

MEDIA

NEIGHBOURHOOD

JOURNALISM TRAINING



Reporting the European Union

A HANDBOOK FOR JOURNALISTS

This handbook contains introductions to the European Union institutions and links to other sources of information.



BBC
MEDIA ACTION

This project is being implemented by a consortium
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MEDIA NEIGHBOURHOOD PROJECT

Media Neighbourhood is a 3 year €4.5 million European Union funded project which delivers a journalism training and networking programme across 17 European Union neighbouring countries:

Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Palestine, the Russian Federation, Syria, Tunisia, Ukraine.

The project aims to build the capacity of the media across the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Caucasus regions to effectively and professionally report on key social, political and economic issues.

By the end of the project over 1,200 journalists and students of journalism from the 17 countries covered by the Media Neighbourhood project will have participated in the programme.

The programme's two key objectives are:

- To strengthen the professional capacity of journalists, particularly in the areas of media independence and online media
- To enable journalists to better understand and improve the quality of their reporting on the European Union, its policies and activities in Neighbourhood area.



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Like us on Facebook: [MediaNeighbourhood](https://www.facebook.com/MediaNeighbourhood)



Visit our YouTube channel www.youtube.com/user/MediaNeighbourhood

The Regional Communication Programme

The European Union funded Regional Communication Programme, which runs from 2011 to 2014 with a total budget of 14 million euros, aims to improve knowledge of the European Union and its neighbourhood policy.

The programme contributes to greater understanding of European Union policies and highlights cooperation actions carried out in the region. The programme works on developing sustainable communication networks and aims to strengthen the capacity and competencies of journalists in the area of European affairs. It follows on from the previous phase of the Regional Communication Programme.

<http://www.enpi-info.eu/>

<http://euneighbourhood.eu/>



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Most of the sites referenced here are in English but many of the main press releases are available in a range of languages while video links of course will be in whatever language is being used. You are more likely to find press releases in your own language if you link to the EEAS delegation office in your country.

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THE EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union has 28 member states with more than 500 million citizens. Spend some time familiarising yourself with the structure of the European Union by browsing the web sites in the adjacent European Union section of Journalism Resources.

Then you will be ready to go to the specific website handling press and media information for individual institutions. The European Union is very good at providing not only news but also background information and guides online. There is a wealth of information sources available on the official European Union websites, of which the main ones are listed below.

There is a spokesperson for each DIRECTORATE GENERAL (DG) of the European Commission and services in all other institutions such as the Council, the European Parliament, European External Action Service (EEAS), etc. At the Commission, there is the daily (except holidays) midday briefing in Brussels, which can be watched live on the audio visual service, or replayed subsequently. This is a good place to learn the issues of the day, to hear the European Union's response to events in the news and to get usable quotations or clips for use in print or audio visual media. This site can also show you who to contact if you want to know more on any specific topic, or if you want information about a topic that was not raised at the press briefing. Take a look and click to find out what topics were raised today. Each topic has a different video clip: <http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/ebs/schedule.cfm>

Press releases and other tip-offs can generally be found on the European Union's NEWSROOM site: http://europa.eu/newsroom/index_en.htm

This site enables you to search for press releases on a specific topic in different languages: <http://europa.eu/rapid/search.htm>

RSS feeds, EU Tube, Twitter and Facebook are also widely used, while many Commissioners and other officials maintain their own blogs.

This site does a similar job of making press releases available for the EUROPEAN COMMISSION under different policy areas: http://ec.europa.eu/news/index_en.htm

Here is a similar site for the EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE (EEAS), the foreign service of the European Union which lists telephone numbers and e-mails for the EEAS Spokespersons and Press Officers. Remember it is these officials' job to answer questions from the press and broadcasts media. They will provide answers to your questions: http://eeas.europa.eu/ashton/spokespersons/index_en.htm

As a journalist based in the Neighbourhood area, you are advised to turn first to the European Union Delegation office in your country - especially if your query is about relations between your country and the EU. Using the directory on this site you can find websites, e-mails and telephone numbers for European Union Delegation offices in the region: http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/repdel/edelhrm/index.cfm?fuseaction=crepdel.europa&lang=EN

This site makes available press releases by the COUNCIL OF the EUROPEAN UNION (Council of Ministers): <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.aspx?id=1&lang=en>

This site makes available press releases by the EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/pressroom/press-release/>

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A good journalist covering the affairs of the European Union will visit many of these sites every day before deciding what story to pursue. Alternatively, where he or she has a specific topic in mind, they will trawl these sites to see what has been said already on the topic before, for example, contacting a spokesperson for a statement. Once you become familiar with these sites you will learn who you should contact.

PICTURES, SOUNDS AND VIDEOS AT YOUR DISPOSAL FREE OF CHARGE

This is the EU's very own section of YouTube, which can be a very useful source for television and radio journalists: <http://www.youtube.com/eutube?gl=GB&hl=en-GB>

This similar site provides video material on the EU's neighbourhood relations:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/ENPIvideo>

Television journalists wanting to gain access to EU originated material by satellite, for example when a minister from their country is visiting Brussels, should contact Europe by Satellite (EBS) at this site to arrange for footage to be made available on the satellite: <http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/ebs/whatsebs.cfm>

Television footage from the EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT can be obtained from this site:

<http://www.europarl.tv.europa.eu/en/home.aspx>

This is the EU's own photo, audio and video library:

http://europa.eu/newsroom/audiovisual/index_en.htm

PARTNER COUNTRIES

You could find useful information about the cooperation activities of EU by visiting the website of the Directorate General, Development and Cooperation also known as EuropeAid:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/index_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/programming_en.htm

Most European Union institutions and agencies have working groups and delegations working specifically on relations with the Neighbourhood Countries. They produce reports and other material of interest to anyone wanting to cover this wide region. Here are some more sites under the EU Neighbourhood Infocentre:

http://www.enpi-info.eu/main.php?id=351&id_type=2

http://www.enpi-info.eu/main.php?id=354&id_type=2

http://www.enpi-info.eu/main.php?id=355&id_type=2

Databases containing the legal framework of cooperation with the Neighbourhood countries are available on the Europa website for the Southern and Eastern Neighbourhood countries respectively:

http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/external_relations/relations_with_third_countries/mediterranean_partner_countries/index_en.htm

http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/external_relations/relations_with_third_countries/eastern_europe_and_central_asia/index_en.htm

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EUROPEAN UNION EVENTS

The EU calendar of forthcoming events covers all institutions: <http://europa.eu/newsroom/calendar/>

The EU Neighbourhood Info Centre also has calendars of events, one for the Southern neighbourhood countries, and another for the Eastern countries:

http://www.enpi-info.eu/list_type_med.php?id_type=12

http://www.enpi-info.eu/list_type_east.php?id_type=12

The following EU sites can help you find people to interview though it may be easier to get help from the Newsroom or Press Corner sites referred to earlier:

http://ec.europa.eu/contact/guide_activity_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/staffdir/plsql/gsys_page.display_index?pLang=EN

EU NEIGHBOURHOOD INFORMATION CENTRE (EU FUNDED)

The EU Neighbourhood Info Centre is a one-stop shop for cooperation activities and policies of the EU in the Neighbourhood region and highlight developments in the European Neighbourhood Policy. Its web portal comprises hundreds of pages of news and information, in English, French, Russian and Arabic: <http://www.enpi-info.eu/index.php>

Daily ENP/EU Neighbourhood news and info alerts tailored to your interests and language can be sent to you by e-mail. There is no charge and you can subscribe on this site: <http://www.enpi-info.eu/join.php>

Press packs with background policy information and links on key topics are available here:

http://www.enpi-info.eu/list_type.php?id_type=3

This section of the Neighbourhood Partnership site is helpful for journalists looking for quotes for their stories: http://www.enpi-info.eu/list_type.php?id_type=11

The EU Neighbourhood Info Centre site can be searched by country or topic in English, French, Arabic or Russian.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The European Union Neighbourhood Info Centre has also gone social. You can follow its activities on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube or LinkedIn through the following links:

<http://www.facebook.com/enpi.eu>

http://twitter.com/enpi_info

<http://www.youtube.com/user/ENPIvideo>

<http://www.linkedin.com/groups/EU-Neighbourhood-Info-Centre-Jobs-4218144?home=&gid=4218144>

http://www.enpi-info.eu/rss_index.php

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EU AND EXTERNAL TRADE

For statistics about trade between the European Union and partner countries:

http://exporthelp.europa.eu/display.cfm?page=st/st_Introduction.html&doctype=main&languageId=EN

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home>

Statistics and data on EuropeAid:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/geographic_en.htm

UNDERSTANDING EU TALK

One of the main challenges of following the discussion on an EU level is what is known as “Euro-speak” – the words, acronyms and other jargon used by those involved. The EU Neighbourhood Info Centre has prepared an online A-Z Neighbourhood glossary in English, French, Arabic and Russian with words related to the Neighbourhood, as well as glossaries on the “Eastern Partnership and Russia” and “Neighbourhood and lists of acronyms and EU jargon”:

http://www.enpi-info.eu/main.php?id=598&id_type=2

http://www.enpi-info.eu/mainmed.php?id=571&id_type=9&lang_id=450

OTHER USEFUL SOURCES

Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat: <http://www.ufmsecretariat.org/en/>

The Eastern Partnership webpage: <http://www.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/easternpartnership>

Details about EU member states, candidate and potential candidate countries are available at:

http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index_en.htm

BBC News Online’s ‘Inside Europe’ section: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11710563>

BBC News website in Arabic: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/arabic/>

BBC News website in Azeri: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/azeri/>

BBC News website in Russian: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/russian/>

BBC News website in Ukrainian: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/ukrainian/>

BBC News has profiles on all countries, member states and neighbourhood countries, which you can find by going to: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/>

You can search for the country by name and looking for its profile, which contains sections headed Overview, Facts, Leaders, Media and Timeline.

For example, on Algeria: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14118852>

Think tanks and other resource centres:

EU Neighbourhood Infocentre: <http://www.enpi-info.eu>

EU Neighbourhood barometer: <http://euneighbourhood.eu>

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[EU4Journalists](#): A site especially designed for journalists with background detail and essential information on the European Union. It included news, dossiers on newsworthy topics, a basic guide to the European Union and where to find information and a contacts guide (European Union languages).

[EU-Observer](#): Run by a non-profit organisation, it provides news on the European Union. You can subscribe for the news that interests you and receive daily e-mail alerts (English).

[EurActiv](#): A media portal dedicated to European Union affairs. It covers key stories, carries analysis of policy topics, compiles dossiers and has profiles and interviews (English, French and German).

[EUBusiness](#): An online business information service about the European Union providing daily news and information about European Union policy, legislation and economic data (English).

[TheParliament.Com](#): A news portal covering numerous policy areas, the Parliament magazine, a press review, a research review and a regional review as well as interviews and events (English).



REPORTING THE EUROPEAN UNION - OVERVIEW

Professional and objective reporting of the European Union and its activities is at the heart of this project. It is widely acknowledged that the European Union has an impact not just on member states themselves, and on accession states – those, primarily in the Western Balkans that are in the preparation phase of joining – but also on the Neighbourhood states of North Africa, the Middle East and the former Soviet Union. These states, as part of the European Neighbourhood Policy, have effectively formed a ring of the European Union's near neighbours since its enlargement of new states in 2004.

EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY: BACKGROUND

- Developed in 2004 to avoid the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged European Union and its neighbours and to strengthen prosperity, stability and security.
- Bilateral policy between the European Union and 16 of its closest neighbours – Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine.
- Regional and multilateral co-operation initiatives: the Eastern Partnership (launched in Prague in May 2009), the Union for the Mediterranean (the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, formerly known as the Barcelona Process, re-launched in Paris in July 2008) and the Black Sea Synergy (launched in Kiev in February 2008).
- Bilateral Action Plans between the European Union and each ENP partner (12 of them were agreed) - agenda of political and economic reforms with short and medium-term priorities of 3 to 5 years - democracy and human rights, rule of law, good governance, market economy principles and sustainable development.
- Existing agreements between the European Union and the partner in question: Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA) or Association Agreements (AA).
- Implementation of the ENP is jointly promoted and monitored through the Committees. Sub-Committees promote and monitor progress.
- The European Union publishes each year the ENP Progress Reports. You can normally find them by searching the home page of the External Action Service (<http://eeas.europa.eu>)

EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY: FUNDING

- The European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) (2007-2013)- targets sustainable development and approximation to EU policies and standards - supporting the agreed priorities in the ENP Action Plans, as well as the Strategic Partnership with Russia. It has been replaced by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). Financial Framework for the period 2014-2020 - €15,433 billion
- 2014 Budget Allocation: € 2,132 480 712

- Eastern Partnership Countries: € 599 885 412
- EU assistance priorities are identified, together with the countries concerned in general Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) covering 7 year periods, National and Regional Indicative Programmes (NIPs) covering 3 years and detailed annual programmes.

