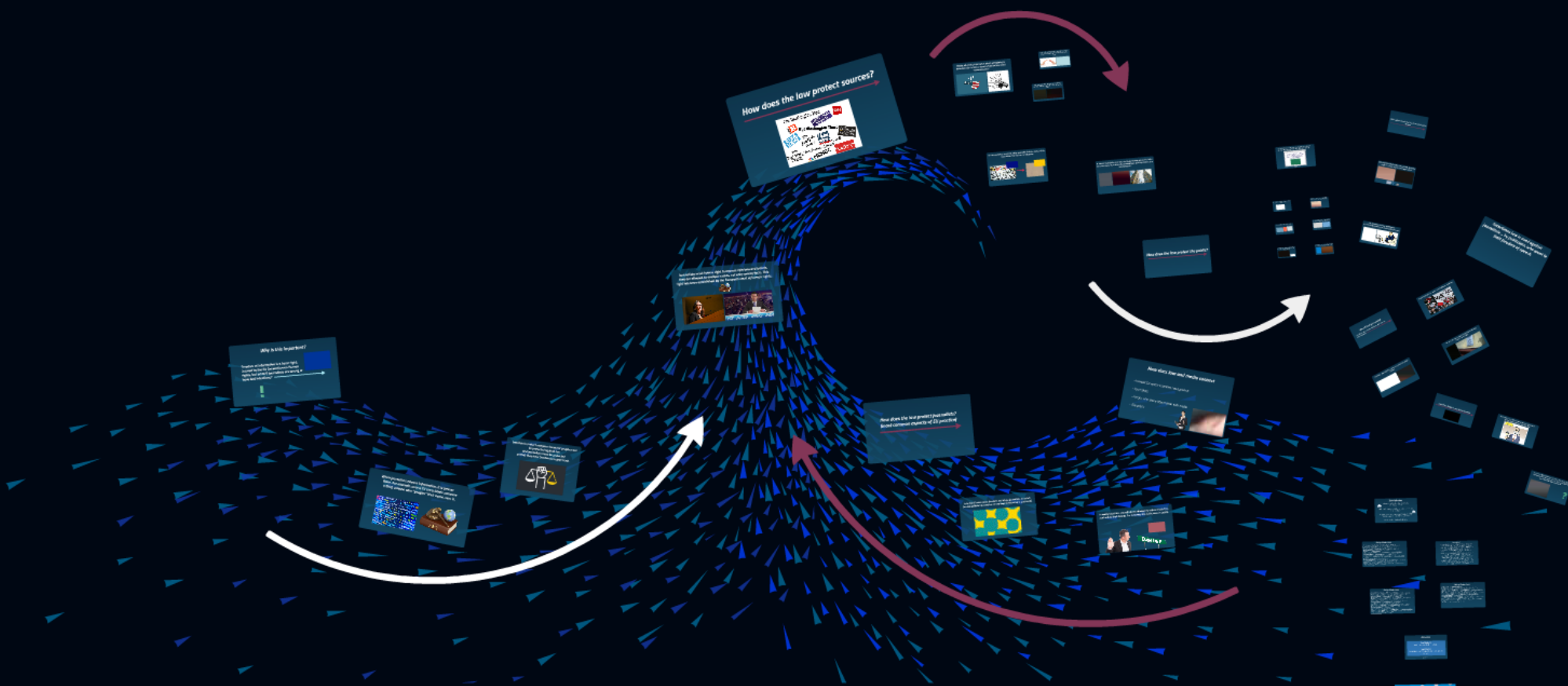


Law and media

How does law regulate work of journalists: most common principles in EU countries and best practices

