



27.4.2017 - If the 2017 World Press Freedom [Index](#) shows you something, it is certainly that the freedom of the written word can never be taken for granted.

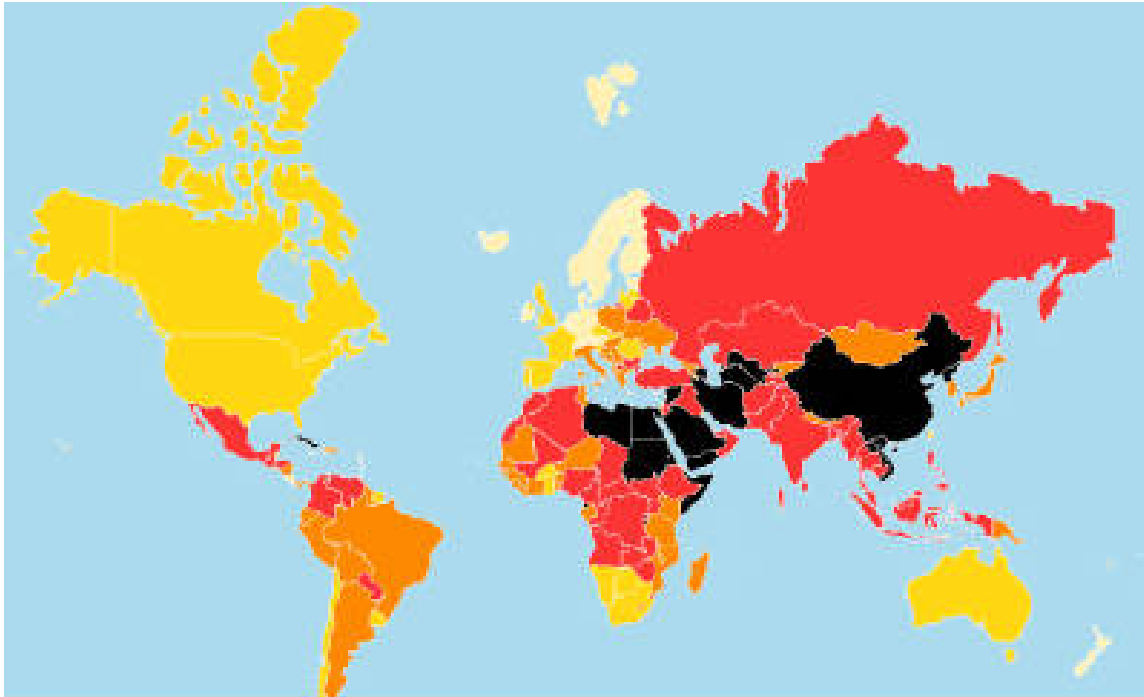
The yearly Index, compiled by Reporters Without Borders (RWB) reflects a world in which attacks on the media have become commonplace and strongmen are on the rise.

“We have reached the age of post-truth, propaganda, and suppression of freedoms”, RWB say in their press release.

Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right as stated in Article 19 of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)

: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

This year, however, media is increasingly under threat.



Finland, at the top of the list for several consecutive years, has fallen down to third place, topped by Sweden and this year's number one, Norway. Finnish Prime Minister Juha Sipilä's alleged attempts to influence the National Broadcasting Company Yle coverage of his potential conflict of interest in a state-funded nickel mine is one reason for Finland's tarnished image.

And while Europeans have been used to rather high scores in most fundamental rights, according to this year's index, journalists in the UK (40) are less free to hold power to account than those working in Chile or Lithuania. And Jamaica (8) scores higher than Belgium (9) and Iceland (10), while Ghana (26) does better than France (39), who in its turn are only a few steps ahead of Burkina Faso, (42). Senegal (58) and South Korea (63) both do better than Hungary (71), Japan (72) and Hong Kong (73).

"The democracies that have traditionally regarded media freedom as one of the foundations on which they are built must continue to be a model for the rest of the world, and not the opposite,"

RWB Secretary-General Christophe Deloire said. “By eroding this fundamental freedom on the grounds of protecting their citizens, the democracies are in danger of losing their souls.”

Media freedom is under threat now more than ever. A total of 21 countries are now coloured black on the press freedom map because the situation there is classified as “very bad,” and 51 are coloured red, the situation is classified as “bad”.

The fact remains that the situation has worsened in nearly two thirds (62.2%) of the 180 countries in the Index.

The 2017 World Press Freedom Index unveils obstacles to media freedom throughout the world.

On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, the United Nations and the international community mark [World Press Freedom Day](#)