The Neighbourhood policy, in the European Union's own words, "is a broad political strategy which has the objective of strengthening the prosperity, stability and security of Europe's neighbourhood in order to avoid any dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its direct neighbours." The EU has bilateral agreements with each of the 16 neighbourhood partner countries, which involve a programme of assistance, including financial, aimed at "creating an area of shared values, stability and prosperity, enhanced co-operation and deeper economic and regional integration by covering a wide range of co-operation areas". Priorities in each country differ, but the EU's core principles, including rule-of-law, market economy, developing of democratic institutions, border security and equality feature prominently in the assistance programme to each country.

The media's role in reporting the EU's work in partnership countries cannot be understated. The situation in each country is very different and often complex. In Ukraine, for example, the decision of the Yanukovich government not to sign the Association Agreement between the European Union and Ukraine kicked off the chain of events that eventually jeopardised the overall stability of the country. In some of the "Arab Spring" countries, the challenge is building democratic institutions and securing the rule-of-law. Crucially, the European Union is supporting countries neighbouring Syria to assimilate tens of thousands of refugees. In these countries, reporting of the European Union is intrinsically linked with stories of global significance that dominate the news bulletins day after day. And the other countries from the Neighbourhood area are also impacted, if not directly, by the situation in Ukraine (Eastern countries, especially Moldova and Georgia) and the situation in Syria – (Southern countries).

One of the main lessons that are hammered home during the Reporting the EU courses is the need for journalists to understand the European Union's institutions.

THE EU INSTITUTIONAL TRIANGLE OF DECISION-MAKING

The European Commission initiates legislation, Guardian of the Treaties - represents the interests of the European Union as a whole.

The European Parliament and the Council of ministers: decide on the legislation adoption.

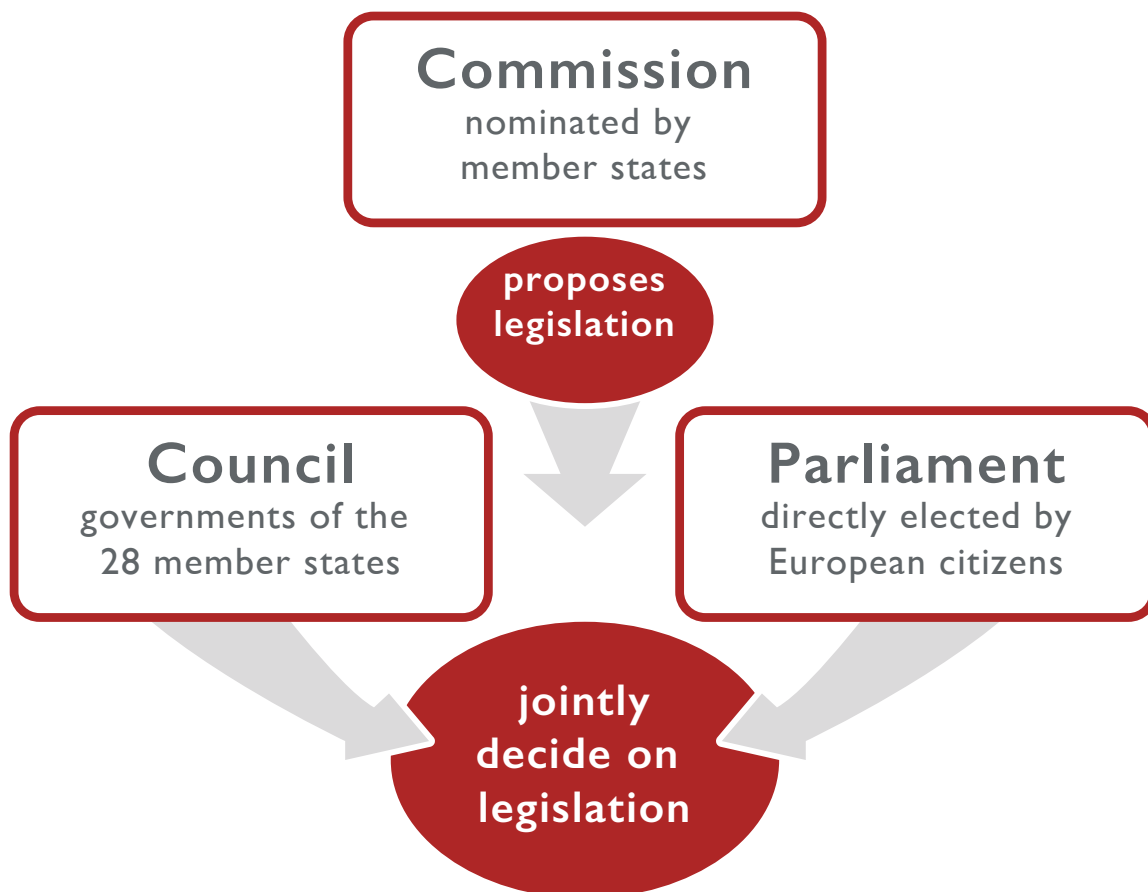
The European Parliament represents the interests of European Citizens.

The Council of the EU (often referred to as just the Council or the Council of Ministers) represents the member state governments.

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DECISION-MAKING ON EU MATTERS – 28 MEMBER STATES



Without a thorough grasp of the make-up, function and competence of the various institutions, journalists will not be able to fully explain to their audience the full implications of a particular EU action or statement. It is therefore crucial that any journalist reporting on the EU is familiar with the institutions, as outlined by the European Union itself:

The [European Council](#) sets the EU's overall political direction – but has no powers to pass laws. Led by its President and comprising national heads of state or government and the President of the Commission, it meets for a few days at a time at least every six months.

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LAW-MAKING

There are 3 main institutions involved in European Union legislation:

- The [European Parliament](#), which represents the EU's citizens and is directly elected by them
- The [Council of the European Union](#), which represents the governments of the individual member countries. The Presidency of the Council is shared by the member states on a rotating basis
- The [European Commission](#), which represents the interests of the Union as a whole and is the only institution at EU level that can initiate legislation.

Journalists sometimes make the mistake of assuming that the Council of Europe, based in Strasbourg, which was set up to promote democracy and protect human rights and the rule-of-law, is part of the European Union. It is not, and such mistakes diminish the credibility of news organisations that make them.

In addition to understanding the institutions, it is also crucial to apply journalistic ethical norms when reporting on the European Union. It is in no-one's interest, least of all the European Union itself, for journalists to slavishly regurgitate press releases from the institutions without questioning what they mean, who they will affect and assessing who, if anyone, could be opposed to a proposed action. Failure to do these things could lead to accusations that a news outlet is not sufficiently impartial and this could impact on its reputation and that of the institutions on which it is reporting. The Reporting the EU course has special sessions dedicated to journalism ethics, some of which are outlined below. At the heart of these values lies the European Union's own charter on fundamental rights, the Art 11 of which states that: "Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. The freedom and pluralism of the media shall be respected." In developed democracies, this allows individuals of every race and creed to express their opinions free from censorship, providing those opinions do not contravene media-related laws such as defamation, contempt and data protection and, when appropriate, issues such as incitement to racial hatred.

It should be borne in mind, however, that laws governing media freedoms vary from country to country and some Neighbourhood partner countries are frequently criticised by international monitoring organisations for varying degrees of censorship, repression and, in the worst cases, intimidation against the media.



EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

TRUST

The relationship between a newspaper or a broadcasting station and its readers, listeners or viewers is based on TRUST. It is like an unwritten contract: the reader buys the newspaper that he trusts. If it lets its standards fall, then his trust diminishes and the reader buys a different newspaper, or looks elsewhere for his news.

An editor or producer tries to retain that TRUST by ensuring that the paper or channel's journalism follows a SET OF VALUES. The most important of these is ACCURACY, for who wants to buy a newspaper that is not committed to accurately reporting the news?

Many other values are expected of good journalists. Usually they are expected to be BALANCED, reporting a story from more than one point of view. Many journals and programmes expect IMPARTIALITY, meaning the journalists does not reveal his own opinion about a story or 'show his political colours'.

This becomes especially important at election time when the media sway public opinion and can collectively influence the election outcome.

War reporting is another instance where the journalists needs to remember that his role is to report the war not to fight it, thus he or she needs to show a high degree of OBJECTIVITY.

Other values that are often imposed, in the interests of retaining public TRUST, may include giving an accused person a right of reply, protecting the children in the news from intrusion and being FAIR, which essentially means not misreporting or denying someone a chance to respond to a news item which concerns them.

These values can be taken to a higher level where and when the story requires it. For example, in the field of investigative journalism an editor would require his journalists to establish FACTS clearly before he agrees to publish a story, especially if it makes an accusation. He would also normally give an accused person – or a company or government department - the right to respond to any charge or accusation.

Most publications and broadcasters make these values part of their in-house CODE OF CONDUCT. In democratic societies individual freedom of expression is an important human right. Freedom of the press and broadcasting media is essential for the functioning of democracy.

As consumers of the media – readers, listeners or viewers – are never slow to point out, such freedom needs to be exercised with responsibility. Codes of conduct provide ways to balance a newspaper's freedom with the responsibility it has towards its readers.

ACCURACY

Central to good journalism is getting the story right - and just as important, not getting it wrong or misleading the public. ACCURACY is sometimes referred to as the fundamental value of good journalism.

Of course, one person's truth can be another person's lie, so it is sometimes hard for a journalist to establish the truth. That can be especially hard in a war where each side has a very different point of view.

These are some of the guidelines towards achieving ACCURACY that newsrooms may impose on their journalists:

- Where possible you should use more than one source for a story, indeed the more sources the better.
- Give the most weight to eyewitness accounts.
- Unconfirmed 'facts' should always be attributed – to prevent the newspaper or bulletin losing its audience's TRUST if the information turns out to be wrong.
- It is the role of the journalist to check FACTS as thoroughly as possible, and only to report corroborated information.
- Journalists should VERIFY information where possible: uncorroborated information or questionable statistics should not be published or broadcast.
- It is better to be right than to be first – though a good journalist wants to be both.
- Always be alert to misinformation: if someone tells you something, ask yourself 'Why is he telling me this?' This applies as much to photographic or video material as to information.
- It is a cardinal error to mislead your audience or readership knowingly – and just as bad to do so unknowingly.
- The internet is a useful research tool but information found there is not necessarily accurate.
- Broadcast or published errors of facts should be corrected at the earliest opportunity.

Journalists are seekers after TRUTH. However it is not necessarily our role to establish the TRUTH, merely to present different claims.

The skill of the journalist is to weight different points of view in an effort to get as close to the TRUTH as possible. The public will TRUST a publication or programme that consistently gets its FACTS right.

INDEPENDENCE

Another important VALUE in journalism is that of INDEPENDENCE, usually taken to mean INDEPENDENCE from political or commercial interests. In other words, decisions about what is published or broadcast are taken entirely for editorial reasons: it is NEWSWORTHY or of interest to the audience.

Political parties are always keen to influence the media because they see it as a way to gain political advantage. This is especially the case during an election campaign where they hope to use the media to encourage people to vote in a certain way. Programme and newspaper editors go to great lengths to restrict the influence of political parties.

A common rule is to say: We do not set out to influence the way people vote, only to present them with choices.

It is undeniable that the media do influence the way people vote, but the important thing is that this should not be deliberate, should not be the intent on the part of the programme or newspaper.