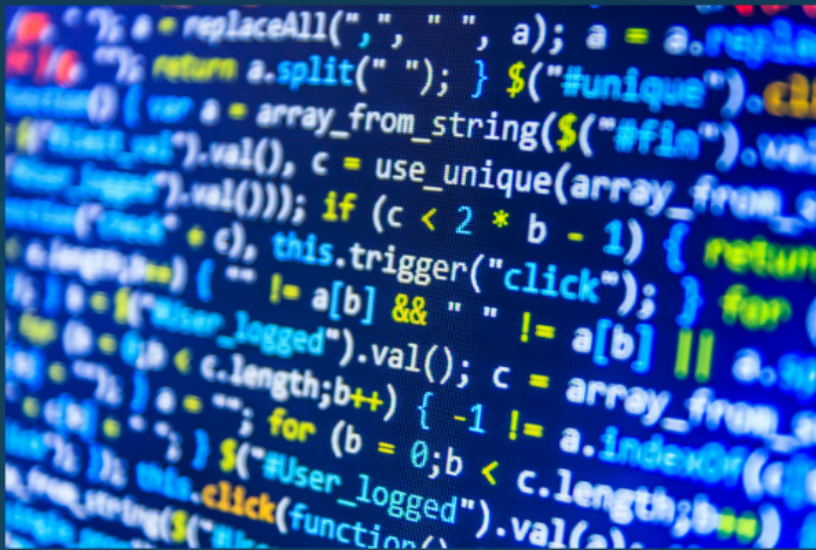


Why is this important?

Freedom of information is a basic right, insured by the EU Convention on Human rights, but what if journalists are wrong or have bad intentions?



When journalists release information, it is forever there. For example, once a TV story labels someone a thief, anyone who "googles" their name, sees it.



**Law has to protect everyone: innocent people must
be protected against lies
and journalists must be protected
so that they have freedom to report truth.**



How does law and media connect

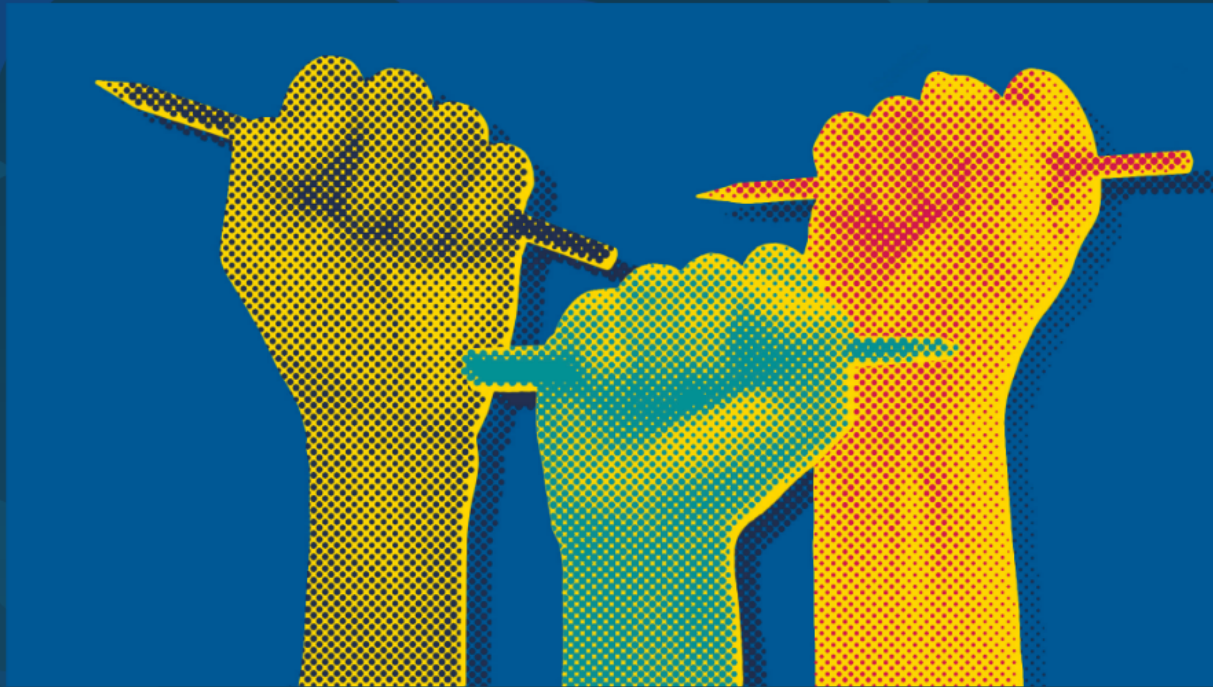
- In most European countries, laws protect:
- Journalists
- People, who share information with media
- The public



