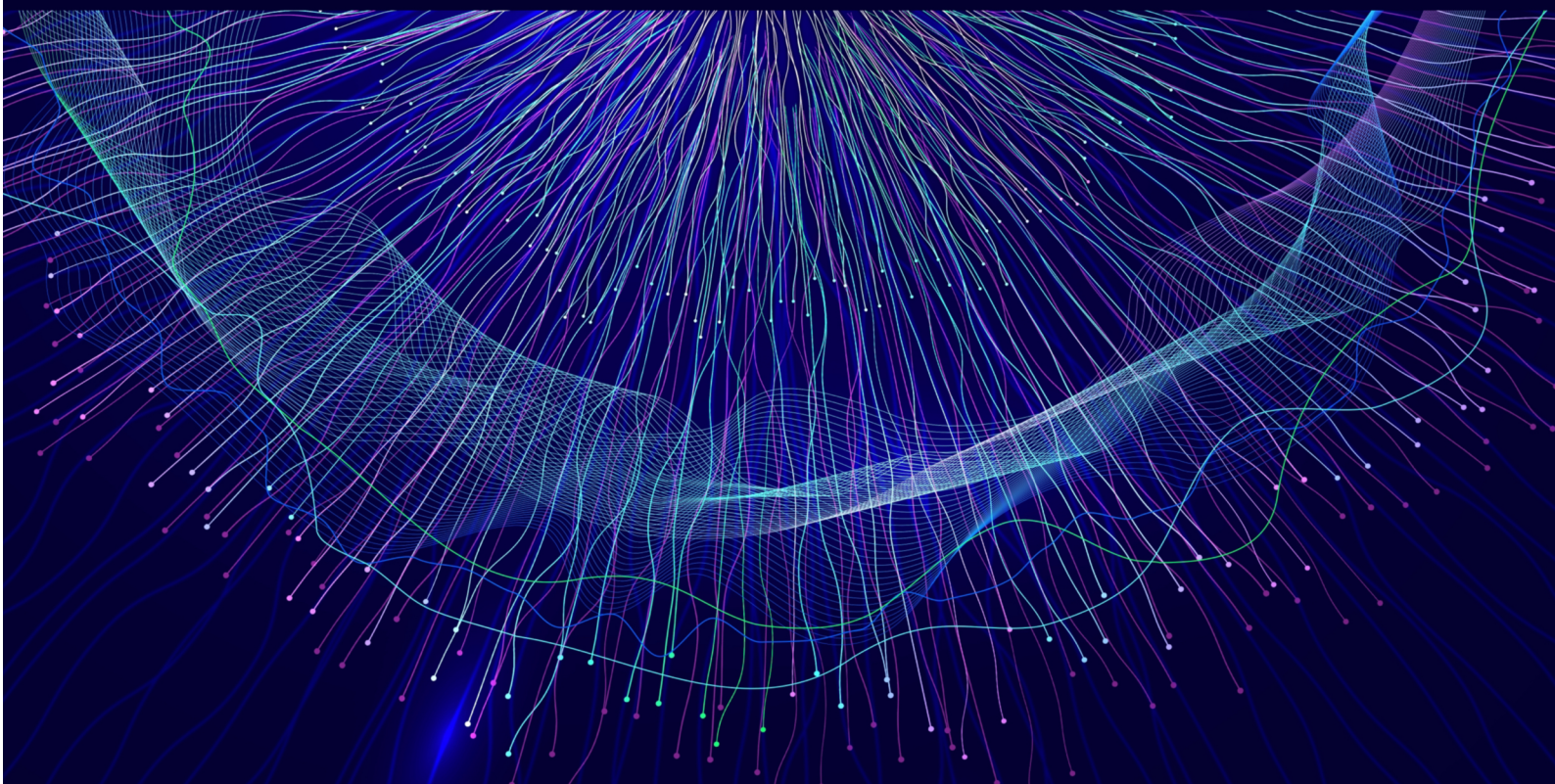


# World Press Freedom Day 2025

## Reporting in the Brave New World: The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Press Freedom and the Media

### Concept Note Executive Summary



## World Press Freedom Day 2025

### *Reporting in the Brave New World:*

## **The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Press Freedom and the Media**

### *Concept Summary*

The media landscape has changed significantly since the UN General Assembly proclaimed World Press Freedom Day in 1993. The unprecedented use and development of Artificial Intelligence systems are playing a transformative role in journalism and the media, and on press freedom.

While the principles of free, independent, and pluralistic media remain crucial, AI's impact on information gathering, processing, and dissemination is profound, presenting both innovative opportunities and profound challenges.

