THE INDEX ON INTERNATIONAL MEDIA FREEDOM SUPPORT (IMFS) **2026**

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FOREWORD

"States should use these findings as an opportunity to strengthen cooperation, protection and sustainable support for independent journalism."

Independent journalism is indispensable to the exercise of freedom of expression and to the ability of societies to hold power to account. Yet support for media freedom cannot rest on declarations alone, it must be reflected in sustained diplomatic engagement, adequate financing and concrete protection for journalists at risk.

The 2026 International Media Freedom Support Index provides an important tool for accountability. By examining 30 States that have already committed to promoting media freedom internationally, it helps make visible where commitments are being translated into action and where significant gaps remain.

The findings deserve careful attention. Only 0.15% of official development assistance was allocated to media development in 2024, while half of the States assessed contributed to no multilateral pooled funds focused on media freedom in 2025. Equally concerning, no State currently combines a dedicated emergency visa scheme for journalists at risk with domestic initiatives supporting media workers in exile.

The Index also demonstrates why systematic scrutiny matters: policies and commitments can change, and progress can be measured. States should use these findings as an opportunity to strengthen cooperation, protection and sustainable support for independent journalism. At a time when journalists face serious pressures in many parts of the world, international solidarity must be translated into practical and durable action.



MR LEOPOLDO MALDONADO GUTIÉRREZ

UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Index on International Media Freedom Support (IMFS) evaluates and ranks 30 states based on their support for media freedom beyond their borders. It does this by analysing the contributions these countries have made to international diplomatic, financial, refuge / protection initiatives that promote media freedom.

The IMFS Index includes all states that are members of both the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) and the Media Freedom Coalition (MFC). These 30 countries have pledged to promote media freedom internationally and the IMFS Index holds them accountable for these commitments.

The Index draws on data from the previous calendar year (2025), except for the Official Development Assistance (ODA) figures, which are for 2024, due to the time lag in reporting.

The IMFS Index is released annually, with the first edition published in 2025. It is produced by an independent research group and is a joint project between City St George's, University of London and the University of East Anglia.

The results of the 2026 IMFS Index highlight several strong performers:

— **Sweden (1st)** is the highest ranked country in the 2026 IMFS Index - moving up one place from 2025 - largely due to its significant financial support for international media development. In 2024, Sweden spent 1.01% of its total ODA on international media development – making it the only country to reach the benchmark of 1.0% as recommended by the Forum on Information & Democracy.

— **Lithuania (3rd)** was the highest scoring country under the diplomatic theme of the IMFS Index – for the second year running.

— **Belgium (8th)** moved up four places into the silver category in 2026. For the second consecutive year, Belgium allocated the second-highest proportion of its ODA to international media development (0.33%) and, at short notice, stepped in to host World Press Freedom Day in 2025.

Sweden is the highest ranked country in the 2026 International Media Freedom Support Index – largely due to its significant financial support for international media development.

Half of all countries in the IMFS Index awarded less than 0.1% of their ODA to media development in 2024.

— **Finland (10th)** recorded the largest improvements in the rankings between 2025 and 2026 - climbing nine places from 19th to 10th - largely due to taking on the role of MFC co-chair in 2025.

— **The European Union** spent $68 million on international media development in 2024 - an increase of over $20 million compared to 2023 (not including individual member states' direct contributions).

The IMFS Index also identifies several less encouraging trends and performances:

— Half of all countries in the IMFS Index awarded less than 0.1% of their ODA to media development in 2024. For the second year running, Latvia (18th), Greece (24th) and Slovenia (29th) allocated none of their ODA to media development.

— Just 0.15% of ODA was allocated to media development in 2024 among all 30 states in the Index - a decline of 0.01% from 2023, or $10 million less.

— No country in the Index has both an active emergency visa scheme and at least one initiative domestically for media workers in exile.

— Half of all countries (15 out of 30) did not award funding to any multilateral pooled funds focussed on media freedom in 2025.

— Italy (26th), Spain (27th) and Japan (28th) were all among the five lowest-ranked countries in the 2026 IMFS Index, despite their size and influence.

— Latvia (18th) and Australia (19th) both saw the greatest decline in their rankings – falling 9 places each.

— Although Norway (15th), Denmark (16th) and Ireland (21st) all had 'good' domestic media freedom environments in 2025, according to RSF, all three fell in the lowest-performing, 'bronze' category of the 2026 IMFS index.

— The United States (14th) fell two places to 14th, remaining in the bronze category. It was the only country to sign 0% of the eligible MFC statements published in 2025, despite officially serving as a member of the MFC Executive committee that year.

INTRODUCTION

WHY IS AN INDEX ON INTERNATIONAL MEDIA FREEDOM SUPPORT NEEDED?

The international order is becoming more turbulent, competitive and unpredictable. Broad international consensus on the importance of democracy, human rights and media freedom is weakening amid renewed great-power competition and authoritarian expansion.

In this new environment, which states are still prepared to defend media freedom beyond their own borders?

The 2026 International Media Freedom Support (IMFS) Index seeks to answer this question by examining how governments support - or fail to support - media freedom internationally.

By tracking states' performance each year, the IMFS Index aims to incentivise governments to improve their international support for media freedom. It celebrates states that deliver against their commitments and highlights those that could be doing more.

Although there are already many indexes which evaluate and compare the domestic media freedom environment in different countries, the IMFS Index is the first to evaluate states' support for media freedom in their foreign policy.

The first IMFS Index, in 2025, revealed that Baltic countries were leading the way[1]. While Lithuania topped the Index, Estonia ranked 4th and Latvia came 9th out of the 30 countries measured.

It also revealed that some states with 'good' domestic media freedom environments performed surprisingly poorly in terms of their international support for media freedom, which promoted civil society groups to take action. For example, Finland's 2025 IMFS Index ranking of 19th led a coalition of eight civil society organisations in the country to commission a report calling on the government to implement a visa system that supports a safe route to Finland for foreign journalists at risk[2].

The 2026 edition of the IMFS Index provides a second annual assessment of governments' international support for media freedom, allowing us to begin to track changes in performance over time. It includes some very minor changes to the scoring methodology and data sources, informed by feedback from across the sector and outlined in the methodology section below.

WHAT IS THE INDEX ON INTERNATIONAL MEDIA FREEDOM SUPPORT?

The IMFS Index evaluates and ranks states based on their international support for media freedom in the areas of diplomacy (theme 1), funding (theme 2) and refuge and protection (theme 3). It includes eight criteria and a points-based scoring system, detailed at the end of this report.

These criteria are designed to encompass a range of different forms of international support relating to media freedom and to apply to all qualifying states – without discriminating against those with less capacity. To help distinguish between the relative performance of different countries, the IMFS Index classifies countries according to one of three categories: 'gold' (21+ points), 'silver' (11-20 points), or 'bronze' (0-10 points).

The Index was designed and produced by an independent, academic research team and is a joint project between City St. George's, University of London and the University of East Anglia. It receives no funding from any states, companies, private foundations, or civil society organisations. Although the IMFS Index was developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, the final design and methodology remain the sole responsibility of the research team. The IMFS Index builds on a theory of change developed through this team's previous research which found that states can be encouraged to improve their international support for media freedom by triggering inter-state peer pressure[3].