***How does the law protect journalists?
(most common aspects of EU practice)***



Law must insure press freedom and allow journalists to search for and publish information on any topic (censorship is outlawed).



In many countries, journalists are allowed to refuse a task if it contradicts their beliefs. For instance, this is the case in Latvia.



Journalists must have a right to express opinions and beliefs, they are allowed to analyze events, not only convey facts. This right has been established by the European court of human rights.



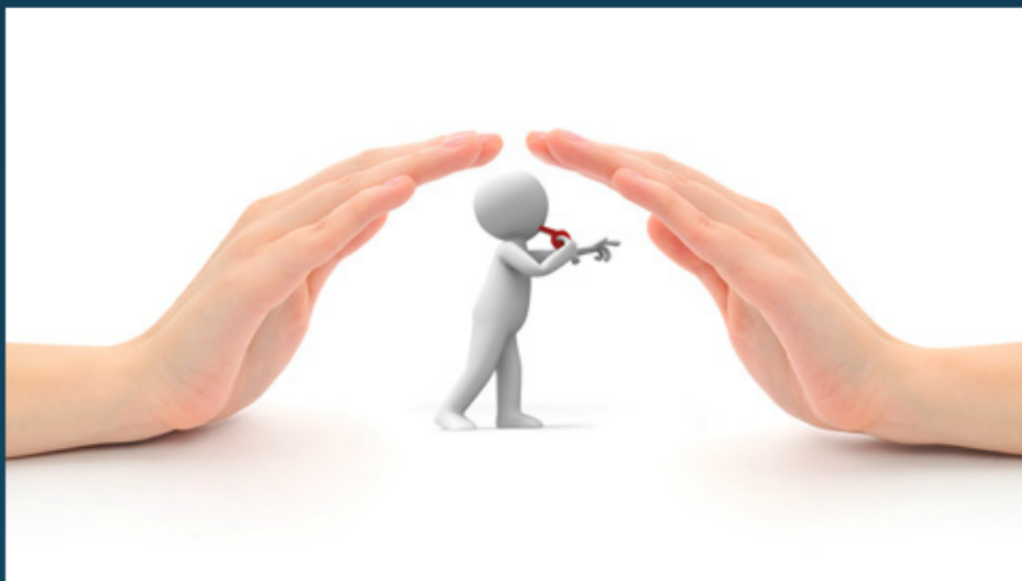
How does the law protect sources?



People, who bring information about wrongdoing to journalists (for instance, about corruption) are called "whistleblowers".



In several EU countries law gives journalists the right to protect the “whistle blowers” and keep their identity secret.



Even though this right is also protected on EU level, journalists still have to fight authorities to exercise this right.



In some countries, courts can oblige journalist disclose sources of the information. For instance, in Lithuania.



In Latvia: investigative journalist had to go to European court of after her home was searched by police attempting to find information on a "whistleblower".



How does the law protect the public?