Similarly, commercial organisations may see the media as a way to increase sales of a product. To do this by placing advertisements is legitimate, of course, but to try to influence a programme or news bulletin to feature that product is not, especially if they try to buy that coverage.

Newspaper editors and programme makers are forever on the look-out for blatant or disguised ways to influence the editorial decision making process. This is why they regard the value of INDEPENDENCE so highly. This VALUE distinguishes true journalism from public relations or propaganda.

Readers, listeners or viewers are likely also to look for INDEPENDENCE when they buy a particular newspaper or watch a programme. They accept that some programmes will be sponsored by certain companies to promote their products. However, they expect this to be clearly stated so that they can allow for this.

Most responsible television companies would not accept sponsorship for a serious news bulletin or programme and newspapers would draw a clear line between paid advertising and news reporting and analysis.

Thus the VALUE of TRANSPARENCY is just as important as INDEPENDENCE since it is the way editors demonstrate to their readers and viewers that they have no 'hidden agenda'.

The VALUE of INDEPENDENCE applies as much at the editorial level as at the individual level: a journalist should not be influenced by his or her own personal political leanings or other personal interests. To do so, would make them lobbyists on behalf of a cause rather than true journalists.

Editorial INDEPENDENCE means that journalists and their editors should report, record or write news and other programme material free from pressure to ensure its ACCURACY, IMPARTIALITY and HONESTY.

For a newspaper or news bulletin, being ACCURATE is the best way to gain and retain readers' or audience's TRUST'.

BALANCE AND IMPARTIALITY

Most stories have two sides to them – or more. The role of the journalists is to present both or all sides. This may mean hearing from two different eye witnesses. If their stories corroborate each other you can be reasonably sure it is factually ACCURATE.

More usually, versions do not entirely match each other having, quite literally, a different perspective on the incident being described. It does not mean that one is telling the TRUTH and the other lying, merely that they were standing in different places and saw the event differently.

It is a mistake to think that the role of the journalists is to decide which account is more accurate. That may be the job of the police or a judge in a court of law. Being a good journalist requires only that we report both versions and attribute them: 'Witness A says this, Witness B says that.'

Many news organisations encourage their journalists never to take sides, nor to show which version they believe to be more accurate. This is the value – and skill – of IMPARTIALITY or NEUTRALITY. It matters especially when reporting politics. Our readers want to know what happened in a factual report; they are not interested which side or political party the journalist favours. (That can be saved for an 'opinion' piece.)

Showing your own political colours may make your audience or readers TRUST your reporting less. Most journalists take pride in not allowing their political feelings to get in the way of their reporting. That makes it even more important that they report both (or all) sides of an argument – without of course taking sides.

A media outlet which publishes uncorroborated 'facts' or, worse, misinformation will soon lose the TRUST of its readers/viewers/listeners. Most newsrooms have a series of procedures for separating TRUTH from rumours and untruths.

Of course TRUTH is not absolute, so it may be a matter of presenting 'facts' from more than one point of view.

Imagine a car accident when drivers disagree about who was at fault. The reporter knows his role is not to decide which of them is telling the TRUTH. It is to report both points of view, or even several points of view – several different versions of the TRUTH, you could say.

This becomes more difficult when you are reporting countries or factions at war when the journalists can be confronted with different versions of history, for example. His objective should remain the same: to report both or all versions.

Remember, the trust of your audience depends very largely on ACCURATE and BALANCED reporting.

REPORTING THE EUROPEAN UNION – ADDITIONAL TIPS

During the Reporting the EU workshops, trainees have been provided with tips to try and avoid some of the pitfalls that can befall all reporters.

AVOID TECHNICAL LANGUAGE AND JARGON

Officials from the EU and other institutions often speak using language that is specific to their sector but can be baffling for members of the public.

Such language can also often be found on official EU documents. The job of a journalist is to simplify, or demystify technical language, or jargon, by using alternative words that can be understood by ordinary people.

Sometimes you will need to explain phrases that are not self-explanatory, such as “association agreement.” If you are conducting an interview for inclusion in a news report and an official uses technical language you may need to politely ask him, or her, to answer the question using clear and understandable language.

VIEWERS/LISTENERS/READERS OFTEN DO NOT KNOW AS MUCH AS YOU DO.

Most viewers, listeners and readers will not have the detailed and specialist knowledge of the subject that you have acquired. It is therefore important for each and every story to have just enough (though certainly not too much) background information to put the audience in the picture. Getting the right balance of current and background information is one of the many skills required by the successful journalist. In order to provide the necessary background, it is important that journalists covering the EU are fully conversant with the nature and functions of EU institutions, its modus operandi and the key personnel.

ENGAGE THE AUDIENCE

EU stories are often presented in an abstract fashion. Many journalists are guilty of this. One way to make the stories more appealing and relevant is to assess the effect that an EU initiative or decision will have on ordinary people's lives and then explain that at the beginning of the story, preferably in the top line (first sentence of the story).

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HUMANISE YOUR STORIES

A story always has more impact if you illustrate it with a human example, or case study. Another way to humanise stories is by using vox pops (series of juxtaposed reaction clips from several people). However, vox pops should only be used if the subject is so broad that virtually everyone in the high street is affected by it and it should be always born in mind that they are not a scientific gauge of public opinion and it is only a snapshot.

ILLUSTRATE YOUR STORIES

Many EU stories originate from statements made by politicians, or officials, in public meetings or press conferences.

In television, if you use pictures from press conferences, or meetings - which is all too common - you deprive the audience of real pictures, thus minimising the impact of your medium. If the story is about refugees, use pictures of camps, border crossings and other images relevant to the subject instead of tedious and uninspiring shots of the meeting. This is especially important at the beginning and at the end of the report. For radio, use the audio equivalent of pictures – natural sound, or actuality - to build up relevant images in the minds of your audience.



ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM IN ONLINE MEDIA

CREATING ATTRACTIVE CONTENT ONLINE

As online media production is rapidly gaining ground and the Internet is becoming the major source of information for many people and the only source of information for the younger generation, producing attractive online content and being able to reach a wide audience is becoming ever more important. The competition for the attention of the audience is huge, so writing a good story or making a good interview alone do not guarantee “views” or “hits”. It is essential that successful online journalists develop skills to produce attractive content using the available technology and combining creatively text with video, audio and photos taking into account the specifics of multimedia production and the models of viewing behaviour of the audience. Text, video and pictures work differently when posted online; copying an article written for the press and adding some photos to it does not usually make an interesting read online. Television reports uploaded onto the Internet do not attract a lot of attention either – multimedia online journalism requires re-writing and re-editing the original texts, making them interactive and finding creative ways to make sure the readers find them easily on their computers or mobile devices. The sections below offer some interesting and free tools that can help produce more attractive online content.

Tools to create interactive online content:

WORKING WITH STILL IMAGES:

Still images enhance every story; according to audience research more than 65 % of viewers are attracted to a story online by its photos. Making good photos and being able to perform some basic editing on them is one of the basic requirements for online journalists today. Here are some tips on tools you may want to use to improve your images and make them interactive:

[Thinglink](#) (Interactive images) helps link text, video, hyperlinks, maps etc. to a specific object on a still image and make it interactive.

[PicMonkey](#) (Photo editing) is a basic photo editor which has most of the functions of other editing software but is free and very easy to use.

[Fotor](#) (photo editing and collages) is another free option for basic editing and combining images.

[SoundSlides](#) (audio slideshow tool) is a tool which helps turn photos into an audio-visual story.

WORKING WITH SOUND:

Editing, uploading, interviewing and other relevant sound possible online in many different ways and enhance a story by giving it authenticity and emotion. The following tools help edit, upload, share and find interesting audio content for online publications:

[Soundcloud](#) (sound sharing) is for basic editing, uploading and sharing of audio.

[Audioboo](#) (sound sharing), in addition to sharing, offers access to thousands of audios and online solutions for broadcasters.

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FINDING MUSIC:

The Internet offers various ways of finding and using music to complement or to tell a story; unfortunately pirating music is still among the most common. Using pirated music is against the law. Additionally, the usage of pirated content undermines the integrity of the whole piece and may hurt the trust of the readers in the content. The two links below provide a legal and free alternative to pirated music:

[Creative Commons Music](#)

[mobygratis](#)

WORKING WITH DATA AND CHARTS:

As data journalism is making rapid headway, developing basic skills for attractive and interactive online presentation of data is becoming a part of the requirements for successful multimedia reporters. The Internet offers many user-friendly and free tools for visualisation of data like:

[Datawrapper](#) (opensource data tools)

[Piktochart](#) (free to use data visualisation themes)

WORKING WITH VIDEO:

Video online differs significantly from video for television; posting a TV package online will not attract as many viewers as developing a more user-friendly video format. For example, stories can be much longer than the regular television spot and include pieces which could not be shown on television because of time constraints. Such videos should be thematically broken into the relevant segments with the appropriate intro. Another option is to make videos interactive, as with:

[Popcorn – Mozilla](#) (including “layers” of additional information to the video activated by a click on the frame)

In every case, videos for online and mobile need to be compressed to speed up uploading and make viewing easy on any speed Internet connection. There are various ways of doing that – like:

[mpegstream clip](#) (free video compression tool) etc.

WORKING WITH SOCIAL MEDIA:

Social media is being used in today’s multimedia journalism at every step of the production and distribution process – from newsgathering through editing and verification to online promotion and distribution. Here we focus on two useful tools:

[Storify](#) (storytelling with social media) turns social media content into an integrated story for online publishing.

[Useful guide on SEO](#) (Search Engine Optimisation): a detailed overview of the requirements your online activity should meet in order to help search engines (and readers) find your content in the multitude of information available on the Internet.

MEDIA MANAGEMENT - FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE MEDIA

THE MANAGEMENT MIX

Media management and the financial and professional independence of the media encompass an extraordinary mix of skills and knowledge across many different fields: editorial management, content production process, professional audience research, marketing, financial management, human resources management and cross platform-integration of media. Further complications are added in the countries in transition of the Southern and Eastern European Neighbourhood by the distorted and heavily manipulated media markets, the unclear structure of media ownership, the heavy handed and politically biased regulatory processes and other factors which render media management even more challenging and raise serious questions about the prospects of financial and professional independence of numerous media outlets.

THE SPECIFIC CHALLENGES

Many of the media management challenges in these countries are beyond the media managers' or editors' control: poor regulatory frameworks, problems with the implementation of the media legislation, political, commercial and other special interest control over the media outlets, distorted advertising market, huge influence of foreign media, etc. These issues determine to a large extent the environment in which media organisations strive to prosper in most of the European Neighbourhood countries. In spite of a very different context, the world media management expertise and standards are relevant and applicable. They can help media managers and editors produce better content, serve better their audiences and work towards the sustainability of their respective outlets.



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THE BASICS

Some basic principles of media management apply across the board to the majority of media managers and senior editors. The same principles apply equally to state-owned and commercial media outlets and to traditional and new media.

- **General management issues:** Management in any environment includes planning, organising, staffing, leading, monitoring and motivating people. Planning is about deciding what needs to be done in order to achieve the organisation's objectives. Organising is about establishing the internal structures and relations within the organisation which will allow the successful implementation of the plans. Staffing is about choosing and recruiting the right people to meet the organisation's needs. Leading is about organising and receiving the support of the staff in order to achieve the organisation's goals. Monitoring is the process of following the progress against the established goals. Motivation is about providing staff with a strong internal reason to strive to achieve the organisation's objectives.
- **Understanding audiences** is the starting point of any meaningful media production. The audience is the marketplace for the realisation of the media product, so knowing the market and being able to provide a high quality product is essential to the success of a media enterprise. Managers use a variety of tools to research the audience. Specialised agencies are used to conduct audience research for media producers, distributors and advertisers. In many cases media companies combine external audience research with internal tools to measure the response of the audience to the media production.
- **Managing the content production process:** Managers face the challenge of how to organise the process of news and information gathering, media content production, content distribution and marketing. The content production process has to achieve the planned audience results in an economically viable way, which is ever more important in an environment of rapidly growing competition and shrinking advertising revenues.
- **Business planning** is a major management tool which helps managers steer their operations towards the established goals of the organisation. It encompasses all major aspects of the planning process starting from the strategy to specific production plans, marketing, finance, operations and human resources management plans.
- **Human Resource Management:** This is the aspect of media management responsible for the recruitment, professional development, training, evaluation, and rewarding media professional and company staff in general. In the current media environment, being able to attract and keep top level media professionals is a growing challenge. Media organisations pay special attention to decreasing talent turnover and preserving their ability to produce unique and competitive media content.
- **Internal and External Communications** is of key importance for the achievement of its overall objectives and keeping the staff involved with the common production effort. Quite often media organisations could improve their external communications – the top management does not always understand the reason why a media organisation would benefit from professional media and public relations.
- **Integrating content production across platforms** is a common challenge for most traditional media companies at a time when a significant portion of the audience migrates to online media companies. They are struggling to develop an effective technology of content production and distribution across the different available platforms.