The data used in this Index relates to the previous calendar year (2025), except for the ODA figures, which are for 2024, due to the time lag in OECD-DAC reporting. The results of the Index should be read with this in mind. For instance, the implications of the wave of cuts to foreign assistance that occurred in 2025 in the US, the UK, Germany, France and elsewhere will not be evident in this year's Index.

The IMFS Index includes all states that are members of both the OECD-DAC and the MFC. In total, 30 states qualify for inclusion in this Index. This inclusion criteria was chosen because all members of the MFC sign the Global Pledge, which commits those governments to 'speak out and take action together to promote media freedom'. Similarly, all states within the OECD-DAC have recently committed to the Development Co-operation Principles on Relevant and Effective Support to Media and the Information Environment, which include commitments on funding and coordination. Despite its significant financial and diplomatic role in supporting media freedom internationally, the European Union is not fully included in this Index because it is ineligible to join the MFC. However, a snapshot of funding efforts by the EU is discussed in the context of theme 2 (funding).

Due to the challenges of obtaining relevant information from states, the IMFS Index only includes criteria that can be assessed via publicly available data. As a result, it does not currently capture several important aspects of international support for media freedom, such as efforts to improve localisation in funding, states' media support strategies/policies, or private diplomatic efforts to protect media freedom. Future iterations of this Index will seek to recognise a greater diversity of states and activities.

WHAT DOES THE INDEX ON INTERNATIONAL MEDIA FREEDOM SUPPORT **NOT MEASURE**?

The IMFS Index focuses exclusively on states' international support for media freedom. It does not include any measures of a state's domestic performance on media freedom, since this is measured by other indexes. However, the results of the Index are presented alongside states' corresponding RSF World Press Freedom Index scores to highlight potential discrepancies between a state's international advocacy and its domestic media freedom practices.

The Index focuses on assessing states' international support for media freedom specifically, rather than wider aspects of the enabling environment upon which journalists rely. For this reason, initiatives which support internet freedom and information integrity, for example, are not included.

It is also important to note that the Index seeks to measure the international activities that states undertake to support media freedom, rather than the quality or outcomes of such support. Therefore, the results of this Index should be read alongside research, including by the Global Forum for Media Development and DW Akadamie, which analyses commitments to localisation, evidence-based approaches and donor coordination.

Finally, although this Index focuses on evaluating the positive contributions States make to supporting media freedom internationally, it is important to acknowledge that other aspects of their foreign policy may, at times, undermine media freedom and this Index does not currently capture such actions.

The IMFS Index focuses exclusively on states' international support for media freedom.

RESULTS

TABLE 1: RANKING & SCORING FOR EACH COUNTRY IN THE 2026 INDEX FOR INTERNATIONAL MEDIA FREEDOM SUPPORT

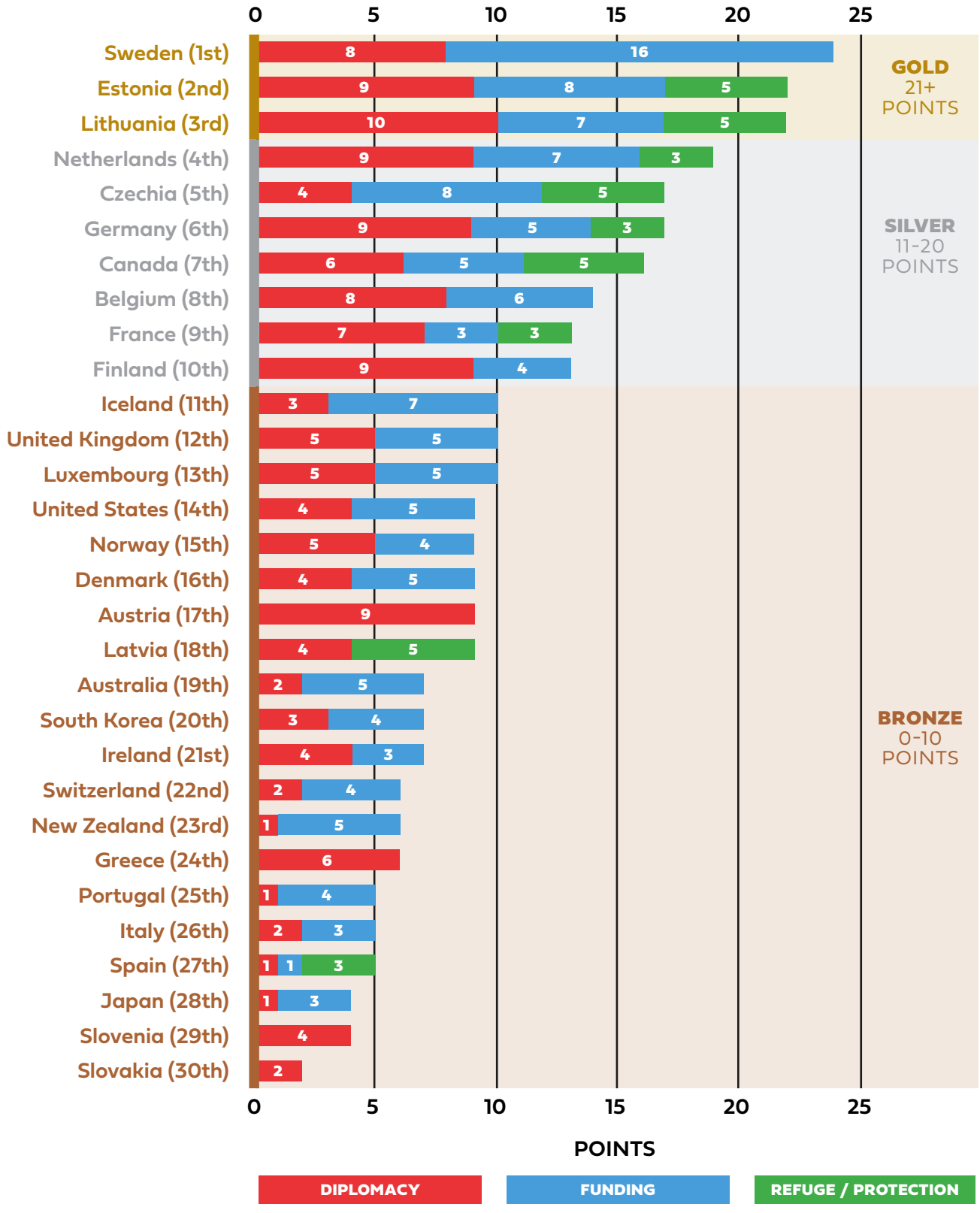
IMFS INDEX RANKING 2026*	COUNTRY	TOTAL SCORE	CHANGE SINCE 2025	DIPLOMACY			FUNDING			REFUGE & PROTECTION		DOMESTIC MEDIA FREEDOM RANKING **
				1. Multilateral leadership	2. Multilateral membership	3. Speaking out	4. Aid spent on media	5. Fulfilment of spending commitments	6. Pooled multilateral funds	7. Safe refuge for journalists	8. Journalist protection mechanism	
1st	Sweden	24	↑ 1	3	3	2	10	3	3	0	0	4th
2nd	Estonia	22	↑ 2	5	2	2	2	3	3	5	0	2nd
3rd	Lithuania	22	↓ 2	5	3	2	2	3	2	5	0	14th
4th	Netherlands	19	↓ 1	4	3	2	1	3	3	0	3	3rd
5th	Czechia	17	↑ 2	2	2	0	3	3	2	5	0	10th
6th	Germany	17	↓ 1	5	2	2	1	3	1	0	3	11th
7th	Canada	16	↔	2	2	2	1	3	1	5	0	21st
8th	Belgium	14	↑ 4	5	1	2	3	3	0	0	0	18th
9th	France	13	↓ 4	3	3	1	2	0	1	0	3	25th
10th	Finland	13	↑ 9	5	2	2	1	3	0	0	0	5th
11th	Iceland	10	↑ 8	0	1	2	2	3	2	0	0	17th
12th	United Kingdom	10	↔	2	3	0	1	3	1	0	0	20th
13th	Luxembourg	10	↓ 1	0	3	2	1	3	1	0	0	13th
14th	United States	9	↓ 2	2	2	0	2	3	0	0	0	57th
15th	Norway	9	↓ 5	0	3	2	2	0	2	0	0	1st
16th	Denmark	9	↔	0	2	2	2	3	0	0	0	6th
17th	Austria	9	↓ 1	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	22nd
18th	Latvia	9	↓ 9	0	2	2	0	0	0	5	0	15th
19th	Australia	7	↓ 9	0	2	0	1	3	1	0	0	29th
20th	South Korea	7	↑ 9	0	3	0	1	3	0	0	0	61st
21st	Ireland	7	↑ 2	0	2	2	0	3	0	0	0	7th
22nd	Switzerland	6	↓ 6	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	0	9th
23rd	New Zealand	6	↑ 1	0	1	0	2	3	0	0	0	16th
24th	Greece	6	↓ 3	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	89th
25th	Portugal	5	↓ 1	0	1	0	1	3	0	0	0	8th
26th	Italy	5	↓ 2	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	0	49th
27th	Spain	5	↓ 6	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	3	23rd
28th	Japan	4	↔	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	66th
29th	Slovenia	4	↔	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	33rd
30th	Slovakia	2	↓ 6	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	38th

