



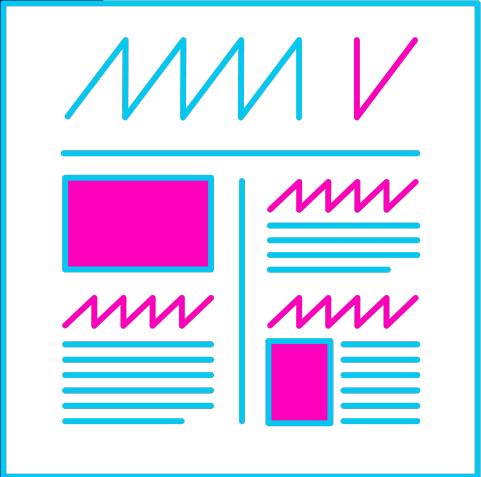
## LES 1: WHAT IS JOURNALISM?

What does the journalistic process look like?



**At the end of this lesson, you will be able to answer the following questions:**

- What is news?
- Why is journalism important?
- How do journalists go about their work?
- What influences a journalist's work? (bonus)



# What is news?





**What were the  
headlines this week?**





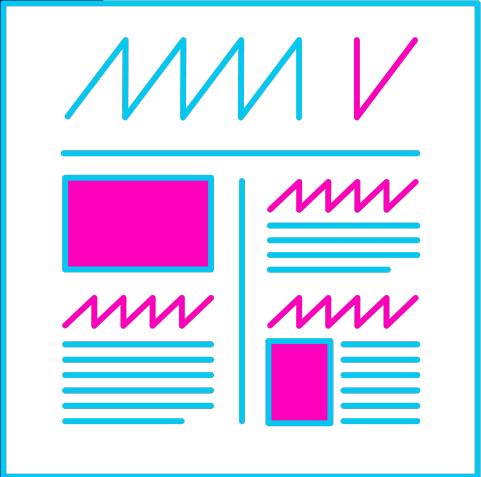
Click [here](#),  
for the  
video  
'What is  
news?'

00:00 – 00:49



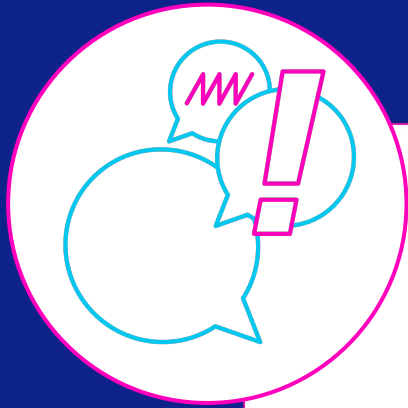
Which news stories are important and relevant to you?





# Why is journalism important?





Why do **you** think  
journalism is  
important?

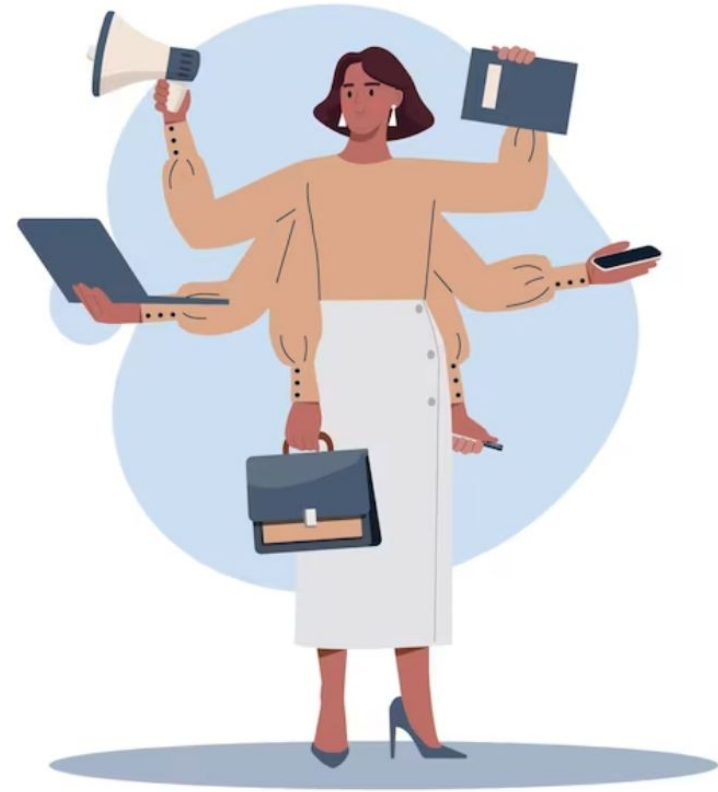


Click [here](#),  
for the  
video 'Why  
is  
Journalism  
Important?'