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DEFINING YOUR AUDIENCE

The starting point of any media production is to understand the audience. The most valuable commodity any media outlet has is the trust of its audience. Selecting and growing the target audience of the media outlet is the ultimate goal of any manager. Defining your target audience allows you to create your own space within the existing choice of alternatives offered by your competitors. In the age of new media your competitors are a variety of other organisations: governments, NGO's, the entertainment industry, citizen activists, social networks, etc. In the case of a large corporation, the current successful model seems to be concentration of communications, technology, entertainment and the production of a vast variety of media outlets targeting different niche audiences. The Institute of Media and Communications Policy, a German think-tank provides a comprehensive list of the [World's top 50 media outlets](#) by annual revenue for 2013. The top five among them have bigger annual budgets than half of the countries in the European Neighbourhood. All of them own a variety of distribution channels of different sizes targeting specific audiences and maximising their reach by providing specific products to satisfy specific audience needs. In the case of a small outlet, the best strategy seems to be focusing on a well-defined target audience and becoming its major provider of trustworthy information.

When deciding about the production of a media product managers analyse the demographics (age, gender, income, geographical location etc.) and the psychographics (activity, interests, opinion, attitudes, values and behavior) of their target audience. Major tools for this analysis are the Representative Audience Surveys, which are not always available in the Neighbourhood countries. Managers in the majority of these countries complain that there is no reliable media surveying and have to resort to alternative ways of measuring their audiences.

Here are some of the available free or affordable tools: in-house Focus Groups, attaching media questions to omnibus surveys, [SurveyMonkey](#), [FreeOnlineSurveys](#), [StatCounter](#), [QuantCast](#).



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BUSINESS PLANNING

The business plan is a management tool. Many of the practical sessions during the project's training sessions were dedicated to discussing the pros and cons of having one. There is no such a thing as a business plan template and the content of a business plan may vary significantly from another. Here are a few items you may want to include in yours.

- Vision
- Mission
- Values
- Objectives
- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)
- Analysis
- Strategies
- Goal ([download a SMART Goals Template here](#))
- Present Status
- Progress to Date
- Sales & Marketing
- Operations
- Finances
- Product Description
- Target Market Profile
- Market Analysis
- Competition
- Customers
- Market Size, Sales & Share Projections
- Marketing Strategies & Sales Plans
- Sales Projections
- Management
- Administration
- Key Assumptions
- Income Statements
- Cash Flow Projections
- Projected Balance Sheets

A business plan is only working if it is honest and updated. That's why it has to be kept confidential and be renewed annually.



STAFF MANAGEMENT

The internal management of an organisation includes the development and adoption of policy covering the following areas and made available to all employees in writing:

An Employee Handbook includes:

GENERAL OFFICE RULES:

- Work Hours
- Security
- Absenteeism
- Company and Personal Property
- Housekeeping
- Smoking
- Furnishings and Decorations
- Visitors
- Social Media Etiquette
- Telephone Etiquette
- Employee Relations/Professional Etiquette
- General Confidentiality
- Use of Common Space and Conference Rooms
- Staff Cell Phones
- Staff Work Stations

PAYROLL:

- Payment of Salary
- Overtime for Permanent Staff
- Certification of Time Worked
- Compensation Time

BENEFITS:

- Leave Policy
- Holidays
- Vacation for Staff – Annual Paid Leave

RECRUITMENT AND TERMINATION:

- Staff Hiring Process
- Employment Contract
- Introductory Period
- Performance Reviews and Salary Structure
- Procedures for Employee Disciplinary Action
- Grievance Policy
- Resignation/Termination
- Position Elimination
- Termination of Employment Contract

TRAVEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

- International Travel
- Domestic Travel
- Lodging
- Per Diem
- Advances
- Travel Reconciliation
- Use of Personal Vehicles
- Reimbursable Commuting Costs

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- Individual Performance Plans
- Training and Education
- Employee Activity Reports

The content of the individual organisational policy will inevitably vary from one organisation to another depending on the size, country, local regulations, etc. The main point of having such regulations in writing is to make sure all employees are aware of the policies and have a clear reference point when facing a specific potential conflict or a controversial situation.

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LEVELS OF CROSS-PLATFORM NEWSROOM INTEGRATION

With the development of multiplatform journalism most of the media organisations are integrating their newsrooms in order to produce and distribute content simultaneously via traditional and new media platforms – Television, Radio, Online, Print, Mobile, Social Media etc. The “integrated newsroom” has gone through three different stages:

- **Multi - Platform Newsroom**

There are separate platform content producers with separate editors, separate newsgathering and separate workflows. One editor coordinates all platform producers.

- **Multi - Media Newsroom**

This approach is recognisable by the “Superdesk”: a round table of separate editors for each platform, coordinated by a “conductor” with joint newsgathering and workflow.

- **Integrated Newsroom**

The most recent level of integration features fully integrated planning, gathering and production process, no separate editors or staff for the “platforms” and full integration of production and workflow across the media organisation.



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MENTOR TESTIMONIALS

An integral part of the Media Neighbourhood project is its network of mentors. A small, carefully- selected group of senior journalists from each partner country in the Neighbourhood area work closely with participants on the Reporting the EU, Multiplatform and Election workshops to help develop EU-related content across print, broadcast and online media. The mentors advise the participants, or mentees, on issues as diverse as story selection, story content and structure, media law and ethics throughout the story production process.





REDA FHELBOOM LIBYA

Since joining the BBC Media Action-led Media Neighbourhood Project in November 2012, my skills as a journalist have been improving steadily.

Thanks to the workshops organised and run by BBC Media Action, I committed to self-education and self-development alongside my mentoring duties which are about helping others to progress, building relations with them, encouraging, stimulating and motivating them to work together and individually and share experiences and knowledge.

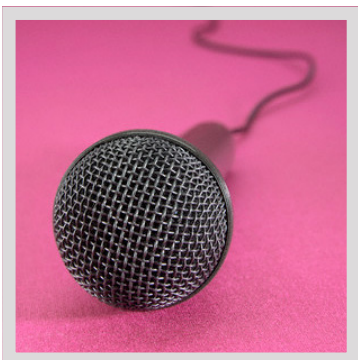
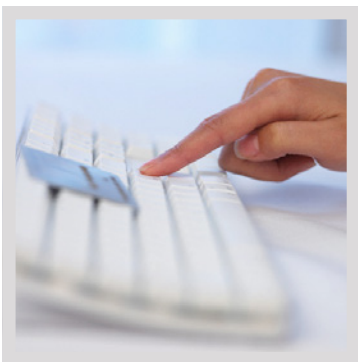
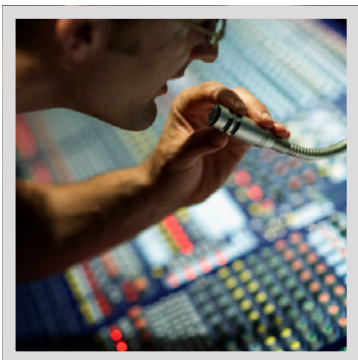
Attending the training session held in Tunis in August 2013 gave me an opportunity to meet mentors from other countries and exchange information and establish professional contact with them. We exchanged telephone numbers and e-mail addresses. We agreed on a methodology for the mentoring process and have worked ever since along the same basic principles. This training session not only gave me the opportunity to meet mentors, but to learn from them, therefore strengthening my skills and my knowledge of the mentors' duties and "mission" - which from time to time require some adjustment.

In September 2013, I contacted the mentees - from different backgrounds - by emails and we agreed on a group meeting in a quiet café in a hotel where we had a preliminary discussion. We discussed the projects and agreed on dates, objectives and methods. Keeping in touch regularly with the mentees, answering their queries methodically, giving them specific support, assistance and advice for their professional project is a faire description of a mentor's duties.

In October 2013, a two hour meeting with the majority of the mentees took place at the National TV where the articles/reports of the mentees were assessed. The discussion focused on their achievements but also their difficulties - including logistics. Assistance was given to mentees to access sources related to the topics they set out to cover professionally. Most of the mentees completed the I-learn modules, the BBC's online training platform and worked concomitantly on their assigned TV reports.

My personal experience as a Media Neighbourhood mentor has been very beneficial for both the mentees and myself in terms of professional contacts, channels of communication, learning new skills, networking opportunities, organizational capacity and management. Our exchange of experiences enables us to discover skills which were not used in the Libyan media before.





SERHIY ANDRUSHKO

UKRAINE

For young journalists, participating in the Media Neighbourhood project is an opportunity to get new knowledge and skills from experienced BBC journalists, find out information and important data about the workings of the European Union, stay in touch with mentors, which enables them ask any question and advice regarding their work. It is also a possibility to share experience with a geographically very widespread community of journalists and media professionals. My advice for mentors and their mentees:

Create Internet communities for better communication

Create a Facebook group. This is particularly useful. Any mentor can ask a question which they need answers to and then a discussion can take place on how to improve the quality of the article/report (I remember a heated discussion through the Facebook page on the feasibility of producing high-quality coverage in a short space of time away from the office. For a mentor, having an Internet group he shares with his mentees is also a possibility to disseminate important information in real time and keep the dialogue going.

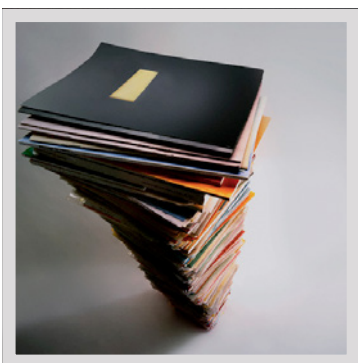
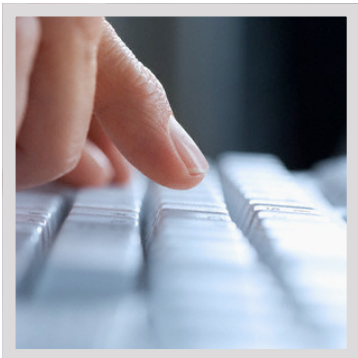
Set objectives

Mentees who have a goal, therefore motivation, produce better results. Each mentee sets his/her own goals and defines his/her participation in the project. Some need to be exposed to new experiences/practices and acquire new knowledge and skills, others will benefit more from practical advice about their own work.

The co-operation with a mentor has to have a purpose. The mentoring programme can enable young media professionals to work on his weaknesses with the help of an experienced and more seasoned journalist. Progress, improvement and acquisition of skills are definitely the best incentives. Motivation can also be created by practical tasks and professional challenges. The follow up training with BBC journalists, where their work is assessed and analysed is particularly useful.

Design your own work plan and set deadlines

For a more positive experience and productive results, mentees should be encouraged to come up with their own schedules and work plans; setting deadlines is essential.



KHEMAÏS ARFAOUI TUNISIA

The “Mission” is no longer impossible!

A free and professional press is a sign, among many others, which enables us to evaluate any democratic experience anywhere. The freedom enjoyed by a professional, pluralistic and objective press is a guarantee for democracy, freedom of expression as well as one of the citizens’ basic human rights.

The press plays a crucial role in the promotion and the broadening of the democratic process in society. This role seems to be even more pivotal in a democratic transition phase, as it is currently the case in Tunisia, and in various countries in the MENA region, as a result of a revolution and a quest for a new and better deal, more democracy, more freedom and general well-being.

The question is how to achieve this?

Democracy is a continuous practice both at the political level and in the daily life of citizens.