GOLD (21+ POINTS) **SILVER (11-20 POINTS)** **BRONZE (0-10 POINTS)**

* The Index draws on data from the previous calendar year (2025), except for the ODA figures, which are for 2024, due to the time lag in reporting.

** Reporters Without Borders (RSF) Global Press Freedom Index ranking for each country in 2025, out of 180 countries and territories. See https://rsf.org/en/index?year=2025

FIGURE 1: RANKING & SCORING FOR EACH COUNTRY IN THE 2026 INDEX FOR INTERNATIONAL MEDIA FREEDOM SUPPORT*



* The Index draws on data from the previous calendar year (2025), except for the ODA figures, which are for 2024, due to the time lag in reporting.

GOLD:
HIGHEST RANKED COUNTRIES

Sweden is the highest ranked country in the 2026 International Media Freedom Support (IMFS) Index, with 24 points - moving up one place from 2025, when it was ranked second overall. This ranking was achieved largely due to its significant financial support for international media development. In 2024, Sweden spent $57,045,000 supporting independent journalism around the world including on election-related disinformation resilience in Moldova, cross-border investigative journalism networks and gender equity in newsrooms, among other initiatives.

Sweden's total spending on media development was 1.01% of its total ODA – making it the only country to reach the benchmark of 1.0% of ODA spent on media development, as recommended by the Forum on Information & Democracy. In fact, Sweden allocated over three times as much of its ODA to media development as Belgium (0.33%) – which was the second strongest performing country on this criteria.

Sweden also scored highly in the 'diplomacy' category, gaining points for being a co-chair of a UNESCO/UN Group of Friends on the Safety of Journalists, a member of all qualifying multilateral initiatives on media freedom and for signing all eligible public statements published by the Media Freedom Coalition (MFC). However, in relation to refuge and protection, Sweden received a score of 0 because it does not have an active emergency visa scheme dedicated to supporting journalists at-risk and it does not host a domestic initiative that promotes the protection of media workers in exile.

The other two countries in the gold category (21+ points) of the Index are Estonia (2nd) and Lithuania (3rd). Although both scored 22 points overall, Estonia ranks higher than Lithuania because it spent a higher proportion of its ODA on media development (0.21%) than Lithuania (0.17%).

Both countries have an emergency visa scheme for journalists at-risk, contributed to several multi-lateral pool funds, delivered on their funding commitments to media development, supported all eligible MFC public statements and played a multilateral leadership role. In 2025, Estonia was a co-chair of the MFC and then an executive committee member, while Lithuania was a co-chair of a UN Group of Friends on the Safety of Journalists and Vice Chair of UNESCO's IPDC. Over the past 10 years, both countries have increased their ODA spend on media development overall, with Estonia tripling its spend in 2024 compared to 2014 and Lithuania going from 0.15% to 0.19%.

As two of the smallest countries included in the Index, Estonia and Lithuania's status as the 2nd and 3rd highest ranked country indicates that state capacity is not an obstacle to providing strong support to media freedom internationally.

SILVER:
MID-RANKED COUNTRIES

Seven countries scored between 11 and 20 points on the 2026 IMFS Index, qualifying them for the silver category. These included the Netherlands (4th, 19 points), Czechia (5th, 17 points), Germany (6th, 17 points), Canada (7th, 16 points), Belgium (8th, 14 points), France (9th, 13 points) and Finland (10th, 13 points).

Belgium moved into the silver category in 2026, largely because of its leadership role in hosting World Press Freedom Day in 2025.

The Netherlands remains at the top of the silver category due to its membership of the MFC executive committee, its role as IPDC vice chair and support for three different multilateral pooled funds in 2025. In 2025, the Netherlands also continued to work with the High Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom on establishing an Independent Investigative Support Mechanism to assist investigations into crimes against journalists – building on a feasibility study published by the Netherlands in November 2024. However, in 2024 the Netherlands awarded just 0.06% of its ODA to media development, at the same level as in 2023.

Czechia improved its position by two places, rising to fifth overall. In 2025, it had an emergency visa scheme dedicated to providing safe refuge for journalists at-risk and gave a higher proportion of ODA to media development than any other country in the silver category (0.26%). However, it only signed 75% of the MFC statements it was eligible to support – despite being a member of the MFC executive committee. It did not sign the MFC statements on media freedom in Türkiye or on foreign media access to Gaza.

Germany qualified for the silver category partly due to its role as co-chair of the MFC in 2025, support for all the MFC's public statements and support for the Hannah Arendt Initiative, which promotes the protection of journalists in exile. In 2025, the Hannah Arendt Initiative supported 103 individuals and 81 media organisations in exile in Germany[4]. However, in 2025, Germany only supported 1 multilateral pooled fund (the Global Media Defence Fund, (GMDF) and awarded just 0.13% of its ODA to media development.

Canada also only supported one international pooled fund in 2025 (the GMDF) and gave just 0.06% of its ODA to media development. However, it remained a member of the MFC executive group, signed all MFC statements and continued to offer a dedicated refugee stream for human rights defenders, including journalists, as well as their family members, through its Government-Assisted Refugees Programme. In 2025, approximately

Finland recorded one of the largest improvements in the rankings – climbing nine places from 19th to 10th - largely due to taking on the role of MFC co-chair in 2025.

345 people were admitted to Canada through this stream[5]. Canada also led an initiative against Arbitrary Detention in State-to-State Relations in 2025, working closely with the High Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom.