00:00 – 00:42

The news selected by journalists can serve various purposes. In doing so, journalists take on different functions, such as:

- Informing
- Holding the powerful accountable (watchdog function)
- Giving citizens a voice (advocacy function)
- Agenda setting





Look at the article on the right and think about the following question:  
**Which of the journalistic functions do you recognize in this news item?**

Informing

Checking the power

Giving citizens a voice

Agenda setting



Optional

You could also watch one of the following video's about the scandal:

- **TIMES Radio:** [Five potential targets' in Post Office investigation](#)
- **ITV News:** [Who will get compensation from the Post Office scandal - and how much?](#)
- **Channel 4 News:** [Post Office scandal: PM "strongly supports" withdrawing CBE from ex-Post Office boss](#)

Explainer

## What is the UK's Post Office IT scandal about and who is involved?

Prosecution of thousands of people has been called one of the greatest miscarriages of justice in British history



📍 The Post Office has about 11,500 branches across the UK. Photograph: Martin Godwin/The Guardian

It is a scandal that has rumbled for years, and yet it is suddenly dominating UK politics. Here is a guide to the saga of the [Post Office](#) and its Horizon IT system.

### What is it all about?

It has been described without exaggeration by the British prime minister, Rishi Sunak, as one of the greatest miscarriages of justice in UK history: the hounding and prosecution of thousands of people who owned and ran smaller post offices for alleged fraud between 1999 and 2015, the overwhelming majority of whom were falsely accused.

The initial fault was with Horizon, a digital accounting system installed by the IT multinational [Fujitsu](#), which wrongly said post office branches had cash shortfalls. This was then compounded by the Post Office, the company behind the network, which rejected any fault with Horizon and insisted operators must have taken the money, to the extent of covering up the real problem.

Overall, 3,500 branch owner-operators were wrongly accused and more than 900 prosecuted, with many of these jailed and ruined. Some suffered significant ill health, local ostracism and family breakup, and in a handful of cases, suicide.

Look at the article on the right and think about the following question:  
**Which of the journalistic functions do you recognize in this news item?**



*Informing*

*Giving citizens a voice*

*Checking the power*

*Agenda setting*

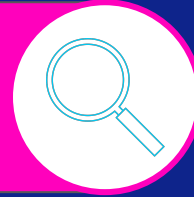
The screenshot shows the BBC Weather website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the BBC logo, a 'Sign in' button, and links for Home, News, Sport, Business, Innovation, Culture, and Travel. A search bar on the right contains the text 'Search BBC'. Below the navigation bar is a blue header with the word 'WEATHER' in white, followed by a search input field with the placeholder text 'Enter a city' and a magnifying glass icon.

The main content area features a 'Flood warning' section. It begins with a warning icon (a triangle with a tree and water) and the title 'Flood warning'. Below the title, it states 'Areas affected: Groundwater flooding in the Bourne Valley - The Winterbournes'. A black box with the word 'ACTIVE' in white is followed by 'Started at: 17:12 GMT on Wed 20 March'. The section is followed by the heading 'Flooding is expected - immediate action required'. The text below explains that the groundwater level at the Clarendon borehole has fallen back to 72.85m above sea level and is forecast to stabilise at about this level for the next few days. It also mentions that the weather over the next two weeks will continue unsettled with a heavier band of rain expected midweek. The text concludes with instructions for residents to deploy property resilience measures such as pumps, flood barriers, and air brick covers, and to avoid driving through flood water. It also notes that property flooding is expected and sewage systems may become inundated. The message will be updated as the situation changes.

At the bottom of the warning section, it states 'Issued at: 17:12 GMT on Wed 20 March' and 'Issued by: [The Environment Agency](#)'.



Look at the article on the right and think about the following question:  
**Which of the journalistic functions do you recognize in this news item?**



*Informing*

*Giving citizens a voice*

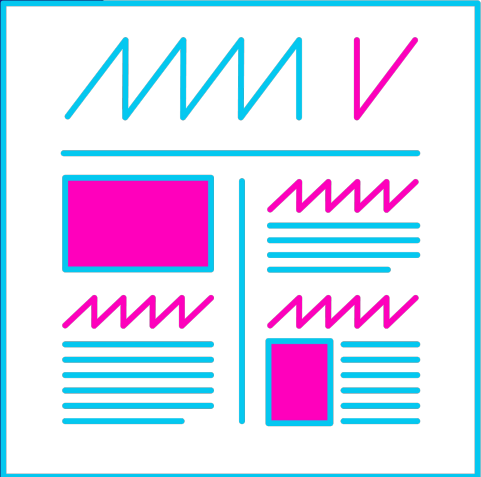
*Checking the power*

*Agenda setting*



**Watch this video:**

**[CNBC International:](#)**  
**[Brexit - What do people on the street think?](#)**



How do  
journalists go  
about their  
work?