Democracy is not only a value and a concept; it has to form part of a whole system. It must be taught, enlarged, sustained, safeguarded and protected on a daily basis.

The media are on the frontline and have to play a major role in this context.

They have a noble and vital mission to fulfill in the education of democracy and the establishment of the democratic practice.

Are the Tunisian media capable “now and here” to accomplish this mission rapidly and efficiently?

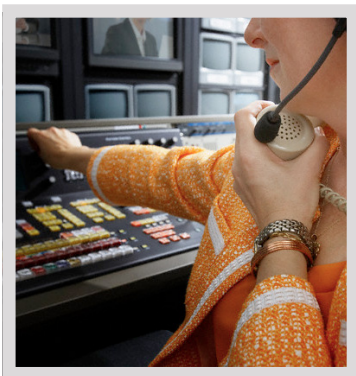
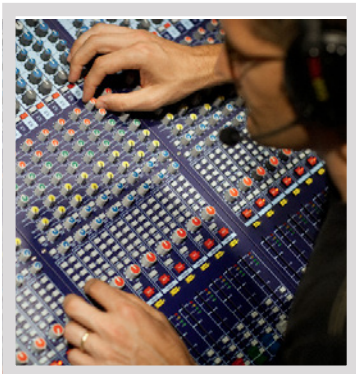
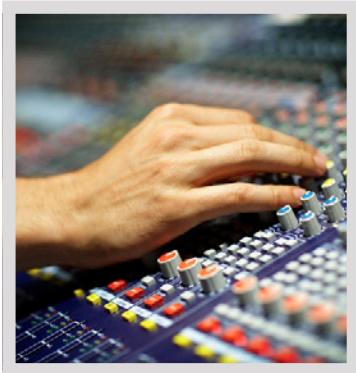
It is not an easy task; it is rare gift, but not an impossible mission.

The Tunisian media do not lack professional journalists, but they have been hindered by a deficit of practice of the professional journalistic exercise for a long time.

And this is precisely why, the Tunisian media could be compared to a child who is not a baby anymore and who has to learn how to walk, or to a prisoner who spent many years in his cell and who is suddenly released from jail. In both cases, the progress is not going to be rapid and easy;

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there will be disappointment on the way before the child can walk with confidence and the prisoner adapts to his new life.

What is required is willpower, courage, support and patience in order to succeed.

Clear objectives have to be set.

As democracy is being built, free and developed media are also being established.

It is high time for the Tunisian media to return to the professional ethics and references, to be acquainted again with professionalism.

The moment has come for journalists to exercise their profession, their passion, the job they chose, studied and love. This is what I am trying to do daily when I am working and this is what I say to my colleagues and insist on, in order to contribute to the democratic transition.

Therefore, for a successful transition we ought to be practicing the only acceptable form of journalism, a professional one and a free one. This can only happen when credible, accurate, objective and honest information is published, the sort of information which reflects the different opinions and political sensitivities.

This sort of journalism is necessary for the well-being and development of the entire country and all its components.

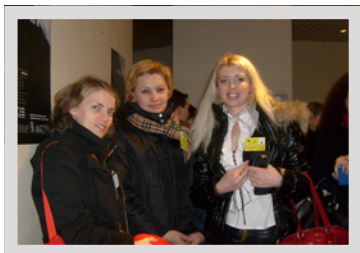
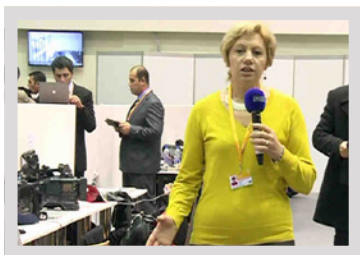
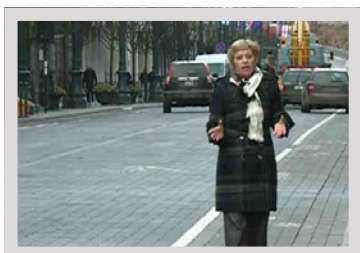
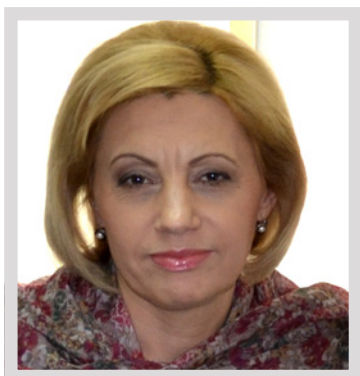
Also, media professionals have to regain the lost confidence of the Tunisian public towards the media as a whole; the only way to achieve that is through journalistic responsibility and professionalism, through professional and responsible journalism.

The state institutions and the law need to guarantee the emergence of free and pluralistic media all through the democratic transition process.

It is definitely a challenge, but Tunisian journalists do not lack the will and the know-how to achieve this objective.

We have no option but to raise to the challenge.

The "mission" is now possible.



LUDMILA BARBA MOLDOVA

“If you are informed, you are armed.”

I launched my own television project, “The European Vector” on Moldova-I Public TV almost 10 years ago, in June 2004. Back then, people in Moldova hardly ever mentioned the European Union. Even MP’s and government officials did not really know the difference between the Council of Europe, the European Union and the European Council.

I gradually learned about the European Union’s history, structure and policies, but the European Union remained very distant and inaccessible. What helped us draw closer to Europe was a year-long training organised by the Institute for Public Policy in Moldova (www.ipp.md) in cooperation with the German Institute “InWEnt” (InWEnt - Capacity Building International and several trips to Brussels.

Theoretical and partial knowledge about the European Union and producing reports for television programmes are two different things. Because of poor funding of Moldova’s Public Television and Radio there was zero opportunity for a television crew to be sent to Brussels or any European Union member-state. I looked for sources of information containing a video library or video materials. One of the main web-sites I found was

www.europa.eu and the Audiovisual section:

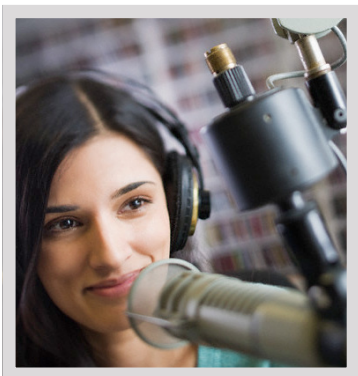
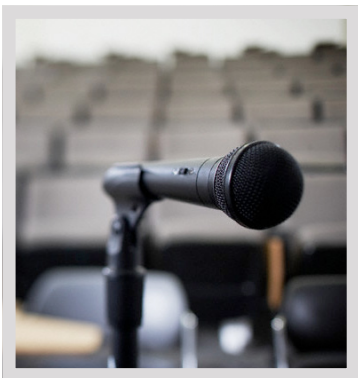
http://europa.eu/newsroom/audiovisual/index_en.htm. Journalists will find numerous resources on this site, including the European Commission channel – EbS (Europe by Satellite)

<http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/ebs/schedule.cfm>. All materials from the library and live broadcasts are available free of charge, on condition that they are not used for commercial purposes.

The most recent example of how EbS helped Moldova’s national broadcaster to be ahead of the game was during the 3rd Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius when Moldova signed the Association Agreement with the European Union. Moldovans, more than 1,200 km from the Lithuanian capital, could witness this historical event, the ceremony and the speeches. Out of more than a hundred national and regional channels registered in Moldova, only two carried live broadcasts. One of them was a private channel that had an agreement

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with the Reuters News Agency and the other one was the Public broadcaster.

All European Union institutions have well developed and well equipped communication platforms. Journalists can if they wish book interviews with European Union, but bear in mind that it is practically impossible to get an interview for the same day or the following day.

The European Neighbourhood Policy was adopted a year before the largest wave of European Union expansion, on 1st May 2004, when 10 countries joined the European Union. Video-information on cooperation between Europe and its neighbours is available here:

<http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/videoByThematic.cfm?sitelang=en&thid=10>.

In recent years, a special web-site has been created <http://www.enpi-info.eu/>, which focuses on cooperation with Eastern Partnership members <http://www.enpi-info.eu/indexeast.php>, as well as the Mediterranean Union countries. Journalists from the European Neighbourhood countries will find the Glossary on:

http://www.enpi-info.eu/main.php?id=403&id_type=2&lang_id=450

The European Union has a rotating presidency system: each member-country takes over the European Council presidency for six months and comes up with an action plan which defines priorities in various fields, including foreign policy. Useful information is available on the web-pages of the country which holds the presidency. The address is always the same, only the domain changes. For example: www.eu2013.ie - Irish presidency, www.eu2013.lt - Lithuanian presidency, www.eu2015.lv - Latvian presidency, etc.

It is impossible to mention all the information made available for journalists in one article; the information platform is vast. The task can be rather daunting but never give up; you will find what you are looking for. I have been a regular user for the past decade!



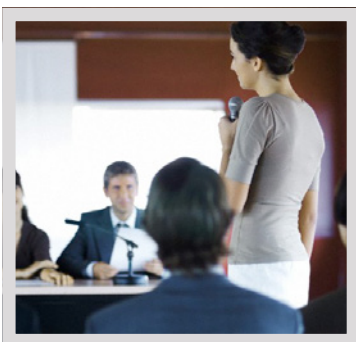
SUZY EL-GENAIDY

EGYPT

When I first started as a journalist in 1980, I wished I had benefitted from training and guidance by colleagues who were experienced. It is for this very reason that I am determined to help those who are new in this job. This is mainly why I am so enthusiastic about this training programme, funded by the EU and run by BBC Media Action. Over the past few months, I have done my best to assist eight mentees, all young journalists.

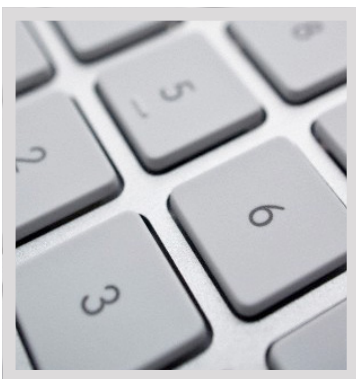
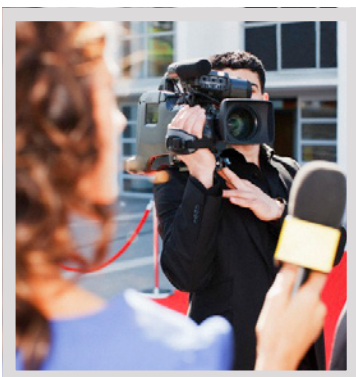
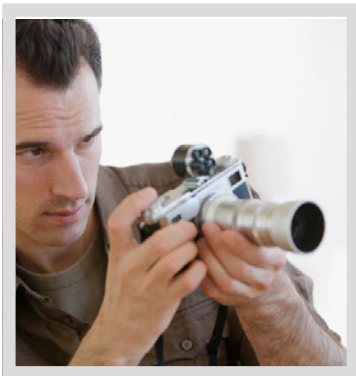
The choice of a topic is obviously the starting point but it can be a delicate and sensitive process. We have to spend time on style and on the different possible journalistic formats: stories, reports, investigation and/or news analysis. News reporting requires transmitting the information in the most concise way avoiding repetition, choosing the right title, including the essential information, answering the right questions (when, who, where, why and how) checking and mentioning the source or protecting it. In the Egyptian press, news are often attributed to unknown sources which are often wrongly labelled as “informed source”. It is also important to explain the background and the circumstances in which the information was obtained. It is not unusual for journalists to pretend that statements were made to them exclusively when in actual fact it was made to a group of journalists during a press conference for instance. Journalists must be reminded that they should not include their personal opinions in their articles/ reports.

A report can be taken from international and/or local news agencies; in that case the style should be adapted in order to serve a different purpose.



