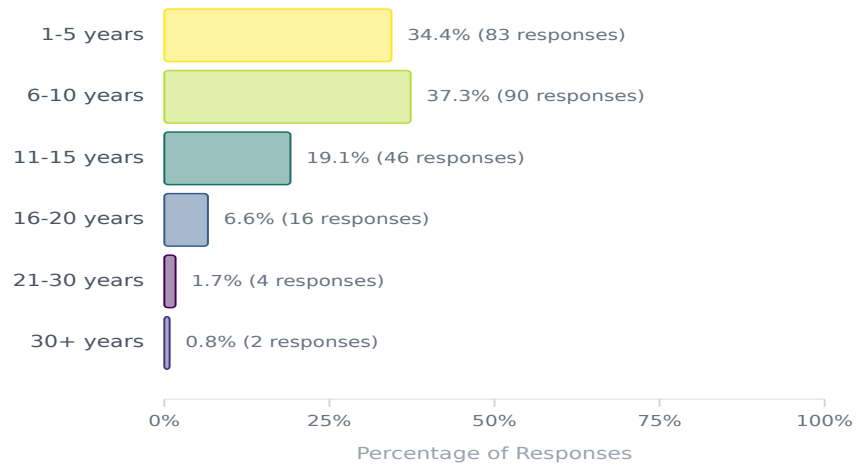
Education Level of Respondents



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/sierra-leone>

© 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 June 23, 2026 at 03:35