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# SPORTS JOURNALIST BAROMETER 2024

A unique and unprecedented global study examining the scale and impact of online abuse faced by sports journalists, with actionable solutions to combat this pervasive issue.

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The Sports Journalist Barometer is authored by Professor David Hassan. He is a Professor of Sport Policy and Management who has published 15 books and over 175 academic papers/chapters on a range of subjects relating to the business of sport. With FIA University and in support of the United Against Online Abuse campaign, he has published findings from the UAOA Online Abuse Barometer survey in January 2024 and spoken at a range of international conferences, including the WiMENA 2024 Conference held in London, on the impact of online abuse in sport.





## FORWARD BY MOHAMMED BEN SULAYEM

As founder of the United Against Online Abuse campaign, I am delighted to introduce the coalition's inaugural Sports Journalist Barometer Report. This pioneering and leading research provides a comprehensive, data-driven analysis of the scale, severity, and impact of online abuse faced by journalists who dedicate themselves to bringing the stories of our sports to millions of fans worldwide.

Sports journalists are essential and valued members of the sporting family. They inform, inspire, and shape the stories of our sports with passion and dedication. Yet, as this report highlights, they are increasingly subjected to a pervasive and harmful environment of online abuse. The findings are stark: over 70% of journalists surveyed reported a significant rise in the volume of abuse in the past year, with female journalists facing particularly pernicious and targeted harassment. Such abuse is not only harmful on a personal level but also threatens the principles of press freedom and diversity which are fundamental to the integrity of both sport and society.

The United Against Online Abuse campaign was founded to address the urgent challenges posed by online harms. Guided by a commitment to research, collaboration, education, and actionable solutions, the growing coalition of sporting federations, governments, and industry leaders are united in our determination to protect all those involved in sport—journalists, competitors, officials, and fans alike. This report is a crucial step in that mission, offering fresh and robust insights that will inform policy, shape interventions, and lead to practical, implementable solutions.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the journalists who participated in this study. Their participation and willingness to share often deeply personal and challenging experiences underscores the critical importance of this work and strengthens our resolve to bring about meaningful change.

As we reaffirm our commitment to the campaign's founding mission of tackling online abuse across the sporting world, the findings of this report are a stark reminder of the profound impact of this abuse has and an urgent call to action. Together with our partners and stakeholders, we will work tirelessly to ensure that sport remains a force for good—where competition is fierce but the values of inclusivity, diversity and respect are upheld and defended.



**Mohammed Ben Sulayem**  
FIA President and Founder of United Against Online Abuse



## FORWARD BY DARREN LEWIS

Not a single journalist will be surprised by the numbers.

Nor will they be shocked by the details.

The specifics are more for those who need an insight into what those who work tirelessly to uncover the information they enter into the public domain brace themselves for.

No matter how harmless the subject, how anodyne the story, writers find themselves in the crosshairs of anonymous social media users intent on directing abuse their way.

It follows in the slipstream of the sports stars targeted similarly by vitriolic Twitter (X) or Instagram users, attacking them for sub-par performances or the slightest misjudgement.

Women (particularly women of colour) are by far the most insulted, according to the findings of the United Against Online Abuse report. Misogyny constitutes nearly half the types of slur thrown around.

Racism is next - as this correspondent will attest - with any attempt to address the problem in sport or society met with the usual first wave of offensive responses to which many journalists have become accustomed.

Other types of abuse are based on physical appearance, gender expression and/or identity, religion, actual or perceived sexual orientation - anything the aggressor feels they can weaponise in an attempt to wound.

Some reporters endure it quietly, creating their own personal firewall by implementing social media filters. Some step away from the maelstrom of a tech discourse racing to the bottom, preserving their sanity and their mental well being. The roles of a significant number, however, actually involve interacting with users on the platforms whose algorithms are the source of their distress.

Even where that is not the case, abuse and hostility are used to shut down debate and intimidate journalists into silence. This cannot continue.

Journalists welcome the digital revolution. Understanding our audience is an important part of the job. It is for our readers, viewers and listeners that we work to provide informed opinion, stories, interviews and debate.

There also an acceptance that, in an interconnected world, it is easier to respond to a journalist or broadcaster now than it ever has been.



As the report sets out, the advantages of social media are obvious. More engagement with your work, the ability to build a bigger profile. An opportunity to break news first.

Set against that, however, mental well-being cannot be prioritised highly enough. Pile-ons and opprobrium from those attempted to misrepresent you or simply disagree with you are not worth it.

Media outlets throughout the industry recognise the problem and have policies in place in an attempt to protect their staff.

As the report shows, however, nearly three quarters of the respondents feel the current safeguards are not enough.

Further, a justified feeling persists that there is a lack of will to adequately address the problem.

With the understanding of the algorithmic direction in which X has been taken by its owner, hope comes in the form of alternate platform Bluesky to which millions of X users have already decamped.

Legislation with teeth, per the report, must also follow. What we have seen this far in the UK in form of the Online Safety Bill must be extended to provide more peace of mind.

The findings in the report are too important to delay action any further.



**Darren Lewis**  
President of the Sports Journalists' Association

## INTRODUCTION

**The United Against Online Abuse (UAOA) campaign is a research-driven global coalition uniting sporting organisations, national governments, regulatory bodies, and technology platforms to tackle the pressing issue of online abuse across the sporting ecosystem.**

**Supported by the FIA Foundation, UAOA currently consists of 27 formal partners and endorsers united in our shared mission to create a safer and more inclusive environment for competitors, officials, journalists and fans by fostering regulatory and behavioural change.**

In January 2024, United Against Online Abuse published the inaugural Barometer report the inaugural Barometer report, setting a global benchmark in the study of online abuse across the sporting world. This comprehensive survey of international sporting federations revealed the scale, form and profound impact of online abuse and harassment faced by competitors of various sports worldwide.

Building on this foundation, United Against Online Abuse expanded its research efforts this year to explore the under-researched impact of online abuse on sports journalists—valued and essential members of the sporting family. While dedicated to their invaluable role covering and reporting on sports for millions of fans across the world, they are uniquely subjected to a pervasive and targeted form of online abuse.

Recent academic research from Dublin City University has highlighted the damaging consequences of this abuse, with some journalists considering leaving the profession or altering their journalism output. Many rely on self-coping mechanisms, such as blocking or muting accounts, while others experience significant emotional strain. The UAOA Sports Journalist Barometer will build upon these findings, offering fresh insights into the digital landscape faced by sports journalists globally.

Throughout the research process, the UAOA campaign has worked closely with journalists, academic institutions, and industry leaders to build a comprehensive, data-driven understanding of the online harms faced by sports journalists.

By amplifying the voices of sports journalists, this report illustrates the profound personal and professional toll online harassment can take. In documenting their experiences, UAOA aims not only to raise awareness but also provide a platform for journalists to share their experiences, contributing towards actionable solutions.

It is intended that the Sports Journalist Barometer will serve as a catalyst for collaborative action, sparking dialogue between sporting organisations, media outlets, and policymakers. Together, we can safeguard the integrity of sport and the wellbeing of those who bring its stories to life, fostering an online environment of respect and safety for all.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024 UAOA Sports Journalist study is the most comprehensive, evidence-based assessment of online abuse's impact on the profession ever published.

At its core, the study focuses on the consequences of the ever-increasing levels of online abuse, to say nothing of its pernicious toxicity, on the practices of professional journalists and broadcasters and, notably, their safety. Its findings should serve as a sobering assessment of the harm caused by now chronic levels of online abuse aimed at members of the media and, in a wider sense, provide an opportunity for the sports ecosystem, indeed society at large, to reflect on the consequences of failing to address these worrying developments.

In October 2024, 41 sports journalists, many high-profile global media corps members with experience covering the world's foremost sporting events, completed our survey. In addition to offering insights into their lived experiences employed in a role that is now routinely targeted by those posting abuse online, they provided a unique insight into their genuinely held concerns for their ability to continue working in the profession, the impact such chronic abuse has for free and impartial news reportage, and, ultimately, on their safety and that of their dependents, which some now feel is under threat.

The key findings from the survey include:

- Some 36.6% of respondents stated that the volume of online abuse they had either experienced or witnessed against fellow sports journalists had 'significantly increased' in the last 12 months, with a further 34.1% indicating they had observed a 'slight increase' over the same period.
- More than three in every four journalists surveyed stated that the toxicity of the online abuse they had received had increased in the last 12 months.
- Similarly, over three in every four respondents stated that 'X' (formerly Twitter) was the platform where they had either experienced or observed the most online abuse posted against journalists in the last 12 months.

- Female broadcasters are disproportionately the subject of online abuse (over three in every four journalists surveyed confirming this to be the case) with female journalists, i.e. those not working in broadcasting, ranked second in terms of the category of journalist/ broadcaster who was most likely to experience online abuse.
- Asked what form online abuse against journalists/ broadcasters typically took, 39% of respondents stated this was misogyny, followed by sectarianism (14.6%) and racism (9.8%).
- Flaming is posting intentionally abusive or aggressive messages online to provoke a response or incite the posting of similarly malicious comments from others. When asked what they observed or, in many cases, experienced as being the most common form of online abuse, almost three-quarters of sports journalists said this was flaming. In the emotive words of one highly experienced sports journalist, "The 24-hour element of news in the modern age, through mobile phones in particular, means there is no escape from abuse at any hour of the day, coming directly to you."
- Some respondents to our survey wanted to highlight, specifically, their concerns about how online abuse exercises a 'cooling' effect on coverage of important issues relating to the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion in sport. In the words of one of those surveyed, "Stories on First Nations peoples, people of colour, those with disabilities, minority groups and women's sports always suffer the worst abuse. Combine any of the above in a story, and the abuse multiplies."