MEDIA

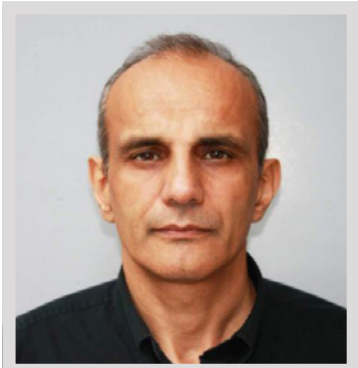
NEIGHBOURHOOD



Investigative journalism has sometimes its own specific rules; it also requires a different style and must include specialised sources who can give their opinions on the issue. The statements by the sources must be clearly sign posted, must not be tampered with, even if they differ from the reporter's own views. I also explained the importance of using simple language and a logic thread for maximum clarity. Among my recommendations was the need to be clear as to what angle is going to be covered, whatever the topic. Each individual journalist can of course have his/her own personal style but the reader/listener/viewer should never suffer and have to make an effort to understand the content. A very useful piece of advice to the mentees is to make their stories more human, how to write articles/reports that the public will find attractive and relevant.

The mentees came to realise that thanks to sometimes long – but fruitful - group discussions their contacts data base and their sources are enriched. They can greatly benefit from their colleagues' different ideas and approaches.

Being a mentor requires a certain degree of patience and diplomacy; the central part of the role is to motivate. I have personally benefited from this experience in the same way as the mentees, and sometimes even more, thanks to the new ideas submitted by young journalists and discussing with them their opinions about current affairs. It was also a great opportunity to meet fellow mentors from other Arab countries and from Eastern Europe and that helped me to broaden my horizon and understand better what's happening in their respective countries.



SHAHIN HAJIYEV AZERBAIJAN

“The objective is to give mentees opportunities, help them realise their potential and the chance to improve their professional skills, by inviting them to seminars and workshops, by offering guidance when they write articles.

It is essential to create an atmosphere where all mentees feel they are members of one team and a wider network, to encourage them, suggest platforms and maybe help them to shine and be noticed for their work.

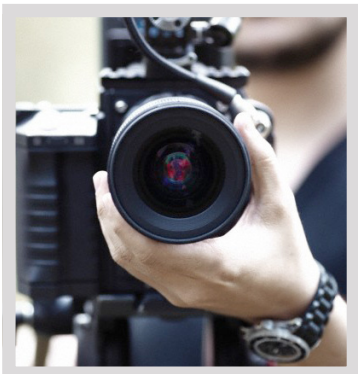
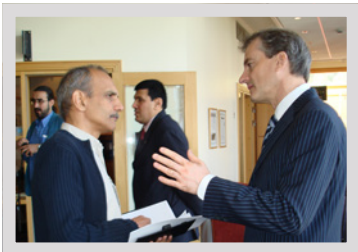
Mentees are not students but nonetheless need proper feedback as opposed to just recommendations.

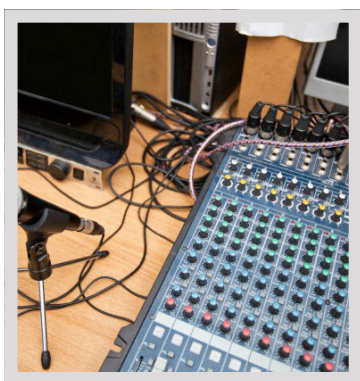
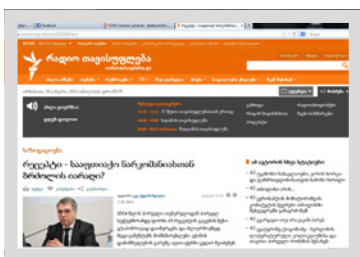
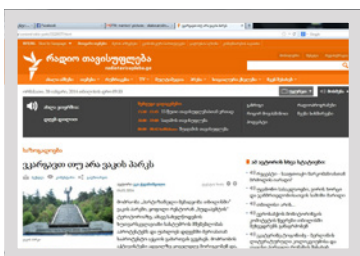
This project has to be seen as a platform to improve their skills and help them in their future and their career.

The primary task – after in-depth discussions and deliberations - consists of identifying and prioritising interesting topics in order to make their articles relevant.

Each individual journalist has his/her own style; only factual or ethical errors should be corrected.

Mentees should be motivated to carry out interviews, practice investigative journalism, write profile and test all formats.”





EKA KEVANISHVILI

GEORGIA

The journalism work with mentees has been both quite complex and intensive.

We worked on iLearn, the BBC online training system and we did the first module together, using Skype conference to communicate. The topic - Multimedia Journalism and Ethics was particularly relevant for all the mentees in the group.

Some of them did not have experience in multimedia journalism, many questions were asked on how to shoot videos, how to upload the material on the web, how to take photos and how to use the sound bites.

Initially, the group met and discussed the general principles; for my part I showed them how to prepare short videos and how to write texts.

Later on, when everyone started working on their own material, individual meetings or online conferences were organised. In many cases the reports were amended several times. The work focused on content and ethics. As a result, the majority of the mentees in the group managed to produce entire reports and some of them were uploaded on the Media Neighbourhood Facebook page. They overcame the main difficulty: how to prepare a multimedia report with all the necessary ingredients.

The works on ethics proved to be more interesting, and all the basic principles had to be re-visited. After several months of work, progress was noticeable. Today, they are able to independently write and produce multimedia material. Some of them continue to upload their stories on their own blogs.

Mutually interesting was working on iLearn (the BBC online training system): interviewing techniques, objectivity, investigative journalism and numerous other issues. My advice to them were about sources, how to protect them, how to get public information, etc.

The final and overall picture is positive. The vast majority of mentees took the iLearn tests and obtained high scores. Progress is mainly noticeable in standards of investigative journalism and ethical journalism. iLearn created a lot of interest; after completing a module, they demanded to start the next one!

As a conclusion, it is a very interesting and fruitful experience indeed for mentor and mentees alike...



OMAR MAHARMA

JORDAN

Europe and the Arab world

The image of Europe in the Arab mind has been created by “the clash of civilisations” stereotype since the Middle Age. Twenty years ago that image started to change as a result of a number of economic and social factors as well as the improvement of communication channels.

However, the Arabs continued to see Europe as a colonizer aspiring to loot their wealth or impose its culture and in the best scenario, Arabs saw Europe as a remote continent, geographically and culturally, politically distant, mainly because of the European countries stance regarding the Palestinian issue.

The 21st century started with positive steps enhancing optimism about the opportunity of an encounter between those two worlds and a change in the mutual traditional prejudices.

I take the view that a programme like the BBC Media Action-led Media Neighbourhood project will have a positive impact in reshaping the relationship between the North and the South.

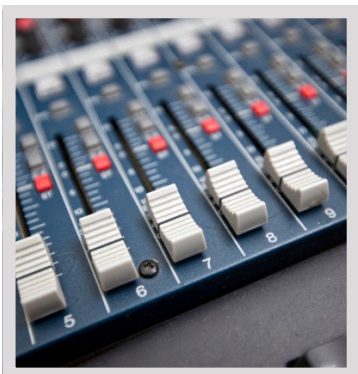
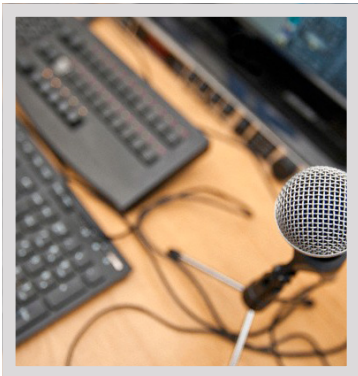
As a mentor in this programme, I came to realise that Europe which is seen as more developed and wealthier, is deploying important efforts to assist the South to develop democratic values, encourage good governance and strengthen institutions capable of improving people’s living standards, dignity and the protection of their rights.

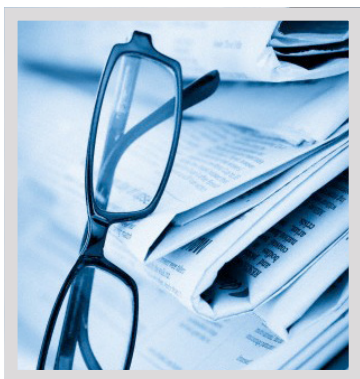
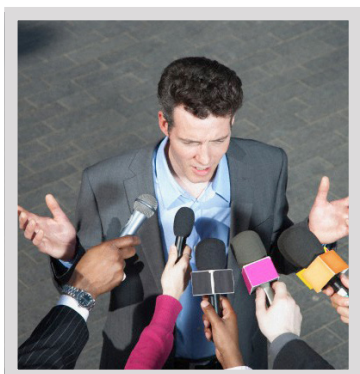
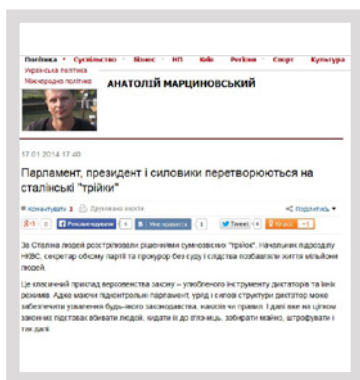
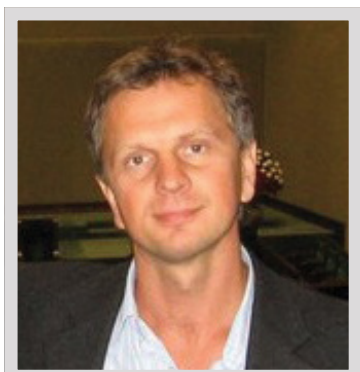
My advice to journalists involved in the programme is to investigate their stories and to abandon their prejudices.

The public in the Arab world will benefit from better journalism. And if journalists stick to facts they will contribute to the improvement of relationships between both sides and will reduce the gap between North and South .

Cooperation between journalists to produce high quality reports/articles focuses on investigating sources of information and enriching their contacts database in order to gather useful and relevant information. So far, one of the major difficulties has been to obtain information and data from official. Journalists should in all circumstances seek multiple sources and avoid relying on one single source.

My experience with this project has opened new perspectives for research and providing assistance in reshaping the relationship between the Europeans and the Arabs; it is definitely in the interest of both sides to have new ties, to rebuild their relationship based on cooperation, understanding and mutual respect for a new future.





ANATOLIY MARTSINOVSKIY UKRAINE

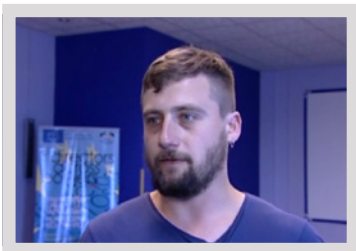
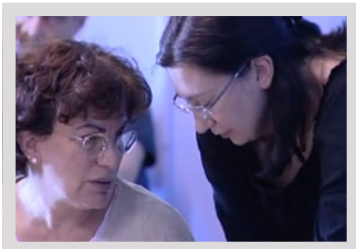
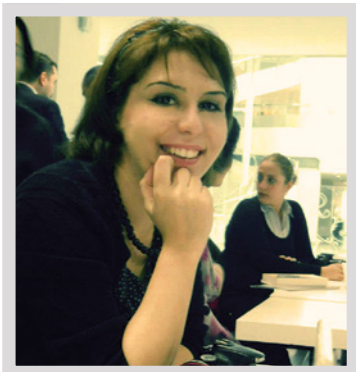
I have been working as a mentor in this Media Neighbourhood project for almost a year. This is a new and interesting experience for me.

Below are some examples of advice I have been giving to my mentees, and hopefully, have been of useful professionally.

For example, in the case of interviews and the preparation stage, while working to my mentees, I always share my experience and give them advice. I explain the importance of researching thoroughly the topic of the interview and previous interviews given by the interviewee. They have to be ready for different scenarios, different answers, different reactions, but most importantly they must prepare follow-up questions.

I also provide my mentees with background knowledge on the topic of the European Union and its relations with Ukraine, which is my specialist field. In Ukraine, there aren't many journalists who have been working on Europe on a daily basis and those who have, only started quite recently. Unfortunately, some of these issues are misinterpreted, journalists speculate instead of providing information based on facts - sometimes deliberately. For instance, on the subject of the Association Agreement with the European Union, some journalists said it would lead to the legalisation of same-sex marriages or the cancellation of the visa regime. I also help my mentee find more information on Europe online and suggest experts who can be contacted on particular subjects. As a result, the mentees produced solid output on European topics.

Journalists should pay particular attention to accuracy, logic, presentation, style, syntax and vocabulary. This is valid for all journalists, not only print journalists.