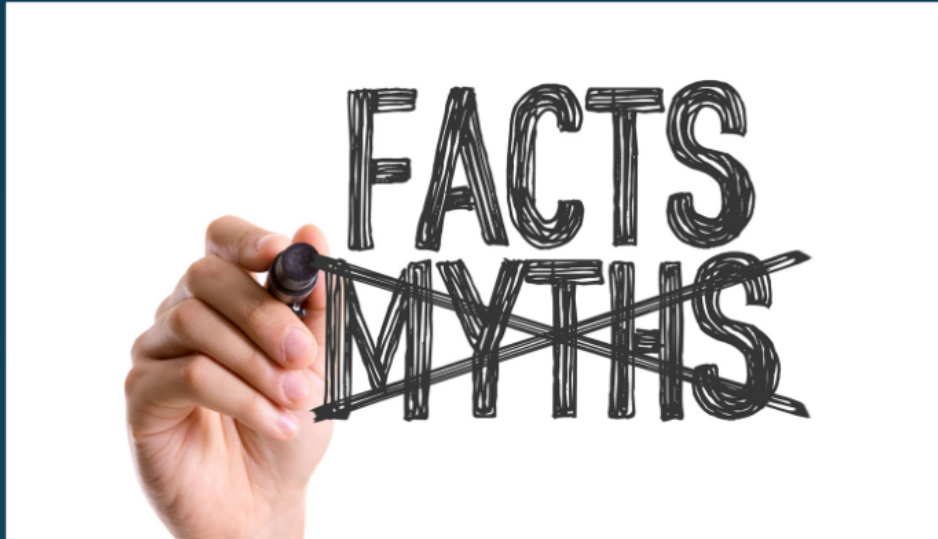


Journalists have an obligation to be objective and reflect all sides of a problem/story. For instance Lithuanian law says:

“Journalists have to provide fair and impartial information, insure, that a person, who is being criticised has the right to be heard”.



If journalists make a mistake, they have to retract the information.



If journalists spread false information, they can be taken to court (that is called libel and defamation).



News should be separated from opinions.



In many countries, hate speech and incitement to violence in media is illegal, it is also regulated by an EU Directive.



Journalists have to protect identity of victims of crime, and get consent of a parent when publishing information about children (under 18).



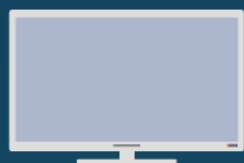
Journalists have to balance their duty to report information, important to the public with persons right to privacy.



Who regulates media and sees if journalists follow the law?



State regulatory bodies (for radio and TV), they have a right to courts, as part of the legal system.



Self-governing structures and Ombuds - internationally considered as an alternative for courts.

REFRAINING
willpower strength of character
SELF CONSTRAINT
SELF CONTROL constraint restraint
SOBRIETY DIGNITY **SELF-GOVERNMENT**
BALANCE **balance** POISE stability
DISCIPLINE refraining Reserve discretion willpower DIGNITY
balance stability poise **NON-INDULGENCE**
DISCRETION **SELF CONTROL**
POISE **constraint**
Reserve poise **self control**
REFRAINING **DIGNITY** **sobriety**
sobriety willpower
POISE discipline discretion
discipline **self constraint** RESERVE
discretion strength of character refraining
DIGNITY **RESTRAINT** non-indulgence
DISCRETION DISCRETION **STABILITY**
willpower self-government Reserve
constraint STRENGTH OF CHARACTER



*Sometimes law is used against
journalists ... by politicians, who want to
limit freedom of speech.*



What if it all goes wrong?

Sometimes law is used to limit journalistic freedom.

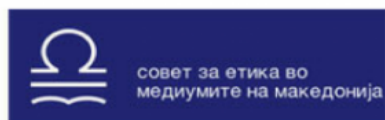
Some examples



Poland: Politicians took control over media with a new law.



North Macedonia: election commission can monitor media content.



Hungary: two media outlets forced to close following Orbán's electoral win.



Sometimes things are not black and white



**Journalists have a right to express opinions and analysis,
but sometimes politicians do not like this.**



Freedom of information does not cover state secrets, like information about the army or secret services. But what if journalists think this is important?



Task/reflection

If it was up to you, what kind of law would you invent for media?



Think about your media experiences – what troubles you or seems unfair?

What kind of law would you propose to regulate media?
Or maybe to give more freedom to journalists?



Find out whether this law already exists!

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Authorship

Olga Dragileva

Baltic Centre for Media Excellence

Jurgis Morkus

Vilnius Vocational School of Railway and Business
Services

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