- Perhaps one of the most insightful findings from this report was an admission by a majority of sports journalists, that the extent and toxicity of online abuse in their profession may convince them to avoid covering certain topics in the future. Indeed, more than 8 in every 10 journalists surveyed for this study supported this view. This position was briefly summarised in this extract from one journalist, "Online abuse against journalists not only impacts their mental health and safety but also undermines the quality and freedom of journalism (as a whole). Constant harassment can lead journalists to self-censor, avoid contentious topics, or even leave the profession."
- Opinions were equally divided amongst respondents between those who believed the ability to detect online abuse against journalists/broadcasters was more important than the right to online privacy (43.9%) and those who concluded that the right to privacy and the ability to detect online abuse against journalists/ broadcasters was about equal (46.3%).
- More than 3 in every 4 survey respondents expressed the view that female journalists/broadcasters could not use social media without fear of threats that they or their dependents may be subject to harm. It is a very sobering conclusion. In the opinion of one female sports journalist, "The level of online toxicity against journalists - particularly females - is harmful beyond measure. Many no longer have a public opinion, post on social media or have dropped out of the industry altogether."
- More than 8 in every 10 respondents stated they believed the tools available to social media users, including journalists/broadcasters, were insufficient to allow them to properly manage the stark reality of the situation they are faced with, i.e. seek to reduce levels of online abuse.
- Finally, on the specific question of legislation to protect working sports journalists, respondents were clear in their position. By way of illustration, in the opinion of one, "It's strongly needed (legislation) to have actions that protect the figure of professional journalists (not only in sports), (offering an) increase (in) salary to give the journalist the power to be independent and not affiliated with sponsors/supporters."

## LITERATURE REVIEW

# JOURNALISM AND ONLINE ABUSE<sup>1</sup>

Increasingly, online communication platforms allow audiences to interact directly with journalists. Consumers can share media content, discuss it publicly, and even create their news.

This "democratisation" of news grants audiences a more active and potentially influential role in media production, consumption, and distribution (Singer, 2010). However, it has also led to the spread of misinformation, disinformation, fake news, and online abuse (Wasibord, 2020).

For this review, online abuse is defined as any harmful behaviours, including but not limited to hate speech, cyberbullying, trolling, threatening, doxing and stalking, that takes place in digital spaces and is targeted at groups and/or individuals (see also Vigden, Margetts and Harris, 2019).

Online abuse against journalists comes from a combination of ordinary citizens, more coordinated 'digital mobs' that look to intimidate and silence journalists (Waisbord, 2020) and state actors that





engage in more sophisticated methods to monitor and attack (both virtually and digitally) journalists (Kirchgaessner et al. 2021). Female journalists are most likely to experience such online abuse (Bartlett et al., 2014).

Audience criticism existed long before the advent of social media. For instance, angry readers often issued heated or even abusive letters to print publications (Campen, 2014).

Waisbord (2020) makes the point that attacks on journalists have always taken place, citing examples of the coordinated campaigns against African American journalism during the civil rights movement and violence and intimidation against Jewish and Communist publications in pre- and post-second War Europe.

These cases differ from online abuse in that they were time-consuming for abusers to engage in, and it was difficult to access the actual gatekeepers of communication. The barriers between producers and audiences have broken down in the digital age. The easy access to journalists has obvious benefits in terms of the increasing number of sources and the ease with which stories can be disseminated.

However, it also increases the possibility of unwelcome and abusive interactions between journalists and the audience.

The digital age has also created a much more significant challenge when we consider audience engagement and abuse.

Journalists are expected, if not required (see Xia, 2020), to engage daily with the public-as-client through online and third-party platforms like social media, often with minimal editorial oversight or protection.

A report released by UNESCO in 2022 highlights an increasingly dangerous profession for journalists in the context of a downward trend of press freedom, a decline in trust in media worldwide and a destabilising of the traditional media economic systems. This has coincided with a rise in online abuse, particularly the targeting of women and marginalised groups. Online abuse has been identified as the biggest problem for journalists (Westcott, 2019). However, instances of abuse and harassment are underreported (Waisbord, 2020). Only 25% of the female respondents surveyed in a UNESCO 2020 study, reported incidents of online violence to their employers.



95%

of respondents believe online abuse against sports journalists is either "very" or "fairly" widespread.

Over 70%

reported a significant increase in both the frequency and severity of abuse over the past year, with 41.5% noting a marked rise in toxicity.

85%

agreed that the fear of online abuse influences their willingness to pursue certain stories, posing a threat to press freedom.

39%

Misogyny

14.6%

Sectarianism

9.8%

Racism

were reported as the most common forms of abuse.

<sup>1</sup> Sinclair G, Kearns C, Liston K, Kilvington, D., Black, J., Doidge, M., Fletcher, T., Lynn, T. (2023) The impacts of online abuse on the personal and professional lives of sports journalists. In: The 6th international sport & discrimination conference, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 23 June 2023



# WHY SPORT IS IMPORTANT

Although research has begun (see Springer and Troger, 2020; Obermaier, 2023; Miller, 2023) to explore the problem of online abuse, it has been slow to catch up with the wide-reaching extent of the problem, and there has been relatively little engagement with sports journalism. Sport is an important context in which to explore the issue of online abuse. Sports journalism increasingly intersects with 'the political, economic, and social concerns that shaped the rest of the news' (Sparre, 2017: 206). Large sporting events are rarely covered exclusively through a sporting lens. Engaging with controversial and divisive issues is likely to encourage tensions and subsequently online abuse. Furthermore, sport, by its nature, is competitive, emotional, and tribal. A fundamental aspect of modern sports journalism is the instant coverage and analysis of emotive events, coupled with engagement with highly passionate audiences. It offers up the perfect environment for online abuse (see Kearns et al., 2023).

Academics have started to document the experiences of various stakeholders in sports (see Kearns et al., 2023), and journalists are a vital part of that. Journalists frequently play a central role in discourses that provoke abuse within the sporting ecosystem. They do this through standard reporting of major incidents or by expressing opinions that challenge prevailing views. In this capacity, they act as intermediaries between athletes, sporting organisations, and fans, with some journalists amassing social media followings that exceed the readership of their employers (English, 2016). Sports journalists need to establish passionate and fervent connections with fans and consumers to effectively harness the emotional highs and lows inherent in sports. Hence, if the very nature of the job is to engage an emotionally charged audience, it is likely to create tension and possibly lead to online abuse directed at sports journalists.

# NORMALISATION OF ONLINE ABUSE

Reader (2012), over a decade ago, claimed that harmful exchanges were so frequent that they have become a cultural norm and in the experiences of sports journalists, this is no different. Research (see Hardin and Shain, 2006; Mozisek, 2015) suggests there is a culture within sports journalism that emphasises developing a 'thick skin'. Sinclair et al. (2023) document how almost all their sample experienced some form of online abuse and the negative impact this had on them both professionally and personally.

From a professional level, the quality of output and level of criticality have suffered as a result (Larsen et al., 2020). Sports journalists are hesitant to write stories about contexts or topics that may engage certain audiences, as they know it is likely to lead to abuse (Sinclair et al., 2023). The broader issue here is the impact this type of self-censorship has on democracy.

At the heart of a healthy functioning democracy is a press that has the freedom to report accurately, to engage in critical analysis on fair merits without fear of repercussion (Waisbord, 2020).

One might think that self-censoring journalism regarding some sort of trivial sporting transfer news is nothing to be concerned about.

However, as argued earlier, sports journalism is increasingly connected to wider societal issues and such self-censorship cumulatively chips away at trust in the profession (Arsan, 2013).

The practice of self-censorship and emotional regulation, in addition to the actual abuse received, has an impact at the individual level. Journalists are under pressure to engage with social media and develop a following and dissemination impact for their work. Sinclair et al. (2023) report on the pervasiveness of the abuse and how there is no longer a separation between public and private spheres in the profession.

The sports journalists interviewed had to deal with psychologically damaging abuse in their time while also worrying about the impact it had on family and friends, who also witnessed the abuse they received. They must do all of this while trying to remain professional and critically impartial in the delivery of their employer's expectations. There is also an understandable fear of online attacks moving offline, as documented in the UNESCO, 2020 report on online violence against female journalists. Some 20% of female respondents said they had been attacked or abused offline.



# RESPONDING TO ONLINE ABUSE

The severity of the problem cannot be overstated because of its substantial repercussions for the profession, including recruitment, career advancement, and retention (see also, Posetti, Aboulez, Bontcheva, Harrison, and Waisbord, 2020).

Binns (2017) connects experiences of online abuse to departures from the profession. Understandably, research has started to explore how some news journalists respond to abusive audience interactions (e.g., Holton, Bélair-Gagnon, Bossio, and Molyneux, 2021).