Belgium moved into the silver category in 2026, largely because of its leadership role in hosting World Press Freedom Day in 2025 – stepping in at late notice after Romania pulled out due to repeat elections. For the second year in a row, Belgium gave the second highest proportion of its ODA to supporting international journalism (0.33%), amounting to $10,529,000. This included projects on capacity-building and support for Belarusian journalists and media workers in exile and core funding for TV5 Monde Afrique, the pan-African francophone broadcaster.

France retained its position in the silver category, partly due to its leadership roles as a co-chair of a UN Group of Friends on the Safety of Journalists and a lead sponsor of a UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) resolution on the safety of journalists. In 2025, it also continued to offer support to journalists exiled in France via its "Voices in Exile" project. However, France did drop four places – from 5th to 9th – partly because it only supported one relevant pooled fund in 2025 (IFPIM) - compared to four in 2024 – and because it only fulfilled 80% of its ODA funding commitment to media development in 2024.

Finland recorded one of the largest improvements in the rankings between 2025 and 2026, climbing nine places from 19th to 10th. This improvement was largely driven by Finland taking on the role of MFC co-chair in 2025. However, despite now being in the silver category, Finland did not support any qualifying multi-lateral funds in 2025 and does not have either an active emergency visa scheme dedicated to supporting journalists at-risk, or a domestic initiative that promotes the protection of media workers in exile. Indeed, Finland's relatively low performance in the 2025 IMFS Index prompted a coalition of eight civil society organisations in the country to commission a research report into support for exiled journalists living in Finland. The report, entitled 'When You Arrive in Finland, You Step into a Dark Room' found that most exiled journalists interviewed named a humanitarian visa as the most important single measure to support journalists in exile[6].

BRONZE
LOWEST RANKED COUNTRIES

In the 2026 IMFS Index, 20 of 30 countries (66%) qualified for the lowest, bronze category, by having 10 points or less. This includes four members of the G7: the United Kingdom (12th), the United States (14th), Italy (26th) and Japan (28th).

The lowest ranked countries in the Index – with 5 points or less – were Portugal (25th, 5 points), Italy (26th, 5 points), Spain (27th, 5 points), Japan (28th, 4 points), Slovenia (29th, 4 points) and Slovakia (30th, 2 points). In 2025, none of these countries had a multilateral leadership role, an active emergency visa scheme dedicated to supporting journalists at-risk or hosted a domestic initiative that promotes the protection of media workers in exile – aside from Spain, which ran initiatives supporting journalists in exile from Mexico[7]. However, Spain only delivered 30% of the ODA funding for media that it promised in 2024, leading to its fall of six places in the Index.

Slovenia was the only one of the six lowest ranked countries to sign all eligible MFC public statements. None of the other five countries signed the MFC statement on Chinese journalist Zhang Zhan and neither Japan, Slovakia, Italy or Spain signed the MFC statement on media freedom in Türkiye. These six countries also all allocated less than 0.1% of their ODA to media development: Portugal (0.07%), Japan (0.04%), Italy (0.02%), Spain (0.01%), Slovakia (0.00%) and Slovenia (0.00%).

The presence of Italy, Spain and Japan among the six lowest-ranked countries is striking given their relative size and international influence among OECD-DAC and Media Freedom Coalition member nations. However, it is important to note that Japan does allocate significant proportions of its ODA spending to other areas – such as "Communications Policy and Administrative Management" - which support the wider enabling environment for media freedom, but which are not covered by this Index. In 2024, Japan gave more than $52 million to 'ICT' and 'Communications Policy and Administrative Management' to public sector entities in countries such as Rwanda, Ukraine and Cambodia.

Greece (24th, 6 points) and Austria (17th, 9 points) both performed relatively well in the 'diplomatic' category. In 2025, both were co-chairs of the Group of Friends on the Safety of Journalists and lead sponsors of the UNHRC resolution on the safety of journalists. Greece also used its May 2025 Presidency of the UN Security Council to highlight journalist safety within discussions on the Protection of Civilians and both Greece and Austria led a UN General Assembly resolution focussed on the heightened risks faced by journalists covering environmental destruction and climate change[8]. Despite this diplomatic activity, both Greece and Austria achieved a relatively low ranking overall, partly because they continued to provide virtually no ODA funding for media development.

South Korea climbed nine places between 2025 and 2026 - from 29th to 20th by becoming a member of the IPDC Intergovernmental Council (2025) and by delivering on its funding commitments this time. In fact, while South Korea committed to spending $535,000 on media development in 2024, it actually spent $2,805,000 – a 524% increase. However, South Korea still only awarded 0.09% of its ODA to media development and signed just 63% of eligible MFC statements.

Latvia (18th) and Australia (19th) both saw the greatest decline in their rankings – falling 9 places each.

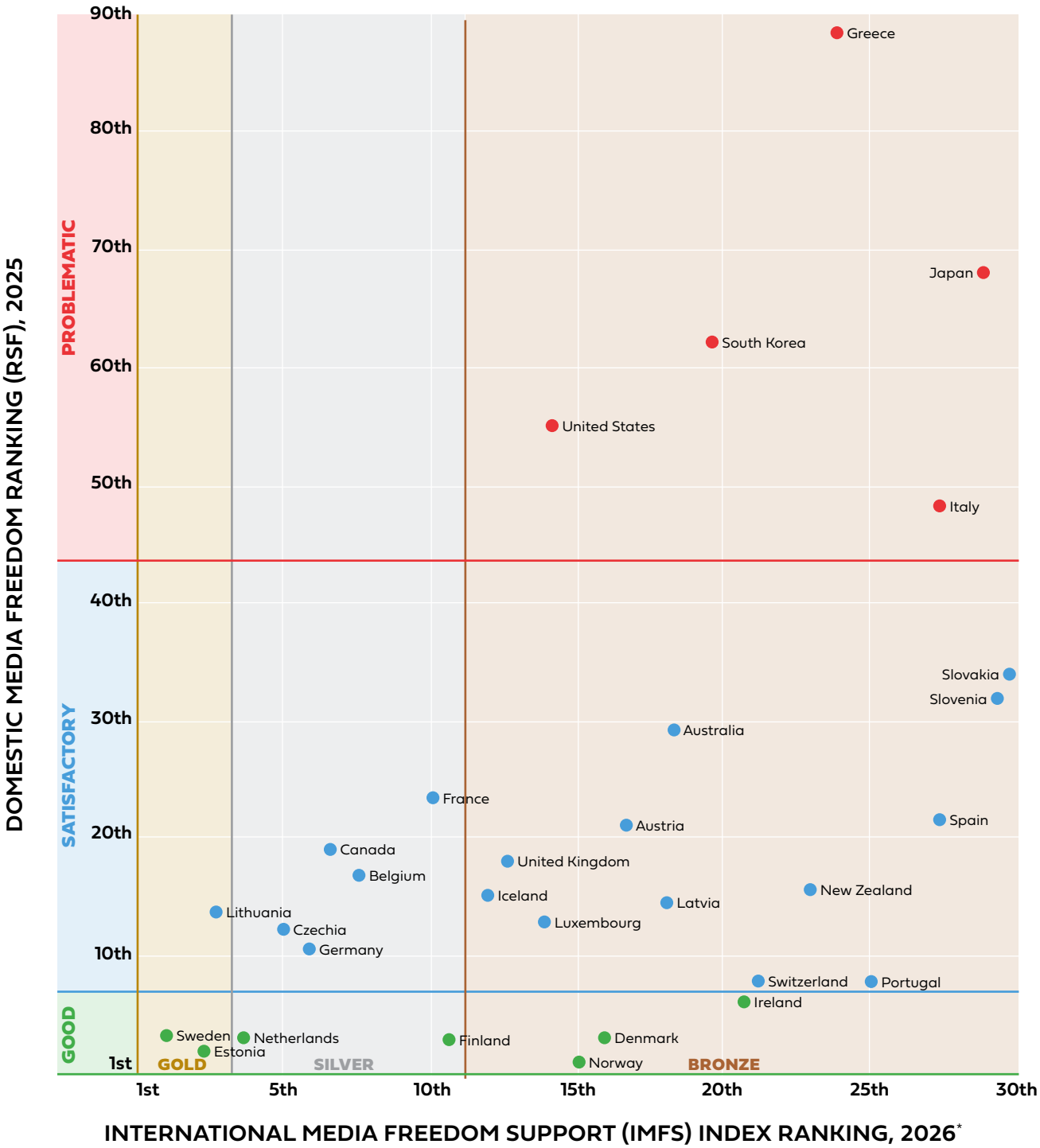
Latvia and Australia both saw the greatest declines from 2025 to 2026 compared to all other countries – falling 9 places each to 18th and 19th place respectively. For Australia, this drop was due to a decline in ODA awarded to media development from 0.3% to 0.1% - and a drop in the proportion of eligible MFC statements signed – from 100% to 88%. In 2025, although Latvia continued to have an active emergency visa scheme dedicated to supporting journalists at-risk, it no longer appeared to financially support a scheme that promotes the protection and safety of media workers in exile. Latvia also continued to give no ODA to media development in 2024.