TAKING ACTION FOR YOU

## Behind the scenes!

News isn't simply there on its own, it's a product that still needs to be created by journalists. In the clip below, you'll get a glimpse into the editorial office of ABC Action News.



[News Literacy: A look inside a TV newsroom and the journalistic process](#)



Click [here](#),  
for the  
video 'How  
does a  
good  
journalist  
go about  
his work?'

00:00 – 02:54

# Bordeaux Declaration

- **Truth**
- **Hearing both sides**
- **1 source = no source**
- **Integrity**

Journalists are always seeking the truth and make a distinction between facts and opinions.

It means seeking out/listening to both sides of a story, from both the involved parties and the opposing side, to create a fair and balanced report. For example, when there is an allegation.

Journalists need at least two sources to confirm a story.

Working with integrity is about doing what is expected and being considerate of others. In practice, this means, for example, journalists treating sources with care and respect and not allowing themselves to be bribed or influenced by outside parties.



## How do journalists deal with sources when searching for the truth?

On June 3rd, 2019, a brutal assault unfolded on the streets of Khartoum, Sudan's capital, resulting in the tragic loss of over 100 lives. Despite the absence of official documentation, a dedicated team of BBC journalists combed through numerous smartphone videos, diligently verifying their authenticity. This is the tale of how those reporters covered the assault, double-checking all the details they gathered to ensure they got the story straight.



Watch this video ['BBC My world: How journalists get the news right'](#)





Sliding this photo away reveals the infamous, sad and shocking photo of Alan Kurdi. This is optional

## How does a journalist act with integrity?

Nearly 4000 boat refugees died at sea in 2015 while crossing to Europe. We only know the name of one: Alan Kurdi. On September 2, 2015, the photo of the toddler washed ashore in Bodrum goes viral on social media. The next day, it appeared in newspapers worldwide.

Optional



Watch this video ['The Newsmakers: Did the picture of a dead Syrian child change anything?'](#)

**GULF NEWS**

Humanity washed ashore

Obama secures crucial vote to protect Iran deal

**DeMorgen**

Er is een kind verdronken

Obama heeft de voorkeur voor de deal met Iran

**Publico**

Gastos das famílias nos supermercados perto dos níveis pré-crise

Obama aprova o acordo com o Irã

**THE SUN**

MR CAMERON, SUMMER IS OVER ... NOW DEAL WITH THE BIGGEST CRISIS FACING EUROPE SINCE WW2

IT'S LIFE & DEATH

**LE SOIR**

Un enfant est mort

**Hürriyet**

DÜNYAYI SARSTI

**EL PAÍS**

Una imagen que estreche la conciencia de Europa

**THE NATIONAL**

The reality Why Europe must act now

**deVroeiing**

Herkeuringen leveren miljoenen euro's op

**LA STAMPA**

La spiaggia si è mossa l'Europa

**Irish Examiner**

Cabinet loses ranks to defend Kenny

**TA NEA**

Απεταξήμην τη συνεργασία με τη ΝΑ

**DAILY NEWS**

Aylan was only 3, fleeing Syrian war with his family. He drowned with his brother and mother.

THE DEAD SEA

**Il Messaggero**

Multe ai Paesi che non accolgono

What strikes you?



# A picture says more than 1000 words

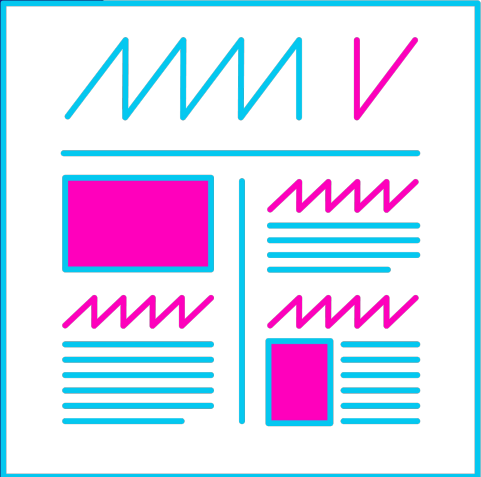
Every day, we see distressing news about war, hunger, and suffering. Often, these reports include visuals, sometimes showing heartbreaking images of adults, children, or animals in pain (or worse).

The saying 'A picture is worth a thousand words' suggests that a compelling image can sometimes convey a story without words. What do you think about this? Should certain images be censored at all? What is ethical? And in today's age of social media where everything is shared, can an image be shielded at all?



Discuss in pairs what you think and then discuss plenary:

***Should impactful yet shocking images be used to tell a story?***



# What influences the work of a journalist?





Click [here](#),  
for the  
video 'Why  
is  
Journalism  
Important?'