These responses often involve self-limiting behaviours, such as managing or restricting audience engagement through tools available on online platforms (e.g., deleting, blocking, muting users, or turning off interactive features). Journalists also consciously limit their engagement with abusive users in various ways, including perspective-taking to minimise the impact of being targeted (e.g., rationalising the user as an unhappy person) and establishing psychological boundaries. In more severe cases, journalists may seek support from authorities for harassment (see, for example, Miller and Lewis, 2022).

Due to the challenges faced, support from colleagues or managers is crucial for them (e.g., Chen et al., 2020). However, as Sinclair et al. (2023) document, there is a lack of formal institutional support or even an informal code of practice for handling online abuse. Consequently, sports journalists have had to create their emotional strategies, including self-censorship. They regard these actions as unwelcome but essential for their protection.

It is not just the direct support to those who receive the abuse that falls under the responsibility of the sporting organisation stakeholders. The issue is much more complicated than that. They also have a lot of power and responsibility when it comes to managing the overall social media discourse.

## SUMMARY

The extant literature on online abuse and journalism paints a stark picture. In addition to outlining the characteristics of the abuse, the increasing prevalence and normalisation of it as part of the profession, it articulates professional and personal impacts at the individual journalist level and the broader societal costs that come with such attacks on the 'fourth estate'.

Sports journalism is no stranger to such impacts but there is relatively little research that examines online abuse directed at journalists in this context. Wider research identifies several coping strategies that individual journalists use, but perhaps an indication of the lack of support and resources available, there is little research that documents organisational and societal support.





## SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

During October and November 2024, Sports Journalists who cover a diverse range of sports across the world were invited to participate in a survey conducted and analysed by FIA University. Wide participation of the survey is indicative of their desire to express the current online abuse landscape that faces them in a constructive and factual manner.

Survey participants are anonymised to protect their identities and to ensure the survey was as robust and insightful as possible under best research practice guidelines.

UAOA would in particular like to thank the following organisations for promoting the survey:



Sports journalists who report on and cover various sports disciplines responded to the survey ensuring that a broad snapshot of the current online abuse landscape was captured, as well as the specific issues faced by journalists covering certain sports.



## METHODOLOGY

The Sports Journalist Barometer Survey was designed and conducted by the United Against Online Abuse campaign's academic partners at FIA University, in collaboration with key stakeholders across the sports and media landscape. This inaugural survey was available to complete online through the FIA University portal and designed to be completed by journalists who cover and report on sports globally to capture a comprehensive view of their experiences of online abuse and harassment.

### SURVEY DESIGN AND DISTRIBUTION

The survey was developed by UAOA academic researchers and industry experts, drawing upon current research frameworks and insights into online abuse within sports journalism. The questions were structured to measure both the prevalence and impact of online abuse targeted towards them with sections dedicated to specific types of abuse, frequency, channels through which abuse was encountered, and the personal and professional impact upon the journalists surveyed.

The survey was distributed through multiple channels, including direct outreach to journalists, partnerships with international media organisations and federations, and promotion through industry newsletters and social media channels to maximise reach across diverse journalistic demographics. The survey ran across October and November 2024.

### PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

The respondents represented a wide range of geographic regions, sports disciplines, and media formats, providing a broad and varied perspective on the issue of online abuse. Demographic data was collected to understand how different factors, such as gender, geographic location, and sport covered, influenced journalists' experiences with online abuse.

### MOTORSPORT-SPECIFIC INSIGHTS

Given the campaign's roots in motorsport, a significant number of respondents represented this sector. The findings provided valuable insights into the unique challenges faced by motorsport journalists, particularly during high-profile events, where the frequency and intensity of abuse often escalates.

## COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Responses were collected through the FIA University's secure survey platform, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. Quantitative data was analysed using statistical methods to determine the frequency and types of abuse, while qualitative responses provided insights into the personal impact, institutional frameworks and coping mechanisms used by journalists. Themes emerging from qualitative responses were categorised to convey the findings and provide actionable insights.



## FINDINGS

# BREAKDOWN OF FINDINGS





Of the 41 professional journalists who responded to our survey, 46.3% stated that they believe the problem of online abuse against those working in their profession was 'very widespread'.

Indeed, over 95% of all respondents stated they considered the extent of online abuse against journalists to be either 'Very' or 'Fairly' widespread.

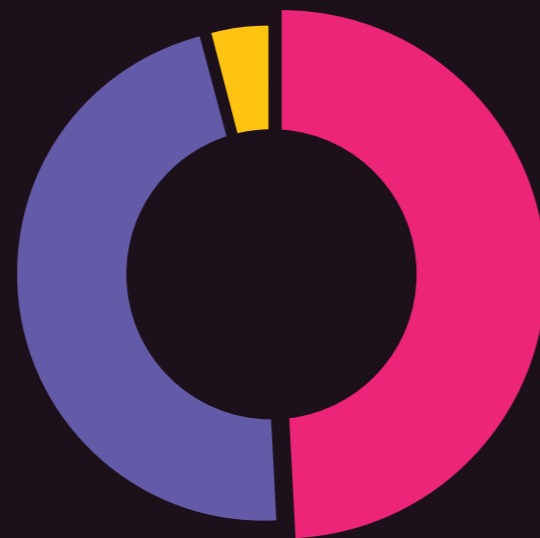
What was particularly insightful, however, was the apparent exponential rise of online abuse targeting journalists in the last 12 months, consistent with a belief many of those involved in sport held that the issue had become markedly worse since late 2023.

How widespread do you think the problem of online abuse is in journalism at present?

**48.8%**  
Very widespread

**46.3%**  
Fairly widespread

**4.8%**  
Rather rare



Well over one-third (36.6%) of respondents stated that the volume of online abuse they had either experienced or witnessed against fellow professionals had 'significantly increased' in the last 12 months, with a further 34.1% indicating they had observed a 'slight increase' over the same period.

This confirms that over 7 in every 10 journalists who replied to our survey stated they had seen a marked deterioration in their experiences of online abuse in the past year.

How widespread do you think the problem of online abuse is in journalism at present?

Over the past 12 months, do you believe the volume of online abuse aimed at journalists has:

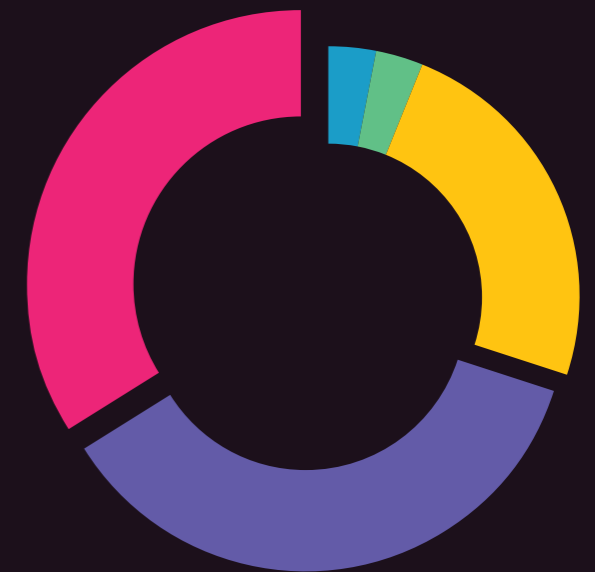
**35.7%**  
Significantly increased

**35.7%**  
Slightly increased

**23.8%**  
Broadly stayed the same

**2.4%**  
Slightly decreased

**2.4%**  
Significantly decreased



Of course, it is not merely the quantum of online abuse that journalists have become evermore concerned with during the last 12 months; it is the severity of it. Whereas low-level resentment and, in some cases, rebuke may have been traditionally considered part of the 'cut and thrust' of the profession, journalists now have grown concerned with the severity of the abuse they are required to endure.

Some 41.5% of respondents to this survey confirmed they believed the degree of toxicity of online abuse they have personally received or have witnessed others in their profession receive has 'significantly' increased in the last year.

Viewed alongside those that also confirmed this same increase, albeit slightly, the results of this survey confirm that more than three in every four journalists surveyed stated that the severity of the online abuse they had received had increased in the last 12 months.

Despite the introduction of transnational, national and regional legislation and guidelines concerning the place of social media in citizens' lives, there is still strong evidence indicating that certain online platforms continue to facilitate the publication of online abuse. When asked to rank those social media platforms in terms of the prevalence of online abuse directed at journalists, with '1' indicating the platform where most abuse was evident/observed and '5', relatively speaking, constituting the least problematic platform in this regard, the results of our survey were emphatic.

Over three in every four respondents stated that 'X' (formerly Twitter) was the platform where they had either personally experienced or had observed online abuse against journalists. Thereafter, Facebook saw just over 25% of respondents confirming they considered it the second most likely place to read abusive postings against journalists and TikTok, a platform used mainly by a youth demographic, following in third place.

How widespread do you think the problem of online abuse is in journalism at present?