The United Kingdom (12th, 10 points) and Luxembourg (13th, 10 points) remain at the top of the bronze category, as they were in 2025. While the UK earned some leadership points for serving as a member of the MFC executive committee, it only supported 88% of eligible MFC statements – since it did not sign the statement on media freedom in Türkiye. By contrast, Luxembourg gained no leadership points but did sign all eligible statements. The United Kingdom (0.12%) and Luxembourg (0.06%) also continue to devote relatively very modest amounts of ODA funding to media development.

Iceland (11th, 10 points) has risen a notable 8 places on the index, due to increases in the proportion of MFC statements supported (92% to 100%) and the amount of ODA spent on media development (0.10% to 0.17%).

The United States fell two places to 14th. It continued to officially serve as a member of the MFC Executive committee – even though it did not sign any of the 8 MFC statements published in 2025 – including those published to mark International Women's Day, World Press Freedom Day and the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists. The US also received points for fulfilling its commitment to spend $136,407,000 on media development in 2024 – or 0.21% of its ODA. However, it is important to recognise that due to the lag in reporting for ODA spending, the figures feeding into the 2026 Index do not take into account the drastic cuts to US foreign aid spending and media development support, that were introduced in 2025.

FIGURE 2: COUNTRY RANKINGS ACCORDING TO THEIR DOMESTIC MEDIA FREEDOM ENVIRONMENT AND THEIR INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR MEDIA FREEDOM



* The Index draws on data from the previous calendar year (2025), except for the ODA figures, which are for 2024, due to the time lag in reporting.

Norway, Denmark and Ireland all had 'good' domestic media freedom environments in 2025, according to RSF, but fall in the bronze category of the IMFS Index.

Figure 2 shows that, in general, countries that tend to have relatively high levels of media freedom domestically (as indicated by their RSF ranking) also tend to perform well on the IMFS Index, while countries with relatively low levels of domestic media freedom tend to perform poorly on the IMFS Index. For example, South Korea, Japan, Greece, Italy and the United States were classified as having both 'problematic' domestic media freedom environments in 2025, according to RSF and as 'bronze', or less well performing, in the 2026 IMFS Index. Similarly, the two highest performing countries in the IMFS Index – Sweden and Estonia – were amongst the 7 countries with 'good' domestic media freedom environments in 2025, according to RSF.

However, Figure 2 also identifies countries that do not follow this trend. Norway, Denmark and Ireland all had 'good' domestic media freedom environments in 2025, according to RSF, but fall in the bronze category of the IMFS Index. Portugal and Switzerland also ranked very highly in the 2025 RSF Index – 8th and 9th respectively – but are in the bronze category of the IMFS Index. In 2025, none of these five countries had an active emergency visa scheme for journalists or played a leadership role in any of the qualifying multilateral initiatives. Norway (0.2%), Denmark (0.19%), Switzerland (0.19%), Portugal (0.07%) and Ireland (0.00%) also gave relatively low proportions of their ODA to media development.

THEMES

THEME 1: DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT FOR MEDIA FREEDOM

Within the diplomatic theme of the IMFS Index, the highest scoring country – for the second year running - was Lithuania (10 points) – followed closely by Estonia, the Netherlands, Germany, Finland and Austria (9 points each). The lowest scoring countries in the diplomatic theme - each for the second year in a row - were Japan, New Zealand, Portugal and Spain (1 point each).

Within this theme, the highest scoring countries in terms of 'multilateral leadership' (criteria 1) were Belgium, Estonia, Lithuania, Germany and Finland (5 points each). The Netherlands and Lithuania were the only two countries to have two qualifying leadership roles in 2025.

It is important to note, however, that other countries performed multilateral leadership roles in 2025 which did not qualify for recognition in this Index. For example, in October 2025, France led a high-level international conference on Information Integrity and Independent Media, as part of the Paris Peace Forum, leading to the adoption by 34 states of the Paris Declaration for strengthened multilateral action in favour of information integrity and independent media. Similarly, during 2025, Finland used its position as the Chair of the OSCE to highlight important aspects of media freedom during the various events at OSCE summits it convened.

Regarding criteria 2 within this theme ('multilateral membership'), nine countries received the full three points for being members of all three qualifying multilateral initiatives: Austria, France, South Korea, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Japan was the only country in the Index not to be a member of the International Partnership for Information and Democracy (IPID) in 2025.

Regarding criteria 3 ('speaking out'), 16 of the 30 countries (53%) in the Index signed all eligible joint public statements published by the MFC in 2025. This was notably up from 2024, when just 33% of IMFS Index countries signed all eligible MFC statements. However, only 21 of the 51 MFC members (41%) signed the statement relating to Gaza, published in 2025, which, 'strongly condemn[ed] all violence directed against journalists... [and] call[ed] for all attacks against media workers to be investigated and for those responsible to be prosecuted'[9]. The countries which signed the lowest proportion of MFC statements were South Korea (63%), Spain (63%) and the US (0%).

