



# Media4Democracy: Promoting **freedom of expression** with the EU

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Freedom of expression and access to information are cornerstones of democracy. As part of the Media4Democracy consortium, Free Press Unlimited

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is supporting EU Delegations in promoting these values around the world. We developed a handbook on journalists' safety and a package that equips delegations to empower women and girls in media.

According to [Freedom House's](#) data of 2019, media freedom has been deteriorating around the world over the past decade. The majority of the global population lived in countries that are not free or partly free. A free press is essential for a functioning democracy: it helps citizens make informed decisions and keeps power in check.

The European Union (EU) has long supported the development of inclusive democracies beyond its own member states. In 2014, it adopted [guidelines](#) which spell out how principles of free expression should be incorporated in EU democracy support in third countries. About [140 delegations](#) in countries all over the world are tasked with implementing these guidelines. They include the combating of violence against and persecution of journalists as well as the promotion of media freedom and pluralism.

## European consortium

A consortium of European organisations working in the field of freedom of expression was founded in 2017 to assist EU Delegations in implementing the guidelines. Free Press Unlimited is part of this consortium, called [Media4Democracy](#), together with [Particip](#), [Article19](#), [Deutsche Welle Akademie](#), [European partnership for Democracy](#) and [Thomson Foundation](#). Media4Democracy draws on the experience of these organisations, giving advice and providing expertise and materials to EU Delegations. Free Press Unlimited has already made several contributions to EU Delegation through Media4Democracy.

## Journalists safety

Free Press Unlimited created an [annual overview](#) of trends in journalists' safety for delegations to stay informed on developments.

Then, we developed a [Safety of Journalists handbook](#) that provides practical information about threats to journalists, and examples of EU Delegation actions to respond to urgent threats to journalists. The Handbook includes practical suggestions for longer-term efforts and programmes to

**Where:** Worldwide

**Since:** 2017

**[Media4Democracy](#)**

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enhance journalists' security and, importantly, to fight the impunity for violations and crimes against journalists. The official launch of the Handbook will go hand-in-hand with a webinar for EU Delegations near the end of October 2020, to coincide with the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists on 2 November.

## Gender Equality

Free Press Unlimited has developed a gender package for EU Delegations, building on our experience promoting gender equality in media. The package aims to strengthen the delegations' work addressing gender issues through an assessment that evaluates the representation of women and girls in media and by providing the EU Delegations with recommended actions to strengthen media in support of gender equality in the countries where they work.

Thanks to Free Press Unlimited and Media4Democracy, more than 20 Malaysian women's and media organisations came together in Kuala Lumpur in March 2019 to discuss with the EU delegation how they could jointly tackle gender stereotyping in Malaysian media.

In October 2019, we organised with the EU Delegation to Burkina Faso a cross-sectoral meeting of women's organisations, media organisations, media development organisations and governmental agencies in Burkina Faso. The group reviewed potential actions to build gender equality by improving women's representation in media content, expanding women's roles and leadership in media institutions and finding means to change mentalities stemming from the strong patriarchal context. Summary can be found [here](#).

Freedom in the world is under strain. Through its work for Media4Democracy, Free Press Unlimited helps the EU in its important mission to spread values of freedom of expression and access to information, bolstering democracies around the world.

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