Over the past 12 months, do you believe the degree of toxicity (i.e., its severity) of online abuse aimed at journalists has:

**40.5%**  
Significantly increased

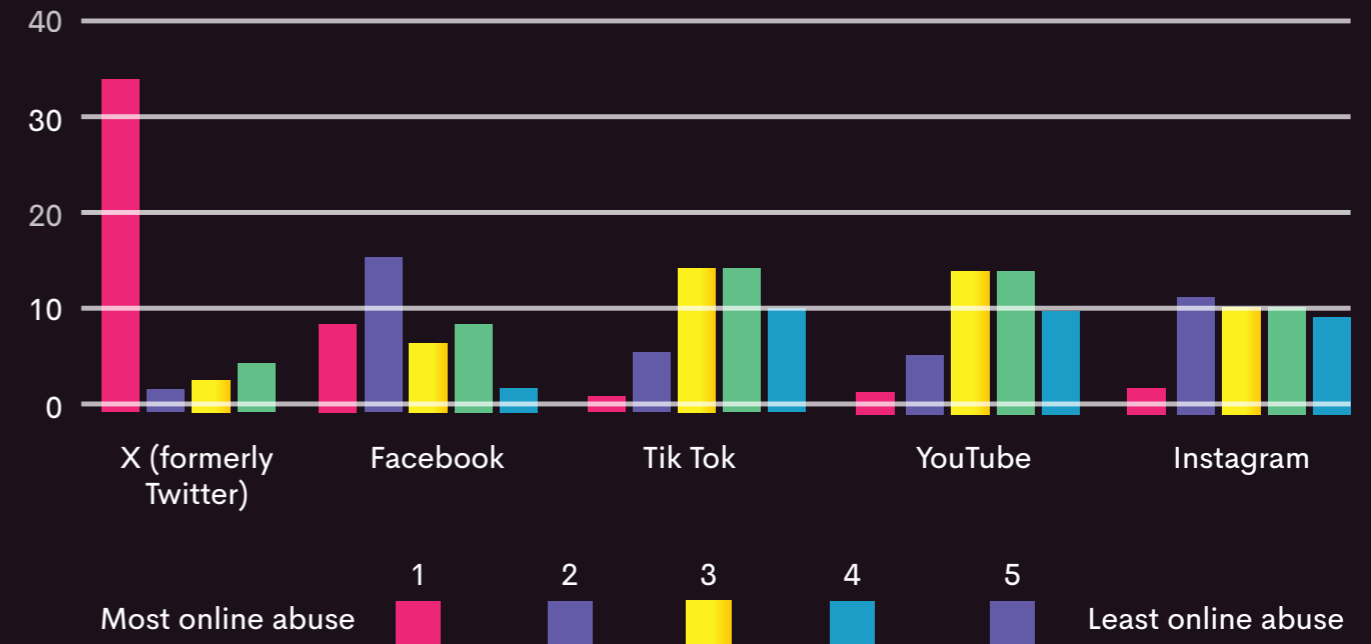
**35.7%**  
Slightly increased

**21.4%**  
Broadly stayed the same

**2.4%**  
Prefer not to answer



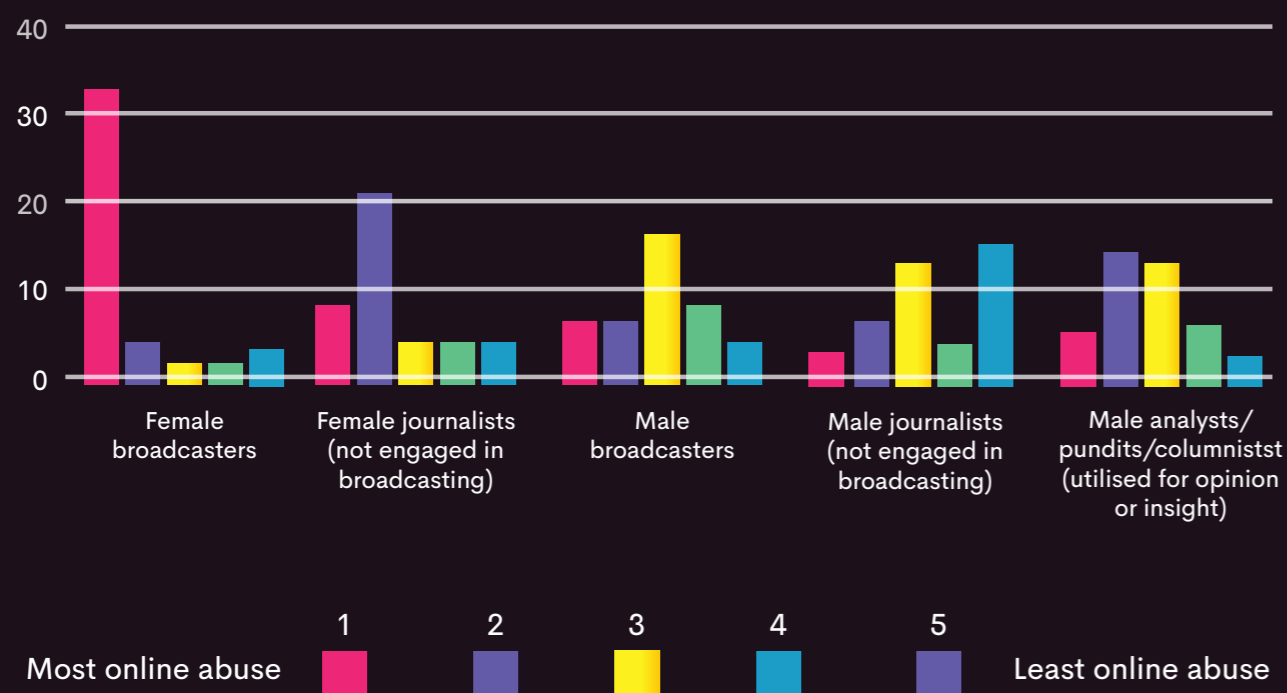
Five of the most widely used online social media platforms are listed below. Please rank these from 1 to 5, where 1 is the platform where you have witnessed/ personally experienced the most online abuse directed towards journalists/ you and 5 is the platform, comparatively speaking, with the least amount of online abuse postings.



Those surveyed were then asked to consider the extent to which certain journalists, including broadcasters, were particularly subject to online abuse, combining both its volume and toxicity. What is clear, in the opinion of those who responded to this question, is that female broadcasters are disproportionately subject to online abuse (over three in every four journalists surveyed confirming this to be true). Female journalists, i.e. those not working in broadcasting, were then ranked second in terms of the category of journalist/ broadcaster who was most likely to experience online abuse, followed by male broadcasters in third place.

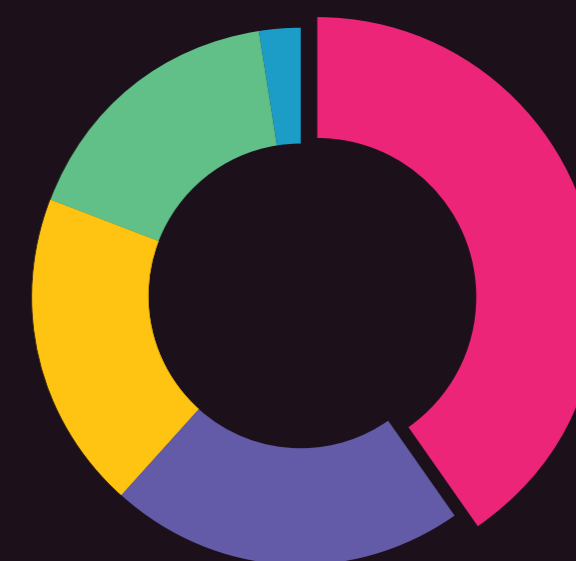
Following on from this, those surveyed were then asked to consider how the extent of online abuse, confirmed in this survey to be particularly impactful for female broadcasters and journalists, made it difficult for media companies/ publishers to promote equality, diversity and inclusion policies. In simple terms, if certain categories of journalists and those employed in the media were the target of online abuse, it may exercise a 'cooling' effect on others, with similar profiles coming forward to work in the media. Some 61% of respondents either 'strongly' (39%) or 'rather' (22%) agreed with this assertion, albeit with just over one in five respondents either 'Rather' (19.5%) or 'Strongly' disagreeing with this conclusion.

Below are the profiles of journalists involved in covering most sports. Combining both the volume and toxicity of online abuse in journalism, rank these from 1 to 5 where 1 represents the participant category that you consider has been subject to the most online abuse over the past 12 months, through to 5, which has been subject to the least amount:

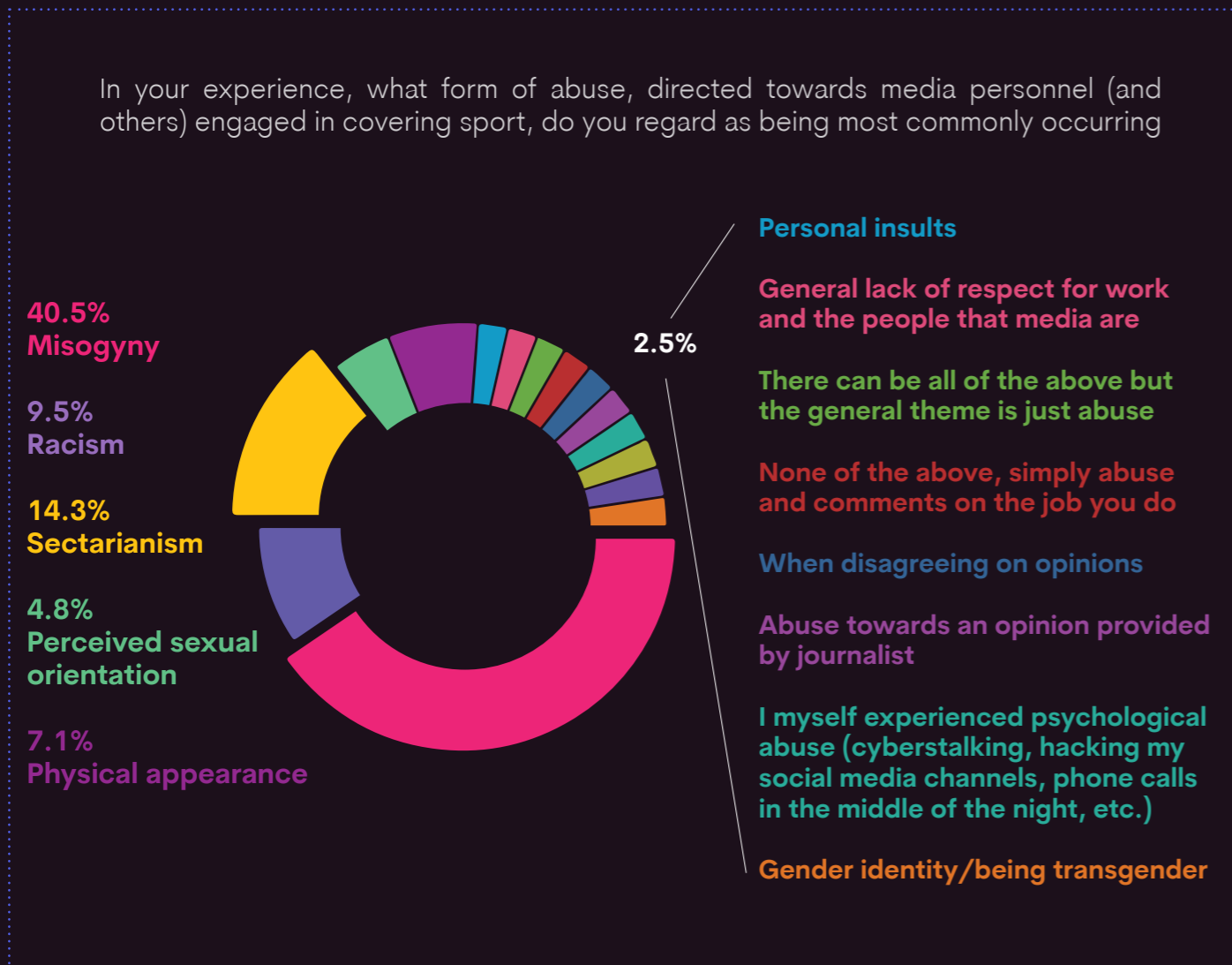


To what extent do you agree with the assertion that the prevalence of online abuse in sports makes it more challenging for media companies to promote equality, diversity, and inclusion policies?

40.5% Strongly agree  
21.4% Rather agree  
19% Rather disagree  
16.7% Prefer not to answer/Don't know  
2.4% Strongly disagree

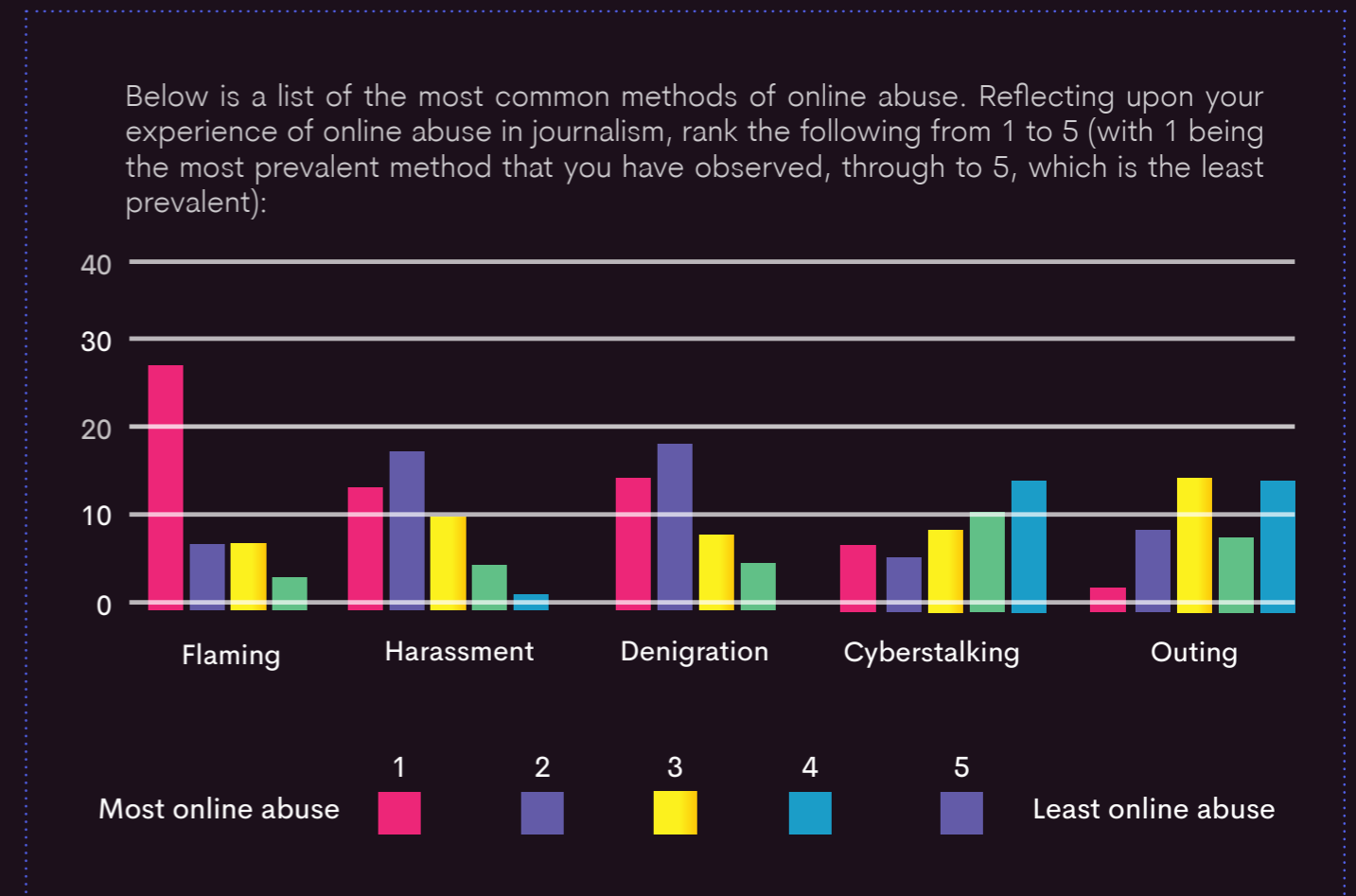


Participants in the survey were then asked to gauge what form of abuse was most directed towards media personnel (and others) engaged in covering sports. In total, 39% stated this was misogyny, followed by sectarianism (14.6%) and racism (9.8%). The extent to which sectarianism, i.e. abuse directed at an individual or group based on their perceived communal or more common, religious affiliation, is ranked here is insightful. It may suggest a rise in online abuse against journalists perceived to be aligned with specific faith groups, for instance. Other notable replies to this question included abuse against individuals due to their 'physical appearance' or 'perceived sexual orientation'.



In online abuse, flaming is the posting of intentionally abusive or aggressive messages to provoke a response or incite the posting of similarly malicious comments from others. When asked what they observed or, in many cases, experienced as being the most common form of online abuse, almost three-quarters of journalists confirmed this as being flaming. This was followed, in almost equal measure, by the posting of denigrating comments or, more worryingly, harassment against the journalists/ broadcasters in question. On a similar theme, the third most common form of online abuse recorded by the survey sample was so-called 'Outing', which is very often the posting of untrue/ distorted information against an individual designed to reveal embarrassing or salacious details about them that they may otherwise prefer to keep private.

As part of this important survey, the researchers also wanted to capture the comments of working journalists about how, and in what ways, the evolving media industry, in which journalists have a much greater interface with sports fans/ followers than previously was the case, has impacted the approach to their work. Respondents detailed their approach and experiences in a voluminous response to this issue, perhaps reflective of the real challenges associated with modern-day sports journalism.