TABLE 2: PERCENTAGE OF ELIGIBLE MEDIA FREEDOM COALITION STATEMENTS SIGNED IN 2025 BY EACH COUNTRY IN THE IMFS INDEX

COUNTRY	PERCENTAGE OF ELIGIBLE MFC STATEMENTS SIGNED IN 2025
Austria	100%
Belgium	100%
Canada	100%
Denmark	100%
Estonia	100%
Finland	100%
Germany	100%
Iceland	100%
Ireland	100%
Latvia	100%
Lithuania	100%
Luxembourg	100%
Netherlands	100%
Norway	100%
Slovenia	100%
Sweden	100%
Australia	88%
France	88%
Portugal	88%
Switzerland	88%
United Kingdom	88%
Czechia	75%
Greece	75%
Italy	75%
Japan	75%
New Zealand	75%
Slovakia	75%
Korea	63%
Spain	63%
United States	0%

THEME 2: FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

The three countries in the IMFS Index with the highest percentage of ODA allocated to media development in 2024 (criteria 4) were Sweden (1.01%), Belgium (0.33%) and Czechia (0.26%), with Sweden the only country to reach the benchmark of 1.0%, as recommended by the Forum on Information & Democracy.

Three countries – Greece, Latvia and Slovenia – allocated none of their ODA to media development in 2024, the same three countries as in 2023. While table 3 shows that Ireland, Austria and Slovakia also gave 0.00%, this is because the figures are rounded to two decimal places. Although making up less than 0.005% of their ODA in 2024, these three countries did award $139,000, $36,000 and $3,000 respectively to media development.

Nine other countries awarded less than 0.1% of their ODA in 2024 to media development: South Korea (0.09%), Finland (0.07%), Portugal (0.07%), the Netherlands (0.06%), Canada (0.06%), Luxembourg (0.06%), Japan (0.04%), Italy (0.02%) and Spain (0.01%). Thus, in total, half of all countries in the IMFS Index awarded less than 0.1% of their ODA to media development in 2024. Furthermore, amongst all states in the Index, an average of just 0.15% of ODA was allocated to media development in 2024 – a decline of 0.01% from 2023.

Half of all countries in the IMFS Index awarded less than 0.1% of their ODA to media development in 2024.

Although no points were awarded for the absolute amounts of financial support given to media development, it is important to recognise those states that made the largest financial contributions. Eight countries gave over $10 million to media development in 2024: the United States ($136.4m), Sweden ($57.0m), Germany ($48.1m), France ($25.0m), the United Kingdom ($23.3m), Norway ($10.9m), Belgium ($10.5m) and Switzerland ($10.1m).

In total, $332.1 million was allocated to media development in 2024 from the 30 IMFS Index countries. This is a decline of over $10 million from 2023, when these same 30 countries awarded $343.4 million to media development. However, it is very important to note that, because these figures are for 2024, they do not account for the estimated 23.1% decrease in ODA in 2025 – the largest annual contraction on record[10].

Regarding criteria 5 ('fulfilled spending commitments'), in 2024, four countries disbursed less than 90% of the financial support to media development which they had committed. These were: Switzerland (86%), France (80%), Norway (71%) and Spain (30%).

For the second year running. Greece, Latvia and Slovenia – allocated none of their ODA to media development.

Although no points were awarded for exceeding financial commitments, it is interesting to note that 9 countries distributed more financial support to media development in 2024 than they had originally committed. For example, Finland originally committed $284,000 but ultimately awarded $977,000 (+344%). This included support for media literacy education in Palestine, gender equality in newsrooms in Nepal and Tanzania and promoting peace journalism in Somalia.

Regarding criteria 6 ('pooled multilateral funds'), no country in the IMFS Index gave financial support to all four qualifying multilateral pooled funds in 2025. However, three countries supported three of the funds: the Netherlands, Sweden and Estonia. Half of all countries (15 out of 30) did not award funding to any multilateral pooled fund in 2025.

UNESCO's IPDC received the largest number of contributions from different states in 2025 (8) followed by the Global Media Defence Fund (7) - just as in 2024. The International Fund for Public Interest Media (IFPIM) received financial contributions from six different countries, while just five countries supported UNESCO's Multi-Donor Programme for Media Development and Safety of Journalists (MDP) in 2025. However, it is important to note that the size of each contribution was not included as part of the scoring.

THE EUROPEAN UNION: FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

For this Index, the European Union (EU) does not qualify as a state that can be assessed against the criteria of most of the themes. However, the EU, mainly through the European Commission, provides significant resources to media development. In 2024, the EU committed $29.4 million of its Official Development Assistance (ODA) to 'Media and Free Flow of Information' (code 15153) and 'Radio/ television/print media' (code 22030) and disbursed $67.7 million, or 231% of its commitment. This is an increase of $20.5 million compared to the $47.2 million it awarded to media development internationally in 2023.

Overall, 0.25% of the EU's ODA spending in 2024 was on media development – compared to 0.12% in 2023. These figures include what the European Union reported through the OECD portal and does not include member states' contributions.

If the EU were ranked alongside states in this Index for criteria 4 ('aid spent on media'), it would have ranked 4th - after Sweden, Belgium and Czechia. The EU's absolute spending amount would have put it in second place, behind only the United States ($136.4m) and above Sweden ($57.0m), Germany ($48.1m) and France ($25.0m).

In 2024, the EU spent $68 million on international media development, representing 0.25% of its international aid budget — up from $47 million (0.12%) in 2023.

TABLE 3: OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE (ODA) SPENDING ON MEDIA DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL COUNTRIES IN THE INDEX ON INTERNATIONAL MEDIA FREEDOM SUPPORT, 2024

COUNTRY	PERCENTAGE OF ODA ALLOCATED TO MEDIA DEVELOPMENT IN 2024	TOTAL ODA SPENT ON MEDIA DEVELOPMENT IN 2024	THE DEGREE TO WHICH ODA FUNDING COMMITMENTS TO MEDIA DEVELOPMENT WERE FULFILLED IN 2024	NUMBER OF QUALIFYING POOLED MULTILATERAL FUNDS SUPPORTED IN 2025
Sweden	1.01%	$57,045,000	142%	3
Belgium	0.33%	$10,529,000	100%	0
Czechia	0.26%	$1,481,000	99%	2
European Union*	*0.25%*	*$67,731,000*	*231%*	*0*
United States	0.21%	$136,407,000	111%	0
Estonia	0.21%	$169,000	252%	3
Norway	0.20%	$10,900,000	71%	2
Switzerland	0.19%	$10,122,000	86%	2
Denmark	0.19%	$5,859,000	98%	0
France	0.17%	$25,020,840	80%	1
Lithuania	0.17%	$361,000	100%	2
Iceland	0.17%	$184,000	100%	2
New Zealand	0.15%	$1,178,000	n/a	0
Germany	0.13%	$48,067,961	97%	1
United Kingdom	0.12%	$23,336,489	98%	1
Australia	0.10%	$3,108,000	100%	1
Korea	0.09%	$2,805,000	524%	0
Finland	0.07%	$977,000	344%	0
Portugal	0.07%	$373,000	101%	0
Netherlands	0.06%	$4,564,000	297%	3
Canada	0.06%	$4,291,000	139%	1
Luxembourg	0.06%	$340,000	100%	1
Japan	0.04%	$8,364,000	126%	0
Italy	0.02%	$1,259,000	93%	0
Spain	0.01%	$215,000	30%	1
Ireland	0.00%	$139,000	100%	0
Austria	0.00%	$36,000	100%	0
Slovakia	0.00%	$3,000	n/a	0
Greece	0.00%	$0	n/a	0
Latvia	0.00%	$0	n/a	0
Slovenia	0.00%	$0	n/a	0

*The European Union did not qualify for inclusion in the full Index because it is ineligible to join the MFC. However, it is included in this table to allow for comparisons with states regarding its funding for media development.