AI offers the potential to enhance freedom of expression by democratizing access to information, empowering global communication, and changing the reality of the flow of information around the world. It also introduces new risks, as highlighted by the UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression.<sup>1</sup> The UN Global Digital Compact emphasizes the need to address technology-amplified issues while protecting privacy and freedom of expression.<sup>2</sup>

This year's World Press Freedom Day aims to explore AI's impact on press freedom and the right to freedom of expression, as well as addressing the continued relevance of Information as a Public Good as in the Windhoek+30 Declaration of 2021, which has been endorsed with unanimity by UNESCO General Conference.

### **Freedom of expression in the face of the AI revolution**

#### **The technology opportunities and challenges for journalists and media**

AI is transforming the fundamental right to seek, impart and receive information, as well as the journalistic profession. It enhances access to information and processing of it, enabling journalists to handle and process vast amounts of data efficiently and create content more effectively. AI tools can improve fact-checking, data visualization, local and multiplatform adaptation of news content and its translation, streamlining the journalistic process and making information more engaging and accessible.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://docs.un.org/en/A/73/348>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.un.org/digital-emerging-technologies/global-digital-compact>

AI also presents risks. It can be used to reproduce misinformation, spread disinformation, amplify online hate speech, and enable new forms of censorship. Some actors use AI for mass surveillance of journalists and citizens, creating a chilling effect on freedom of expression. Private platforms increasingly use AI to filter, moderate, and curate content, becoming gatekeepers of information.

There's a growing concern that AI might contribute to the homogenization of the global media landscape, potentially reducing diversity in perspectives, media pluralism, and marginalizing smaller outlets. To address this, relevant actors have been exploring how to apply professional standards in the AI integration in media production; policy guidelines based on human rights principles and on the need of transparency and accountability are being developed; media and information literacy is widespread; and technology-based solutions are being created that align with human rights standards.

Cooperation among relevant actors is essential to develop AI-driven tools for information integrity, detecting and mitigating of disinformation, fostering secure and human rights based digital ecosystems.

### **AI's impact on the safety of women journalists**

AI presents both opportunities and challenges for women journalists. AI can support victims of gender-based violence by streamlining reporting tools and enhancing fairness in digital spaces. These advancements could reduce barriers to reporting abuse and enable faster responses.

AI also amplifies existing risks for women journalists in the digital landscape. The UN Commission on the Status of Women has identified technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) as a critical global issue, particularly affecting women in public-facing roles like journalism. AI systems can generate deepfakes, doctored images, and mis/disinformation campaigns aimed at discrediting or intimidating women journalists. These AI-driven attacks jeopardize their safety but also have a chilling effect on their work, potentially limiting public access to information.

### **Media viability in question**

AI offers media outlets tools to increase efficiency through task automation, helping newsrooms meet growing demands and remain competitive. However, the financial sustainability of media is becoming more fragile as generative AI platforms repurpose journalistic content without proper compensation, diverting revenue from independent outlets to digital platforms and to AI actors.

Among the issues being discussed is fair remuneration for content used by AI systems, with copyright enforcement mechanisms and fair revenue-sharing models.

Media outlets are facing how to balance AI use with maintaining good practices and audience trust and engagement. Many have issued codes of conduct stressing respect for audience data, content authenticity, AI use disclosure, transparency, and information integrity.

## **AI, Elections, and Democratic Processes**

AI is increasingly influencing the integrity of elections, offering tools for fact-checking and combating disinformation while empowering journalists and voters to promote informed democratic participation. However, it poses risks, as generative AI enables the creation of misleading content like deepfakes, undermining trust in democratic institutions. Addressing these challenges requires collaboration among governments, media, and civil society.

## **Objectives of World Press Freedom Day 2025**

World Press Freedom Day 2025 aims to examine AI's impact on press freedom, exploring how it affects the free flow of information, media freedom, and the achievement of SDG 16.10 to ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms

The discussion will:

- Reaffirm the universal commitment to freedom of expression and press freedom
- Explore AI's effects on media pluralism, diversity, and independence
- Assess AI impact on news and media content creation and dissemination
- Encourage media to make ethical use of AI systems in their operations
- Strengthen collaboration between media stakeholders
- Support enabling environments for media to have the rights and resources to effectively report on the benefits and harms of AI systems,
- Encourage global cooperation for journalists safety.
- Support media integration of AI, focusing on viability and representation
- Emphasize the importance of information integrity on AI impacts.
- Promote media and information literacy skills to strengthen critical thinking and competencies needed to understand the use and implication of AI systems.