# IN THEIR WORDS...

*"I find the best approach is never to read any comments (posted online) or interact at all. It's not ideal but it's the only way to stay sane."*

Another journalist, working in motorsport, whilst accepting that there were both positive and negative aspects to the much closer relationship that now exists between journalists and sports followers, stated:

*"Engagement metrics are important and there is more positive engagement than negatives so there's a lot to learn. (On the flip side) Aside from the ad hominem attacks on individuals, what I have experienced most is bigotry and the assumption that opinions follow nationality. e.g. a British F1 journalist's opinions are 100% dictated by nationality, not by many years of study and expertise."*

Another respondent accepted that journalists themselves have, in some cases, implanted themselves into the story, something they are acutely aware of is not their role:

*"The only advantage (to be closer to the fan base) is in terms of personal development as the "main actor", which is definitely NOT what a journalist should be. (Equally) The 1to1 relationship brings the audience to have some visibility and value as a professional person."*

The themes of professional development, the raising of one's profile and, for the most part, the constructive feedback received by journalists were all recognised as potential advantages of the much closer relationship journalists now have with their readers/followers. Yet there is no denying that this has come at a personal cost to the individuals involved, as one remarked:

*"Because you are online, people can hide behind anonymous profiles to do so (post abusive comments), which would not have been the case previously."*

This theme is developed by several other respondents and, as set out in the quote below, means that some hold a sceptical view of the media companies, many of whom employ such journalists, and their role in arguably contributing to the plight experienced by many in the profession:

*There aren't any advantages of the interaction with the public via social media, merely disadvantages. And whilst that doesn't reflect all of the public - the majority are not abusive - it is impossible to escape abuse, pile-ons and other forms of targeting. Social media has made the world and journalism, a worse place, but so have the media companies who say they want "engagement" or who judge journalists by how many Twitter (X) followers they have.*

Finally, on this theme, two responses offered by journalists on their experiences effectively capture the full spectrum of opinion around how the profession has evolved, arguably exponentially, in the past decade. On the one hand, a respondent stated:

*"It (the interaction with followers) keeps journalists accountable in a way they weren't in the print era, but many journalists are not prepared for the level of ill-will (they experience)."*



On the other, the personal toll of the abusive feedback experienced by many in the profession was clear in the comments of a fellow journalist:

*"Some readers/viewers are lovely and are enjoyable to interact with. Others can cause real upset and stress to journalists. One is often asked to "just get over it", but that is not always easy. Insults hurt us. Threats worry us."*

Perhaps illustrative of a growing concern outlined in these views, a final contributor on the topic said:

*"(The close interaction between journalists and followers on social media)... introduces challenges like exposure to misinformation, pressure to prioritize speed over accuracy, and increased risk of online harassment. Also, public opinion can sometimes compromise editorial independence, making it harder to maintain objectivity on controversial topics."*

The so-called 'democratisation' of news reportage, sports journalism included, through the unprecedented growth in platforms, such as X and Facebook, that allow immediate publishing opportunities for everyone, has raised the spectre of traditional, peer-reviewed and professionally curated journalism being required to co-exist alongside content that is not subject to any of these established quality standards, and social media has undoubtedly accelerated this situation. In the views of one respondent:

*"(Nowadays) Anyone is considered a "news creator". Being a journalist is something different. You need to check and verify the info (rmation). The professionalism of a journalist nowadays is considered to be much less than in previous years."*

Again, the real toll that the growth of '24-hour' publishing/ broadcasting now exercises on journalists and broadcasters is clear in the comments of one motorsport journalist, who said:

*"The 24-hour element of news in the modern age, through mobile phones in particular, means there is no escape from abuse at any hour of the day, coming directly to you. It also means that the internet allows content to be replayed and saved months after something has occurred, encouraging abuse with the benefit of hindsight. It can also make it more difficult to 'switch off' from work, where in the past when you left a circuit or a country, you were less accessible."*

The latter view is echoed by another journalist, who said:

*"The constant thirst for news has placed journalists under increasing demands to be omnipresent and always 'on' even outside of contracted work hours, be that shifts or assignments. As a result, a lot of the abuse gravitates towards those who are often overworked and underpaid."*

Finally, a third commentator on the same theme simply said:

*"You can never escape it, you are always subject to it even at home."*

These views, communicated in different ways by many respondents to this survey, are arguably symptomatic of a broader media industry revolution, making it more important to prioritise engagement – howsoever this is achieved – than merely providing content and carefully crafted comments. As one commentator said:

*"There are connections between live televised sports, the betting industry, opinion-based journalism and attempts to amplify under-represented voices that have provided extra scope for those who want to direct abuse online. The quest for viewers/readers is often a 'race to the bottom', whipping up a user base around a controversial incident or individual, which then, in turn, heightens emotion and toxicity."*



One sports journalist based in the UK was clear about where the strategic imperative for many of these problems emerged from:

*"The way that modern British media fixates on culture wars, moral panics and the desires of niche social media groups has led to increased abuse of minority groups who work in sports media - notably women, and LGBT people, particularly trans journalists."*

This also appeared to be a concern, specifically, amongst journalists employed to cover motorsport:

*"Stories related that are seen to have equality, diversity and inclusion (whether deliberately or not) are used to weaponise conversation against journalists and media outlets deemed responsible for their production. It is much harder to explain the nuances of sensitive topics e.g. looking at the relative lack of opportunities in motorsport for women, people who are Black or from diverse ethnic communities, LGBTQ+ people etc, and the challenges people from these groups face, when their experience has to be distilled into a headline or short social media clip, which can lead to those involved in the story or for whom the content is most relevant, being targeted for abuse."*

The significance of these comments cannot be overplayed. Put simply, this respondent – and others in their own way – is saying that vitally important issues for society and, in a separate way, sport, are being compromised and even demonised online in a manner that makes it challenging to even raise some subjects, far less meaningfully advance them.

The orthodox media industry, particularly the publishing field (including all forms of conventional output-based content production), is engaged in a challenge to remain viable, attracting advertising investment and subscribers. One strategy employed to achieve this is to pursue so-called 'exclusives', but this approach has a material impact on some journalists in the field, who are then subject to online abuse as a result. In the words of one journalist that spoke on the topic:

*"The minute someone else posts something that is an 'exclusive' — even if it isn't, or isn't a story of any real note, it's likely you will receive abuse for 'not being first' or therefore useless at your job."*

Again, the theme of those stories that are arguably most in need of exposure but which require nuance, proper consideration and, ultimately, enlightened opinion appear to suffer most when the combined pressures of exclusivity and speed are factored into publishing strategies:

*"Stories on First Nations peoples, people of colour, those with disabilities, minority groups and women's sports always suffer the worst abuse. Combine any of the above in a story, and the abuse multiplies."*

The rivalry between sports fans, increasingly apparent in motorsport, is now a source of some of the most concerning trends in online abuse against journalists. This is true, especially in recent years, in Formula 1. As one journalist working in this field stated:

*If you write about Lewis Hamilton, Max Verstappen, or Fernando Alonso, it is impossible to do so without triggering a torrent of abuse from fans who either love them or hate them, depending on the angle of your journalism. Many Formula 1 fans are scarily tribal these days, and that is a new thing provoked by social media, especially on Twitter/X.*



Perhaps one of the most instructive findings from this survey of journalists/broadcasters is found in their response to the assertion that concern about being targeted with online abuse may exercise a detrimental effect on their willingness to pursue certain lines of enquiry or investigate certain stories. In essence, this was a question about the degree to which a 'free press' was threatened by people posting social media abuse. More than half of those surveyed (51.2%) strongly agreed with this statement, with a further 34.1% saying they 'rather agreed' with this viewpoint. Combined it means more than 8 in every 10 journalists surveyed for this study supported a view that the fear of being targeted by social media abuse may be a material consideration when deciding whether to cover a story.

The position, as outlined above, is perfectly captured in the words of one journalist, who said:

*"Online abuse against journalists not only impacts their mental health and safety but also undermines the quality and freedom of journalism as a whole. Constant harassment can lead journalists to self-censor, avoid contentious topics, or even leave the profession, which ultimately limits public access to diverse perspectives and in-depth reporting. Addressing this issue requires stronger platform regulations to curb abuse and support systems within media organisations to protect journalists' well-being and independence in reporting."*

To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

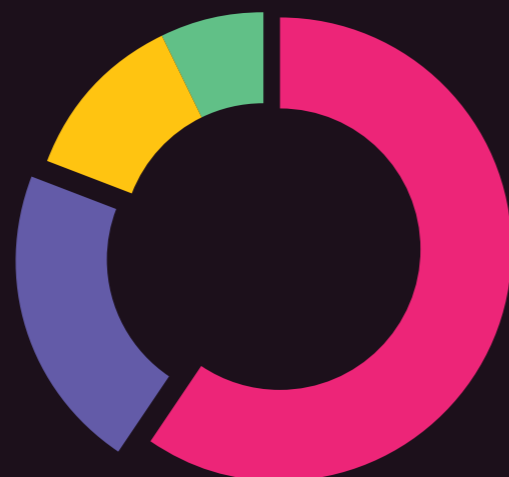
Online abuse against journalists has the potential to exert a detrimental effect on their willingness to pursue certain lines of enquiry/ investigation or publish certain stories out of concern regarding the social media abuse they may receive.

**59.5%**  
Strongly agree

**21.4%**  
Rather agree

**11.9%**  
Rather disagree

**7.1%**  
Strongly disagree



When asked what they saw as being the best form of response to the level of online abuse they must endure journalists/ broadcasters were equally clear. In this case, 73.2% of those surveyed, or three in every four, supported the view that broadcasters/ publishers working in unison as part of a combined response constituted the greatest likelihood of seeing some meaningful change in the level of online abuse that journalists suffer when undertaking their work.

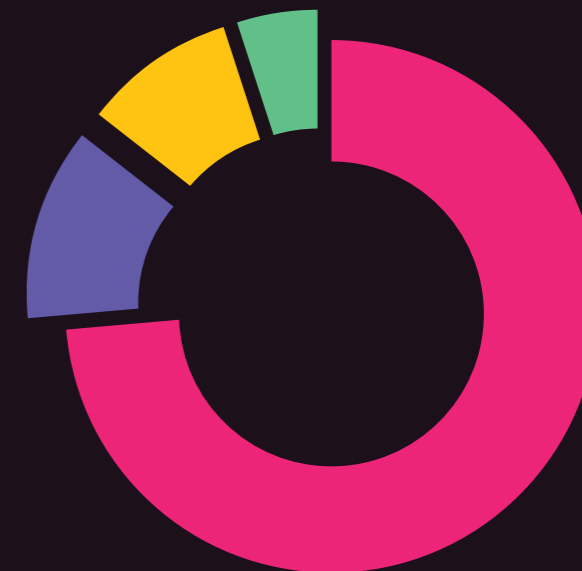
Which one, if any, of the following statements comes closest to your view?