GAYANE MIRZOYAN ARMENIA

Mentoring Tips

Establish Communication

The first step to take as a mentor is to establish communication with the mentees. During the first meeting, their career and interests in journalism have to be thoroughly discussed. Face-to-face meetings, at least for the first time, produce better results.

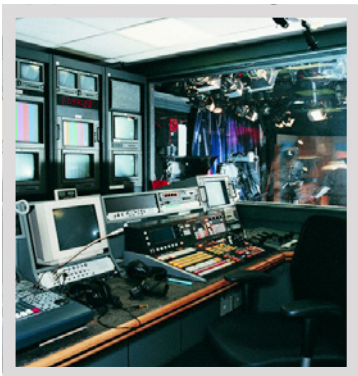
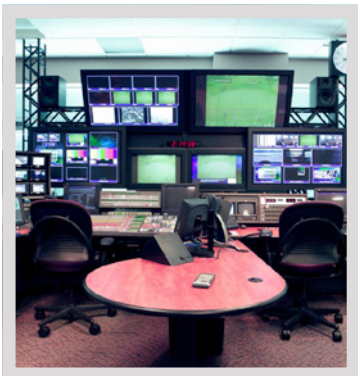
When mentees are almost the same age as the mentor or even older, it can cause additional difficulties. Whatever the circumstances, respect is an essential element to establish trust and to communicate efficiently. Mentees are not students. Topics and content have to be discussed, commented and analysed in order to agree on what needs to be improved and how it can be improved.

1. Motivate and Encourage

The iLearn online journalism educational tool plays an important part in the process; all questions regarding iLearn need to be answered clearly. The iLearn assignments should take at most one hour, but mentees need to be motivated and encouraged in order to beat the deadlines. Encouraging and motivating mentees is the main part of the mentors' "mission". Mentees are active journalists and are always very busy and need to be reminded of deadlines. Social networks, e-mails, mobile phones are particularly useful to keep in touch and to remind mentees of iLearn assignments and deadlines for articles and/or audio reports.

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2. Assist and Advise

Mentees need assistance and advice to select a relevant topic and angle. Because the project focusses on European Union related issues, mentees tend to choose news stories which are too official and therefore it proves extremely difficult to make them sound interesting to the wider public, as it is the case for official visits or official reports. It is essential to help them find more “human” stories or show how some political decisions, projects or initiatives can bring about change and have an impact – both negative and positive - on people’s everyday lives.

Experience shows that the angle and the focus of a story create the most interesting discussions as far as editorial principles and ethics are concerned. Generally, topics are very wide, far too wide and the risks of superficial reporting are high.

Other fascinating discussions take place regarding the “right” choice of footage for television reports - especially for the opening and closing shots - the length of interviews which can make stories desperately tedious. The structure of the report provides also an excellent opportunity to cover important editorial issues, both in terms of script and pictures.

3. Sustainability

The mentor-mentees relationship cannot and should not be based on the promise of rewards. Mentors and mentees have to work as colleagues and have to be in touch on a regular basis in order to evaluate the journalistic skills of everyone involved.



SEDA MURADYAN

ARMENIA

Media Neighbourhood Project is a valuable experience, where one, besides learning, establishes worldwide connections, which are critical and very important for sustainable cooperation, in the context of globalized world, media and developments.

As a mentor, I had an opportunity to be acquainted with local Armenian journalists, find new talents and colleagues and engage them into other journalistic projects.

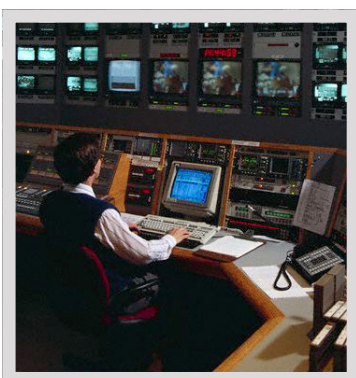
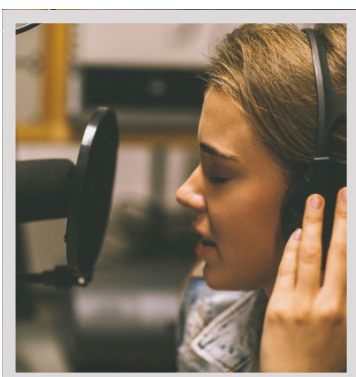
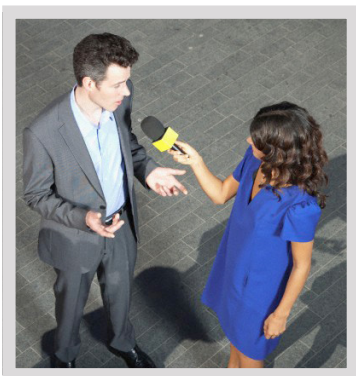
For example, one of the Armenian participants started to contribute as a free lance journalist for IWPR's Caucasus Reporting Service, where I work as an editor from Armenia, on regular basis, since our first meeting in the frames of Media Neighbourhood Project's seminar in Yerevan, in 2012.

Another participant from the Armenian group was engaged in an initiative I was involved - in the Media Center, during election season in Armenia in 2013, as a moderator and analyst.

It is a great advantage to be part of the Media Neighbourhood Project, and to have access to human resources around the world.

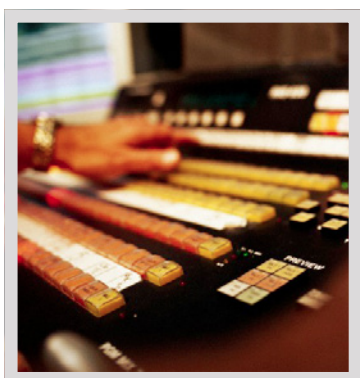
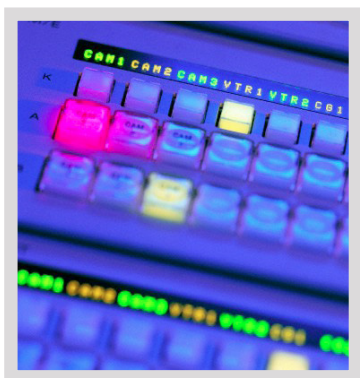
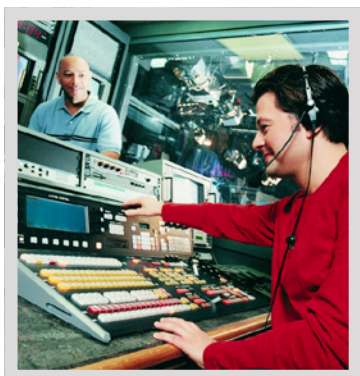
When developments started to take place in Ukraine, regarding Ukraine's government's decision not to sign Association Agreement with European Union in Vilnius, Lithuania, I asked for help and suggestions from my Ukrainian colleagues-mentors, who recommended political analysts that could have been interviewed by Media Center and Armenian journalists. As a result, Media Center organised a discussion with participation of Armenian political analyst and a Ukrainian expert, who joined us via Skype.

Media Neighbourhood Project enriches participants with knowledge, information and with valuable contacts, enabling professional and diverse journalistic experience. It is also a tool for sustainable cooperation between media experts and journalists from different countries.



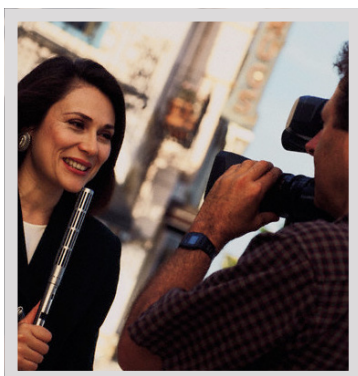
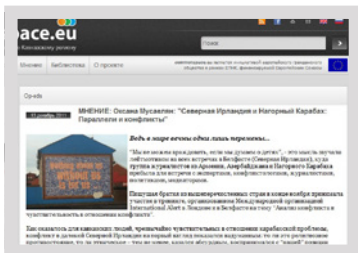
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Here are my recommendations:

- Be open for a feedback from trainers and colleagues regarding your journalistic work. Being defensive will not help you to improve professionally.
- Try out new techniques that you learn at workshops or from an interaction with your mentor on a daily basis in your newsroom. Everyday implementation of new skills will help you to progress faster. Share your knowledge with your colleagues, write about it in your blog or on social networks.
- Co-operate! Be aware that you are part of a huge network and that you can use your contacts in order to enrich your journalistic material with interviews, information and facts from around the world. If you are covering Syria, for example, do not forget that you have colleagues and mentors from Syria in this network. Contact them, engage with them and get first-hand information from a place you have no direct access to.
- There are many opportunities to get funding for investigative reporting projects or other media-related ideas. Think about it and if you have an idea, broaden your horizon and take an international perspective and remember that you are part of a huge network where you can find colleagues who will be interested in taking part into a joint project. Share your ideas with them and engage with colleagues from other countries and regions for the benefit of your projects. This will strengthen your project and will internationalise it. More people will learn about your activities, and you will therefore make a greater impact.



OKSANA MUSAELIAN ARMENIA

For almost a decade, I have been an investigative journalist, editor and political analyst for a major European-Caucasus news agency, Armenian ArmlInfo News Agency, covering international and national political, social, cultural events and current affairs.

I have also worked for Regnum Russian Federal News Agency and other agencies. In my journalistic career I have been a reporter for newspapers and magazines, produced official reports and done live reporting as a stringer for the Russia Today channel. I have provided and continue to provide media coverage of events for a variety of international organisations, including the CE (Council of Europe), the EU (European Union), the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe), NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) and various UN (United Nations) agencies.

Participation in the European Union funded Media Neighbourhood project delivered by BBC Media Action is a unique opportunity for me to get professionally acquainted with the journalistic practices accepted by the BBC, a respected media giant, to meet key European leaders and decision makers, and other journalists, my colleagues from other countries which are part of the Neighbourhood region.

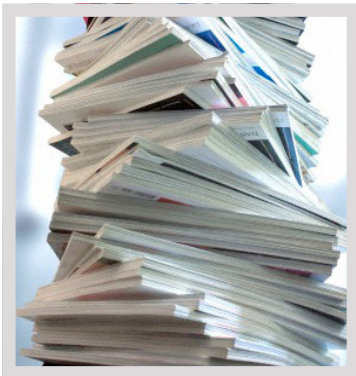
This project is also an opportunity for me to share with my Armenian colleagues the experience that I have gained as a journalist reporting on international politics from an Armenian perspective.

As a Media Mentor, I am engaged in mediation between media experts and Armenian journalists. At the end of each training session, each meeting – face-to-face or virtual -I try to give the necessary support to my mentees in the selection process of topics and all the other stages bringing forward new skills and new knowledge, tools and techniques introduced by BBC experts in order to achieve the highest journalistic standards and ethics and make the coverage of the news stories they cover as interesting, relevant and accurate as possible.



OLHA MUSAFIROVA UKRAINE

Currently, Ukraine is going through milestone moments in its recent history, when the role of the media is not simply about informing the public on events in the country, Europe and the world or analysing those events. Almost all national and regional media outlets (with the exception of the governmental ones) are trying to educate their readers/listeners/viewers. They are trying to tell them about euro-integration and how it will influence their lives.