THEME 3: SUPPORT FOR JOURNALISM REFUGE AND PROTECTION

No country in the Index has both an active emergency visa scheme and at least one initiative domestically for media workers in exile.

Regarding criteria 7 ('safe refuge for journalists'), in 2025, only five countries had an active emergency visa scheme dedicated to supporting journalists at-risk, as recommended by the High Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom. These were: Canada, Czechia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania - the same as in 2024. Under these five schemes, more than 1,000 visas have been issued to media workers in exile since 2020.

It is worth noting that several countries in the Index have visa schemes for human rights defenders and these have been used to issue visas to journalists, for example, in Ireland, Spain, France and Germany. These could be built upon further, with the recommendation of the MFC's High Level Panel of Legal Experts, to provide specific affordances for journalists.

Importantly, the IMFS Index currently only accounts for whether a country does or does not provide visas/permits for journalists in exile. It does not account for the length or accessibility of this support, or restrictions or reductions to accessing support. Therefore, it does not capture, for example, the fact that in 2025, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security proposed replacing the long-standing "duration of status" framework for foreign journalists' I-visas – which were valid from up to five years - down to a fixed term of 240 days (with 90 days for Chinese nationals).

Regarding criteria 8 ('journalist protection mechanisms'), only four countries in the Index reported on UNESCO's Global Repository of National Safety Mechanisms for Journalists that they supported a domestic initiative that promotes the protection and safety of media workers in exile. These were France, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain. For example, France's "Voices in Exile" project[11] offers 9 months of support to journalists exiled in France which encourages networking for editorial collaborations and professional solidarity that will help them integrate and continue their careers.

Last year, Latvia was the only country in the Index to have both an active emergency visa scheme dedicated to supporting journalists at-risk and to support at least one initiative domestically (the Media Hub) that promotes the protection and safety of media workers in exile. Support for the Hub by Latvia was not recorded for 2025, thus no country in the Index supports both of these critical mechanisms.

In 2025, according to the data sources consulted for this report, 21 of 30 countries had neither a dedicated legal mechanism for providing safe refuge for journalists at-risk or supported a national assistance programme for journalists in exile.

METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY OF THE INDEX FOR INTERNATIONAL MEDIA FREEDOM SUPPORT

THEME 1: DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT FOR MEDIA FREEDOM

States' diplomatic support for media freedom is assessed through measures of their leadership, membership and advocacy within multilateral initiatives. As members of the MFC, all states assessed in this Index have signed the Coalition's Global Pledge which commits them to 'speak out and take action together' and 'reinforce international initiatives to champion media freedom'[12].

Criteria 1, Multilateral leadership: States are awarded points for holding executive roles in multilateral initiatives focused on media freedom. Qualifying leadership roles include serving as a chair (3 points), vice-chair (2 points), or rapporteur (2 points) for UNESCO's IPDC, serving as a co-chair (5 points) or Executive Group member (2 points) of the MFC and serving as a co-chair of at least one of the Groups of Friends on the Safety/Protection of Journalists at UNESCO in Paris, the UN in New York or the UN in Geneva (3 points). States that host global observances for World Press Freedom Day (May 3rd) and the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists (November 2nd) also qualify for leadership recognition (5 points). Leadership of these multilateral initiatives is determined via the relevant UN, UNESCO and MFC websites. While states were awarded five points for each leadership role they held in the 2025 IMFS Index, the scoring for these roles has been adjusted in the 2026 Index to better reflect the level of responsibility and commitment involved in each role. States also now receive recognition of membership of the MFC Executive Group.

Currently, recognition is not given to states that play a leadership role in regional or country specific donor support groups or MFC Embassy Networks because this information is not publicly available. Despite their importance, initiatives like the Team Europe Democracy Network are also not included because membership is not open to all states in the Index. Finally, recognition is not currently given to states that play a leadership role in multilateral initiatives which focus on supporting different aspects of the wider enabling environment for journalism, rather than media freedom specifically, such as the Freedom Online Coalition, the Open Government Partnership and the Community of Democracies.

Criteria 2, Multilateral membership: States can also demonstrate their diplomatic support for media freedom via membership of relevant multilateral initiatives. In this Index, qualifying initiatives include the International Partnership for Information and Democracy (IPID), UNESCO's IPDC and the Groups of Friends on the Safety/Protection of Journalists in Paris, New York and Geneva. States are awarded one point for membership of the IPID and one point for membership of the IPDC. States also receive one point if they are a member of at least one of the three Groups of Friends on the Safety/Protection of Journalists. States can be awarded a maximum score of three points for this criteria. Membership of these multilateral initiatives is determined via their public websites and statements.

Currently, recognition is not given to states that are members of regional or country specific donor support groups or MFC Embassy Networks because this information is not publicly available. Recognition is also not currently given to states that are members of multilateral initiatives that focus on supporting different aspects of the wider enabling environment for journalism, rather than media freedom specifically.

Criteria 3, Speaking out: States can also demonstrate their diplomatic support for media freedom by signing joint public statements or resolutions on journalism safety or media freedom adopted or published by multilateral initiatives. States are awarded two points if they sign all the joint public statements made by the MFC in the previous calendar year, which they were eligible to sign[13]. States that sign between 90% and 99% of the MFC statements they were eligible to sign are awarded one point. States that sign less than 90% of such statements receive zero points. States are also awarded two points if they co-author a resolution or declaration on media freedom or journalism safety at the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC). The data sources for this criteria are the relevant UNHRC and MFC websites.

THEME 2: FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

States' financial support for media development is assessed through measures of their funding levels, fulfilment of financial commitments and contributions to pooled multilateral funds. As members of the OECD-DAC, all states assessed by this Index have committed to 'increas[ing] financial and other forms of support to public interest media', as part of their endorsement of the Development Co-operation Principles on Relevant and Effective Support to Media and the Information Environment[14].

Criteria 4, Aid spent on media: States are awarded points for the percentage of ODA they allocate specifically to media development. Assessing the percentage of ODA allocated to media development, rather than the total amounts, allows for fairer comparisons between states with different economic capacities.

The data source used for this criteria is the OECD Creditor Reporting System (CRS) database, which is a publicly available database that captures states' reporting on types of aid (grants, loans, development finance, etc.), recipient countries, sector and channel (NGOs, public sector, multilateral organisations, etc.), amongst other data. Due to lags in reporting at the granular level by states on the public-facing database, this Index must rely on data from two years prior, so the 2026 Index uses data from 2024.

Following a methodology used by the Global Forum for Media Development, the funding codes used to identify ODA spending on media development are: 'Media and Free Flow of Information' (code 15153) and 'Radio/television/ print media' (code 22030)[15]. Funding codes for Communications Policy and Administrative Management (22010); Telecommunications (22020); and Information and Communication Technology (22040) are not included because they focus on broader areas like strategic communications, telecommunications policy and equipment and internet access. While such support can contribute to the wider enabling environment, they fall outside of the scope of media freedom specifically.

Following the methodologies used by the Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA) and the OECD-DAC Governance Network (GovNet), funding allocations for 'international broadcasting' by Germany, UK and France within these codes are excluded[16]. While international broadcasting makes an important contribution to

ensuring citizens' access to independent news and information - especially when it is largely absent or extremely limited in a country - it is generally excluded from calculations of ODA spending on media development because it does not directly contribute to the development of a domestic independent media sector.