**73.8%**  
**Opposition to online abuse against broadcasters journalists (in sports) is best achieved by individual journalists speaking out against it**

**11.9%**  
**Online abuse against journalists (in sports) is best addressed when publications broadcasters, on an individual level, decide to take a stand against it.**

**9.5%**  
**Broadcasters publishers acting together to present a unified opposition to online abuse against journalists represents the most impactful approach.**

**4.8%**  
**Prefer not to answer or Don't know.**



Another important finding that emerged from the study was the degree to which the dismissal of well-regarded and evidence-based reporting – what traditionally may have been regarded as ‘trustworthy’ output – as being ‘fake news’ – by those wishing to discredit it – has eroded trust in traditional forms of media output. In turn, it has served to embolden those who use social media as a means of attacking it (well-regarded output) and those who publish it. In this survey, two-thirds of those surveyed strongly supported this conclusion, with 9 out of 10 supporting it to a greater or lesser degree.

The survey then sought to establish respondents’ views on the right to privacy of social media users, particularly in the context of online abuse. In this case, opinions were broadly equally divided between those who believed the ability to detect online abuse against journalists/ broadcasters was more important than the right to online privacy (43.9%) and those who concluded that the right to privacy and the ability to detect online abuse against journalists/ broadcasters was about equal (46.3%).

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

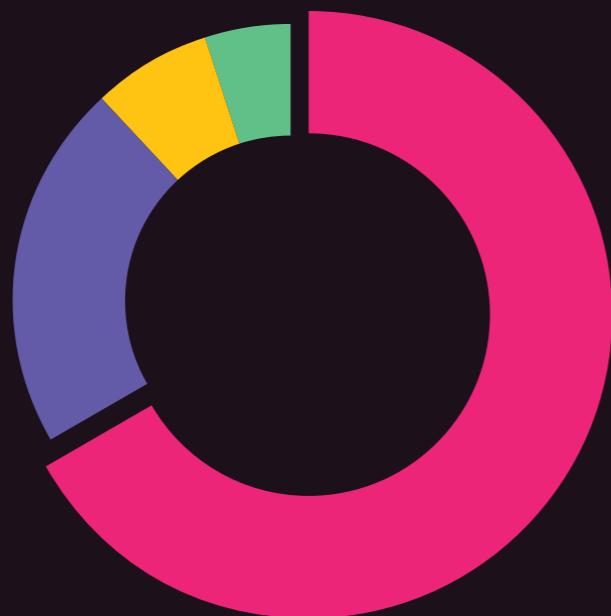
The rise in commentary dismissing some news output, including on sport, as ‘fake news’ (when it is otherwise regarded as reliable and evidence-based) has eroded trust in broadcasting/ journalistic integrity and supported those who use social media platforms to abuse legitimate reporting.

**66.7%**  
Strongly agree

**21.4%**  
Rather agree

**7.1%**  
Rather disagree

**4.8%**  
Strongly disagree



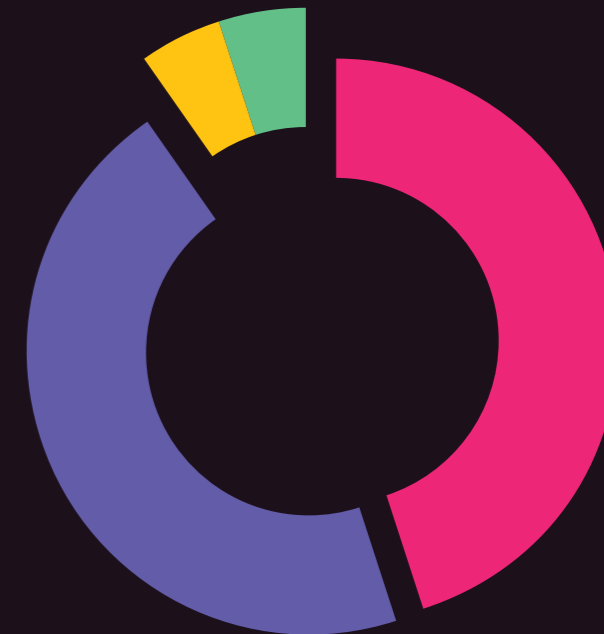
Which one, if any, of the following statements comes closest to your view?

**45.2%**  
The ability to detect online abuse against broadcasters journalists is more important than the right to online privacy

**45.2%**  
The right to online privacy and the ability to detect online abuse against broadcasters journalists are broadly of equal importance

**4.8%**  
The right to online privacy and the ability to detect online abuse against broadcasters journalists are broadly of equal importance

**4.8%**  
Prefer not to answer or Don't know.



Towards the latter part of the survey, attention returned to the specific experiences of female sports journalists/ broadcasters. More than 6 out of 10 of those surveyed strongly expressed the view that such a category of journalist could not readily use social media – viewed as an important tool for many in the profession – without fear of being subject to online abuse. More telling, more than 3 in every 4 survey respondents expressed the view that female journalists/broadcasters could not use social media without fear of threats that they or their dependents may be subject to harm – a very sobering conclusion.

Expanding on this issue, one journalist stated:

*“The level of online toxicity against journalists – particularly females – is harmful beyond measure. Many no longer have a public opinion, post on social media or have dropped out of the industry altogether. Their emotional, mental and physical well-being all suffers, particularly after keyboard warriors do a “pile on”. I have experienced it personally, as has EVERY female journalist I know.”*

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

As things stand, female journalists can use online social media platforms without concern that they may be exposed to online abuse.

<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b> 11.9%	<b>RATHER AGREE</b> 0%	<b>RATHER DISAGREE</b> 21.4%	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b> 59.5%	<b>PREFER NOT TO ANSWER</b> 7.1%
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More than 8 in every 10 respondents stated they believed the tools available to social media users, including journalists/ broadcasters, were insufficient to allow them to properly manage, i.e. reduce levels of online abuse they faced.

Not surprisingly, then, more than 80% of all respondents confirmed their view that social media platforms and their owners had an important role to play in reducing online abuse.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

The current tools and safeguards available on social media platforms are insufficient to reduce levels of online social media abuse against journalists.

<b>STRONGLY AGREE</b> 69%	<b>RATHER AGREE</b> 16.7%	<b>RATHER DISAGREE</b> 4.8%	<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b> 7.1%	<b>PREFER NOT TO ANSWER</b> 2.4%
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Arguably, in the absence of a proactive approach by social media platforms to online abuse, employers could do more to safeguard the online experiences of their employees. It was telling, therefore, that over 90% of those surveyed said their employers did not currently use any form of Artificial Intelligence software, often provided by private companies, to at least remove from public sight some of the most distasteful forms of online abuse.

There is an argument that if online abuse is removed from public sight, those issuing such postings are more likely to move elsewhere or even refrain from posting altogether.

It was interesting, nonetheless, that one-quarter of all respondents did say they had access to a named person/ department within their company who could support them if they were suffering from online abuse, which is a welcome development, even if more than 3 in 4 are largely left to handle the ill effects of this themselves.

In the words of one journalist:

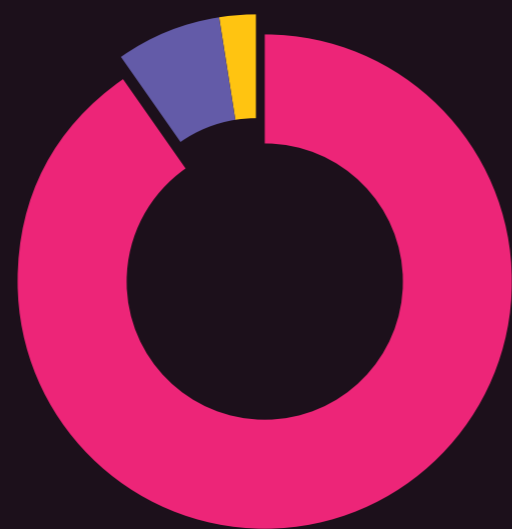
*"Currently, we cannot rely on the automatic detection implemented by social media platforms, as it often ends up blocking situations unrelated to online abuse. Third-party platforms need to be developed to integrate into algorithms for these checks. However, they must remain digital solutions external to the providers' ecosystem."*

Does your employer engage companies that deploy Artificial Intelligence to detect and remove instances of online abuse against journalists and fellow employees?

**90.5%**  
**Yes**

**7.1%**  
**No, but we are in discussions with relevant companies for this purpose**

**2.4%**  
**No**



Does your employer have support measures in place for those impacted by online abuse i.e., a unit/ department or named personnel that can offer psychological and other support services etc?