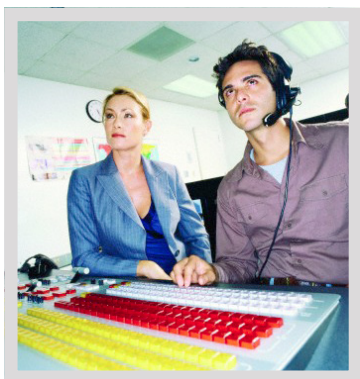
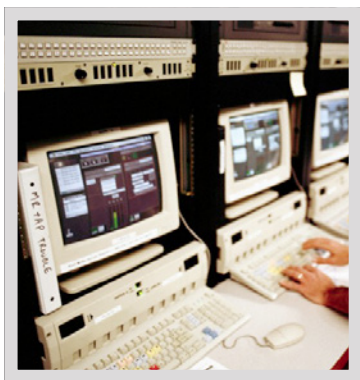


The media which approve the development of the Ukraine – European Union relations limit themselves to running very generic stories on this topic. They either cover meetings and negotiations at the top echelons of Ukrainian authorities with their European Union counterparts, or publish interviews with politicians who talk about macro-economic cooperation and reforms, justice problems, struggle against corruption, European values and democracy. In my opinion, they, themselves, do not quite understand the nature of changes that need to take place in the mentality of the post-Soviet and rather conservative Ukrainian society. Stories are very often like a set of mottos and appeals not supported by examples or facts and hardly comprehensible by the public at large. As a result, the public's feedback show that Ukrainians are "connected" with Euro-integration mainly as consumers of potential benefits. People seem to think that salaries and pensions will be increased immediately and will be comparable to European levels, commodity prices will drop, and believe they will be able to travel visa-free, etc. Selective justice, a relevant and painful topic for Ukraine, which was included into the so-called "Fuele List" (which contains conditions that have to be met before Ukraine could sign the European Union Association Agreement), is mostly presented to Ukrainians through the prism of Yuliya Tymoshenko's case. Journalists hardly ever write about other cases, especially in the context of compliance with European justice's standards. Those who end up behind bars are not those who necessarily committed crimes, but those who cannot prove their innocence without bribes or connections.



MEDIA

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The political situation is of course a focal point of discussion with mentees when it comes to choosing a topic to be covered. Euro-integration often comes at the top of the list; unemployment is also a priority and so are foreign investment projects. BNY and large the public is interested in investigative journalism, for instance: Why can't foreign investors, foreign companies fully meet their commitments? Journalists/reporters have to highlight the entire range of issues, and sometimes, as a result, the main protagonists of the story might not like the outcome of the investigation.

<http://procherk.info/resonance/2-cherkassy-news/12279-cherkaschina-vidljakue-investoriv/>

Our experience and the public's reaction show that media outlets must cover issues that are geographically topical and relevant, analyse local conflicts, use local examples to draw parallels with Europe. The other conclusion is that the public trust journalists' assessment and reports when the reporters do not only quote documents or insider information, but when they also describe what they see for themselves in a lively style. It is hard to get officials to talk directly to a journalist, especially if the officials are suspected of corruption - not only in Ukraine but also in Europe. It is difficult but it does not mean it is impossible or should not be done. The truth should come out.

As a mentor, I used my own investigation story "Chernobyl. Background",

www.novayagazeta.ru/society/56699.html which talks about the global project "Shelter" at Chernobyl and the use of international donor funds. The mentees should be encouraged to use persistently the law on access to public information.

My participation in the project as a mentor stimulated me to engage in self-education, as well as to develop partnerships with young journalists, as we learn both from each other's mistakes and experience.



NASSIMA OULEBSIR ALGERIA

The Layout says a lot about you!

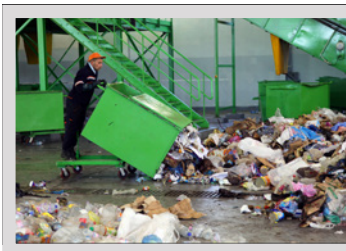
Think about having a sketch of the layout. A journalist must be able to define his/her own layout. Although the journalist cannot technically do that, it would be sufficient to provide the editing secretary with a sketch of the layout. You must respect the number of signs for each bloc and the already established menu. For example, you are preparing a report on street children; the layout must be spaced. You committed yourself to submit to the editing secretary a report that contains a caption on updates, a short interview or statistics in the form of graphics, you must make sure that the report is free from any other loads, statements by officials, a spokesperson from an association, figures, or reminders... you must make it easy for your readers. Attract the reader, breakdown your piece but keep the logic thread. Remember to involve all the editing team. The photographer (if you do not take pictures yourself), can take expressive photos, shots that speak for themselves. Discuss your plan with him/her and the layout technician must implement what you have in mind. On the other hand, it is your duty to take his/her recommendations into account. Very often, original topics and good ideas fail to be identified because of a bad layout and the journalist's "attitude of the journalist who focus his/her attention on the text only. Be innovative.

Graphics! That's even better!

Think about using graphics. There are some technical topics which are complex and the challenge is to make them accessible to the readers who by definition are not experts. Avoid texts, wherever possible use graphics. Give all the details to your graphics specialist. For example, in the case of teams that qualify for the World Cup, there is no need for a traditional article, a graphic will be more relevant, and the same can apply to a report on the cost of living..

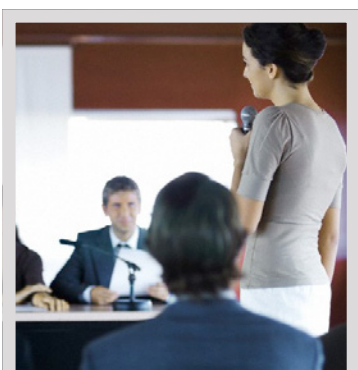
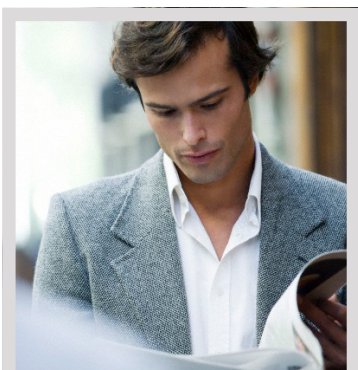
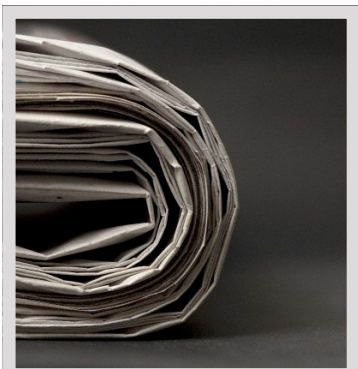
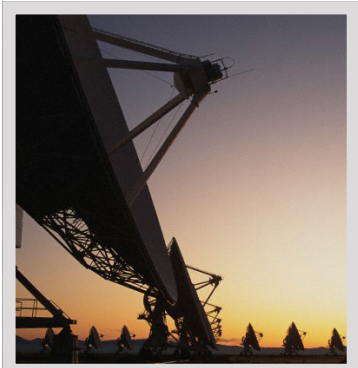
Contacts, contacts, contacts

Journalists must realise the importance of a contact database. The hardcopy of a contact list in alphabetical order might appear old-fashioned but definitely does the trick. Do not be "embarrassed" in this technological age to display one next to your smartphone. .



MEDIA

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You have an idea for a topic, but...

You have an idea... Do not hesitate to suggest it in the editorial meeting. Whether original or not, make the suggestion and then you will know where you stand after a discussion with your colleagues and your editor. If you trust your editor, let him mentor you. Suggest anything you like; your readers might be interested if the topic is made relevant and covered accurately.

Short of ideas?

It happens! Do not seek complicated issues. Simple topics can make the front page news. You may start by reviewing the press, reading various articles covering daily events, statements by officials. Read between the lines and you can be inspired, without necessarily doing a “copy and paste” job or “re-heating” someone else’s article. For example, during the whole week you read about a wave of suicides in many cities; see what you can add, explore other angles. Another example: a statement by a minister on the launch of 3G or 4G, think of the failures, the impact, the repercussions. If you are short of ideas and you find only emptiness around you, think of the possibility of investigating projects announced by officials: where does the project stand?

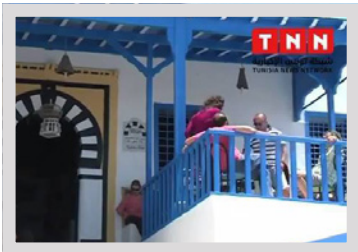


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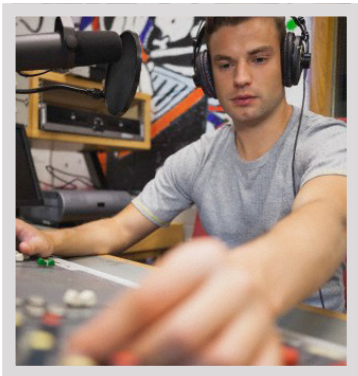
TUNISIA

I tell the mentees: “Stick to the Basics of Journalism”

A few months after the launch of the BBC Media Action-led Media Neighbourhood training programme, useful lessons have already been learnt by mentors and mentees alike.



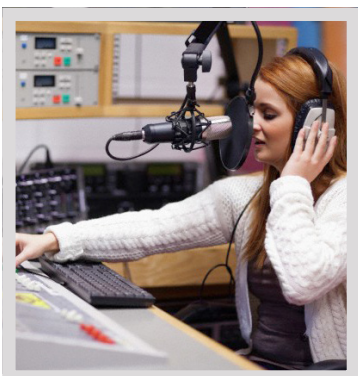
The majority of young journalists/reporters in Tunisia work in a unfriendly, sometimes openly hostile environment. Most of them are graduates from IPSI, Tunisia's only and often criticized journalism school.



The journalists who took part in the workshops organised in Tunisia for early and mid-career media professionals were very satisfied with the outcome, simply because they discovered practices, skills and ethics they would otherwise have never discovered.

Most of them kept asking to be given the opportunity to take part in other training workshops - a reasonable request it seems.

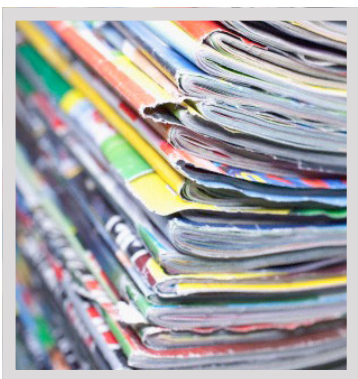
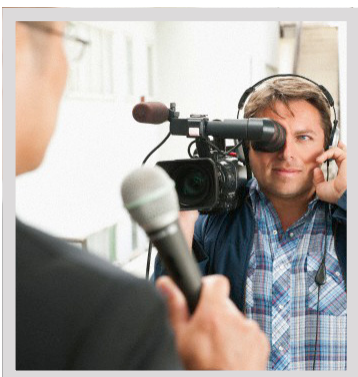
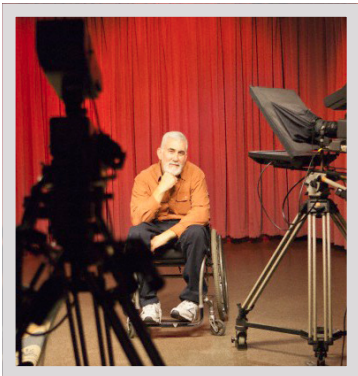
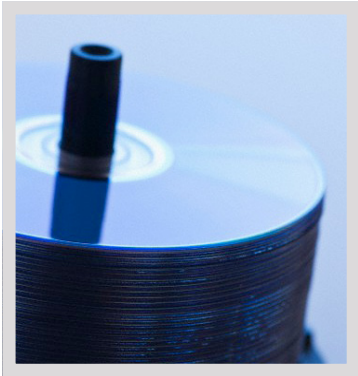
A journalist can take part in more than one training session covering different themes and platforms, and the assignment they are given means that the whole experience has real practical value.



It is obvious that the needs of the journalists based in the headquarters of their media outlets - in Tunis, the capital city - are on the whole very different from the needs and the backgrounds of reporters who work in the regions, an element that must be taken into account for the training approach and methodology.

MEDIA

NEIGHBOURHOOD



I tell the mentees: “stick to basics”

The public perceive journalists as incompetent and corrupt or simply and accuse them to be creative with truth.

Many mentees have often asked me this very question: “How do you define a good journalist?”

My answer has always been: “Forget about good or bad journalist, just concentrate on good journalism”.

Most of the trainees have studied at the university for several years and they have the theoretical and academic background to enable them to become “proper” journalists. I am convinced that they should be sticking to the basics of journalism if they hope to become “brilliant” journalists.

In order to answer their question, I always refer to 9 core principles of journalism, as identified by PEW Research Journalism Project.

1. Truth is journalism’s first duty
2. The public is journalism’s first loyalty
3. The essence of journalism is to verify
4. Journalists must be independent
5. Journalists must make politicians accountable
6. Journalists must provide a forum for public debate
7. Journalists must stay in tune with the public and cover relevant events
8. Journalists must provide comprehensive and balanced coverage
9. Journalists must be free to report without political interference or pressure

MEDIA

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