It is important to note the limitations of this publicly reported data. Public donors must try to collect and standardise information that may be spread across several government agencies or bureaucracies, such as the foreign ministry, aid/ assistance ministry and defence ministry. Additionally, not all donors have a common understanding of media development or media assistance and may include funding for development communication, public diplomacy, or open government data in their reporting. Finally, the figures may exclude confidential (and thus, non-reported) data, or support for election-related reporting or investigative journalism which may be reported as part of election programming or anti-corruption efforts, respectively.

States are awarded one point per 0.1% of ODA allocated to code 15153 or code 22030. States committing less than 0.05% of ODA to these codes are awarded zero points. There is no limit to the number of points a state can be awarded in this category.

Criteria 5, Fulfilled spending commitments: States are also awarded points for delivering the funding amounts they previously pledged to media development. This is also assessed via the OECD CRS database, which records them under "flow type," separating funding commitments – amounts of planned and approved funding – and disbursements – funding actually paid out to the recipient. As there can be a delay between when commitments are finalised and when disbursements are made, there can sometimes be a lag time beyond two years in disbursing a commitment. States are awarded three points if they deliver at least 90% of the funding they committed and they are awarded zero points if they deliver less than 90% of their financial commitment[18]. States do not receive additional points for exceeding the financial commitments they made. The maximum number of points a state can be awarded in this category is three points.

Criteria 6, Pooled multilateral funds: States are also awarded points for contributing to pooled multilateral funds dedicated to supporting media freedom or media development. Such funds are, in principle, an effective way of coordinating resources and can provide core support to local entities, reduce the earmarking of contributions and support the principle of multilateralism[19].

The pooled multilateral funds recognised in the IMFS Index include three funds administered by UNESCO: the IPDC, the GMDF and the MDP. In addition, the Index recognises IFPIM in this category. This is because IFPIM's governance structure is multilateral (with representation from more than three nation states) and its financial contributions are pooled together into a single financing mechanism overseen by a centralised governance structure and distributed in alignment with a collective strategy.

States are awarded one point for each of these pooled multilateral funds they contributed to in the previous calendar year, up to a maximum score of four points. Funding allocations are determined by the websites of the relevant fund and corroborated by the fund managers themselves. Multilateral pooled funds focused on supporting media freedom in a single country are currently excluded because they may not be open to all states within the Index and because the funding data is often not publicly available.

THEME 3: SUPPORT FOR JOURNALISM REFUGE AND PROTECTION

States' support for the refuge and protection of journalists at-risk or in exile is assessed through their commitment to providing safe refuge and assistance programmes. The issue of safe refuge to journalists at risk has consistently been designated a key priority for the High Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom - the MFC's independent advisory arm. The High Level Panel has provided MFC states with a clear plan to fulfil this commitment, via its advisory Report on Safe Refuge for Journalists at Risk, with the key recommendation being to create an emergency visa for journalists at risk[20].

Criteria 7, Safe refuge for journalists: States are awarded points for having a dedicated emergency visa scheme or residence permits that explicitly include provision for media workers in exile. In line with the recommendations of the High Level Panel, these visas/permits should be open to journalists in need of immediate or urgent protection due to an ongoing threat to them and/or their families and continue to be available until the risk subsides[21]. All states with an active visa/permit scheme for journalists at risk receive five points.

The existence of such a scheme is determined by relevant public reports including from the MFC and the High Level Panel. It is important to track how visa/residency schemes for media workers are implemented in practice. However, this is not currently possible, as there are no publicly available data sources to track or verify this data.

Criteria 8, Journalist protection mechanisms: States are awarded points for supporting programmes or initiatives that promote the protection and safety of media workers in exile, as recognised in UNESCO's Global Repository of National Safety Mechanisms for Journalists. These initiatives are run domestically, but offer mechanisms that address the safety of exiled journalists in one or more of the three areas of prevention, protection and prosecution. Such initiatives can focus on policy, advocacy, fellowships, training, or grant assistance to at-risk journalists, media professionals and defenders of freedom of expression in exile. All states supporting at least one such scheme will receive three points.

The only significant presentational change to the 2026 IMFS Index, from the 2025 Index, is the ranking of countries with equal scores. Where two or more countries receive the same overall number of points, they are no longer given a joint ranking. Instead, the higher ranking is awarded to the country that allocates the larger proportion of its ODA to international media development (criteria 4).

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TABLE 4: CRITERIA AND SCORING FOR THE INDEX ON INTERNATIONAL MEDIA FREEDOM SUPPORT (IMFS)

THEME	CRITERIA	SCORING
Diplomatic support for media freedom	**1. MULTILATERAL LEADERSHIP** Leadership of multilateral initiatives supporting media freedom. — Media Freedom Coalition (MFC) (Co-chair and Exec Group member), UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) (chair, vice-chair, or rapporteur) and the UNESCO/UN Groups of Friends on the Safety of Journalists (Geneva, Paris or New York) (co-chair). — Hosting World Press Freedom Day and the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists.	2 to 5 points for each leadership role.
	2. MULTILATERAL MEMBERSHIP Membership of multilateral initiatives supporting media freedom. — IPDC, Groups of Friends on the Safety of Journalists and the International Partnership for Information and Democracy.	1 point for each membership.
	3. SPEAKING OUT Publicly supporting joint statements relating to media freedom. — Percentage of eligible MFC public statements supported. — Co-authoring a resolution or declaration on media freedom or journalism safety at the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).	2 points for 100% of MFC statements signed. 1 point for 90-99% of MFC statements signed. 2 points for leading a relevant UNHRC resolution.
Financial support for media develop-ment	**4. AID SPENT ON MEDIA** Percentage of total Official Development Assistance (ODA) spent on media development.	1 point per 0.1%.
	5. FULFILLED SPENDING COMMITMENTS Fulfilment of funding commitment of ODA spending for media development.	3 points for 90% or more. 0 points for below 90%.
	6. POOLED MULTILATERAL FUNDS Financial contributions to pooled multilateral media development funds. — UNESCO's Global Media Defence Fund, the International Programme for the Development of Communication and the Multi-Donor Programme on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists; and the International Fund for Public Interest Media.	1 point for each fund.
Support for Journalism Safety and Protection	**7. SAFE REFUGE FOR JOURNALISTS** Existence of a dedicated emergency visa scheme or residence permits for media workers at risk.	5 points
	8. JOURNALIST PROTECTION MECHANISMS Support for domestic programmes or initiatives to promote protection and safety of media workers in exile.	3 points

ENDNOTES

1 - https://www.citystgeorges.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/2025/october/index-on-international-media-freedom-support

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6 - https://rsf.org/en/exiled-journalists-find-safety-finland-few-opportunities-continue-their-work-15-recommendations

7 - unesco.org/en/safety-journalists/un-plan-action/national-safety-mechanisms/spain

8 - https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4098510/files/A_RES_80_217-EN.pdf

9 - https://mediafreedomcoalition.org/joint-statement/2025/mfc-statement-media-access-to-gaza/

10 - https://www.oecd.org/en/data/insights/data-explainers/2026/04/a-historic-decline-in-foreign-aid-preliminary-2025-oda-data.html

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