**STRONGLY AGREE**  
**73.8%**

**RATHER AGREE**  
**26.2%**



Developing this theme, opinion was divided among journalists on whether social media platforms should be permitted to self-regulate on the issue of online abuse and comments posted from anonymous accounts. Broadly speaking 63% of respondents felt this issue (detection and reporting of online abuse) should be removed from social media platforms, but a minority view, held by around 30% of respondents, continued to see some responsibility and therefore a role for these platforms in addressing this matter.

On this issue, one respondent said:

*"Around 80% of the abuse I have received comes from anonymous accounts, who are free to post what they like without repercussions. Pile-ons are becoming more and more common and regularly journalists are forced to turn off replies or mute notifications to stop seeing streams of abuse. Both male and female journalists regularly suffer online abuse. Women can often receive abuse simply because of their gender."*

On the specific question of legislation to protect working sports journalists, respondents who expanded on their views were clear in their position:

*"It's strongly needed (legislation) to have actions that protect the figure of professional journalists (not only in sports), (offering an) increase (in) salary to give the journalist the power to be independent and not affiliated with sponsors/supporters."*

Perpetrators of online abuse, in general, avoid detection under the anonymity they appear to benefit from on social media platforms. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Online service providers (e.g., social media platforms) should have the freedom to decide whether to tackle this problem and how to do so:



The recurring issue of anonymity was also foregrounded, as evidenced in this representative view:

*The anonymity of online abusers is the biggest issue. I bet that, if everybody had to give their real names, A LOT of online abuse would immediately stop. Online abusers should not be allowed to do all this stuff with anonymous accounts (or just make new ones after a ban).*

Highlighting the complexity of online abuse, including against sports journalists, one respondent stated:

*It's essential that all forms of discriminatory online abuse are taken seriously and that experts with an understanding of the nuances of language are involved in the fight to tackle this issue, lest a 'hierarchy' of discrimination be created. Often an individual on the receiving end of this abuse has intersecting identities which makes it essential to assess the exact nature of the abuse they receive and how it impacts them and others.*

Considering the dilemma faced by many in the journalism/ broadcasting industries, one respondent crystallised the issue when concluding:

*My view, after being on Twitter (X) for years, is that I don't want to be on social media at all and certainly not to engage with anyone on it. And yet, in this business, taking that approach could come at a huge cost to my career, sooner or later.*

Or another contributor, who simply concluded:

*I am active on social media because, as a journalist, I have to be. The very day I retire, unless something is done to reduce online abuse before then, I will cancel all my social media accounts, for the good of my mental health, which is under threat at the moment as a result of that online abuse.*





## NEXT STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Committed to Action is a central pillar of the United Against Online Abuse campaign's philosophy. UAOA is dedicated to working collaboratively with its coalition partners and endorsers to convert research findings into practical, implementable solutions, rooted in evidence, that will foster the regulatory and behavioural changes needed to create a safer, more inclusive sporting environment for all.

The findings from this Sports Journalist Barometer highlight the critical need for targeted actions to protect journalists and other stakeholders in the sporting ecosystem from the increasing prevalence of online abuse. UAOA will leverage these insights to drive a multi-faceted approach across several key areas, aiming to foster systemic change and safeguard media professionals globally.

### 1. Strengthening Advocacy and Policy Work

- **Engagement with Policy Makers:** UAOA will continue to work with international federations, national governments, and regulatory agencies to discuss the cross-sector frameworks needed to address the unique vulnerabilities faced by sports journalists. By hosting international conferences and events, UAOA will convene and facilitate global collaboration, drive regulatory action and promote stronger deterrents and enforceable consequences for online abuse across jurisdictions.
- **Adopting a Leadership Role:** UAOA will work with its partners to provide global leadership. The campaign has been selected by the European Commission to develop a pan-European framework to combat online abuse in sport with funding from its Erasmus + programme.

### 2. Working with Sporting Partners

- **Promoting Industry Standards:** In collaboration with Dublin City University, UAOA will launch an Online Safety Audit Framework to allow sports organisations to assess their current safeguarding practices and implement the most robust, industry-leading measures to protect all of those working within their respective sports.
- **Encourage Sports Federations to Lead The Way:** Encouraging sports federations to adopt a "zero tolerance" policy against online abuse directed at their accredited journalists. Utilising their unique role, reach and authority, sports federations and organisations can take a leading role to monitor, report and where relevant take action to foster a safer environment for the media professionals covering their sports.
- **Promoting Public Awareness Campaigns on Respecting Journalists:** The sporting community should engage in ongoing public campaigns emphasising the critical role of journalists and the importance of respectful interaction with them online. By utilising their platforms effectively, sporting organisations can engage fans and shift online culture and behaviour, reducing the prevalence of harmful comments targeted towards media professionals.

### 3. Collaborative Working with Media Organisations

- **Working with Media Outlets and Journalism Organisations:** Building upon the partnerships and collaboration utilised in the distribution of this survey, UAOA intends to establish a working group consisting of sports journalists, associations, media organisations, regulators, legal experts and policy professionals to design best practices and actionable, implementable solutions.

- **Mandatory Code of Practice by Media Organisations:** Urge all media organisations employing journalists to have a dedicated code of practice that establishes the reporting and support processes for journalists receiving online abuse. Structured to follow the example of Health & Safety protocols already mandated for organisations, every press and media organisation should implement a comprehensive online safety framework that protects the journalists working for them.

#### 4. Building Alliances with Digital Platforms

- **Partnership with Online Service Providers:** Collaborating with social media companies and digital platforms to improve detection, reporting, and removal mechanisms for harmful content. UAOA will also explore options to utilise the EU's Trusted Flagger initiative to assist in the detection, identification and removal of illegal content online.
- **Development of Monitoring Tools:** Facilitating awareness of advanced monitoring tools for journalists and media organisations to detect and respond to abuse more efficiently. These tools, including the use of AI and data analytics, aim to help journalists identify and manage threats proactively.
- **Enhance Social Media Platforms protections for Journalists:** Facilitating awareness of advanced monitoring tools for journalists and media organisations to detect and respond to abuse more efficiently. These tools, including the use of AI and data analytics, aim to help journalists identify and manage threats proactively.

#### 5. Enhancing Support and Education Programmes

- **Workshops and Training Sessions:** UAOA will continue to organise training programmes and workshops on digital safety, personal resilience, and strategies to navigate online spaces safely. These initiatives will expand to cover the effect of online abuse on journalists and include practical tools to safeguard individuals' digital environment and manage the effects of online abuse.

#### 6. Expanding Research and Data-Driven Insights

- **Data Collection and Reporting:** UAOA is committed to tracking trends in online abuse and regularly publishing updates to raise awareness and measure the impact of ongoing initiatives.

A follow-up to the Sports Journalist Barometer, planned for release in the next 12 months, will enable UAOA to broaden the research scope whilst tracking and evaluating changes in the scope and nature of abuse against sports journalists.

- **Working with the UAOA scholars:** 6 individuals have been selected to research online abuse in Dublin City University with full funding from the FIA Foundation. The research underway will investigate the particular abuse key demographics receive including sexism, misogyny, racism and ableism.

This plan of action underscores UAOA's unwavering commitment to tackling online abuse at all levels. By engaging stakeholders, strengthening alliances, and implementing data-informed strategies, the coalition strives to ensure a safe and respectful environment for journalists and all who contribute to the sports ecosystem. Together, we can drive meaningful change and create a sporting world free from the harm caused by online abuse.



## PARTNERS

# OUR PARTNERS



United Against Online Abuse is proudly a global coalition, bringing together partners from across the political, sporting, regulatory and technology sectors. These partnerships and endorsements reflect the comprehensive, collaborative and cross-sector action that is needed to research, design and implement the lasting solutions needed to protect the integrity of the sporting ecosystem from the harmful and corrosive nature of online abuse.



**Mohammed Ben Sulayem**

FIA President and Founder of United Against Online Abuse

**Jorge Viegas**

President of the FIM

### UAOA's Current Partners and Endorsements:

Sporting Federations and Organisations	National Governments	Other partners
FIA	Greek Government	DCU University
FIM	French Government	Clark Hill LLP
Peace & Sport Monaco	Slovenian Government	Arwen.AI
IESF	Albanian Government	UNESCO
ARISF	Australian Government	Council of Europe
SAMBO	Kenyan Government	ARCOM - France
FIH	Costa Rican Government	Interpath Advisory
ASETEK Sim Racing	Namibian Government	Sport Radar
		ESBS Business School
		ESSEC Business School
		FIA Foundation



## JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

United Against Online Abuse (UAOA) is a coalition of international sporting bodies, political organisations, regulatory authorities and technology platforms, united in our belief that through research, collaboration and united action we can effectively tackle the scourge of online abuse directed at athletes, competitors, officials, referees, journalists and fans across the sporting ecosystem.

We welcome new partnerships through the signatory of our charter, indicating a commitment to our shared mission. The UAOA charter is a non-binding document which serves as a statement of shared intent, including a set of best principles that UAOA and signatories will mutually endeavour to embody in our work.

Partnerships and endorsements to the UAOA campaign also includes access to regular events, resources, support and campaign updates.

To enquire about partnering with or endorsing the campaign, please get in touch with:

Erin Bourke, Project Lead: [ebourke-consultant@fia.com](mailto:ebourke-consultant@fia.com)



# UNITED AGAINST ONLINE ABUSE

COALITION TO STOP HATE SPEECH IN SPORT

 / UNIVERSITY  FOUNDATION