00:42 – 01:42

# Freedom of press

Journalists have the right to freely gather  
and publish information without anyone  
censoring or impeding them

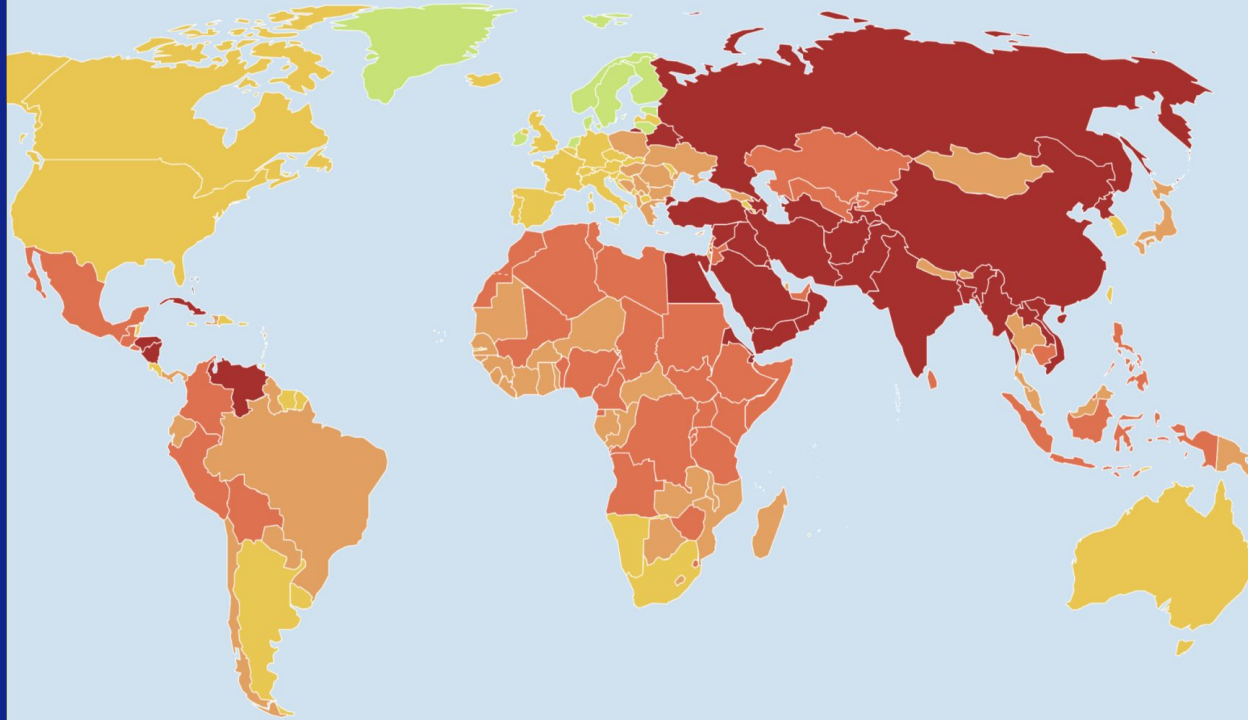


# Freedom of press index

## 2022



How is  
your  
country  
ranked?



Find a country

INDEX 2022	GLOBAL SCORE
1	Norway 95.18
2	Ireland 89.91
3	Denmark 89.48
4	Sweden 88.15
5	Finland 87.94
6	Netherlands 87
7	Lithuania 86.75
8	Estonia 85.31
9	Portugal 84.6
10	Timor-Leste 84.49
11	Liechtenstein 84.47
12	Switzerland 84.4
13	New Zealand 84.23
14	Czech Republic 83.58
15	Canada 83.53
16	Latvia 83.27
17	Slovakia 83.22
18	Iceland 83.19
19	Samoa 82.15
20	Luxembourg 81.98
21	Germany 81.91
22	Namibia 80.91
23	Costa Rica 80.2
24	France 78.72
25	South Africa 78.6
26	United Kingdom 78.51
27	Australia 78.24
28	Moldova 77.62

0 40 55 70 85 100



## Now you know...

- What news is.
- Why journalism is important.
- How a journalist goes about their work
- What influences the work of a journalist (bonus).

Before starting **Lesson 1**, take a look at the following:

This lesson comes with a **comprehensive lesson instruction (walkthrough)**, which you'll also find in the **notes**. You'll need this to **conduct the lesson**, so be sure to read it thoroughly beforehand.

This lesson has been developed as part of the European collaborative project **SMILES**, funded by the Erasmus+ Programme. The project aims to empower young people against misinformation. Read more [here](#).

The lesson has been updated, enriched, and translated by **BENEDMO**, an initiative aimed at preventing and combating the spread of misinformation in Flanders and the Netherlands. The project is funded by the European Commission. Read more about the project [here](#).