

Evaluation of Media Cooperation under the Danish Arab Partnership Programme (2005-12)

Annex G: Country profiles



May 2013

Annex G Country profiles

Country profile – Egypt¹

Freedom of expression and access to media

The authoritarian regimes in the MENA region have implemented “multiple layers”² of media legislation, controlling the establishment, the access and the distribution of media. Penalty laws were used to criminalise critical journalism, invalidating the right of free expression as stated in their constitutions.

The legal framework governing the media in Egypt "is very complex, with overlapping rules set out in different pieces of legislation" which "formally establish a strict regime of control over the media, which is very much under government control."³

In brief - Egypt

Inhabitants	82.5 million
Literacy rate	66%
Press outlets	566
% of households with access to TV	96.5
Radio (n.a. radio sets)	20.5 million
Internet	36%
Mobile phone subscriptions	82 million

The IMS-coordinated *National Coalition for Media Reform* (NCFMR) has drafted concrete suggestions for a new set of media legislation comprising a press law, a public service media and a private broadcasting law, which were outlined to Parliamentarians and two Ministers of the current Government. But the first round of drafting was lost with the approval of the new constitution in the referendum in December 2012 whose vague language, critics say, poses new problems to the media.⁴ Other primary aims are still pending, like the establishment of an independent media supervisory body in Egypt, the seven media-related laws restricting freedom of expression and access to the media in Egypt, and transparency in the licensing process.

Media structures and diversity

Nothing substantial has changed in the country’s information system that still by-and-large rests on two pillars: the highly influential state-run print media, including the leading daily; Al Ahram, the MENA news agency, and the pro-government broadcaster ERTU that towers above the rest of the media with its 40,000 employees. On the private media side, the Youm7, Al Masry Al Youm and Al Watan dailies have established themselves as the leading print media. While Youm 7 still tops the online charts, Al Ahram’s portal has been catching up fast to become the close runner-up. Publishing houses have a strong presence on social networks in relation to newsgathering and dissemination, tapping into youth layers of the market and driving traffic to their online business. Al Masry Al Youm has 1.2m followers on Twitter, trailed by Al Ahram with 850,000 (both have each above 30,000 Facebook likes), while Youm7 boasts 80,000 Facebook likes and has just under half a million followers on Twitter. Newcomer, Al Watan, has outnumbered its competitors on Facebook with 181,000 likes.

Although the rate of Internet household penetration has increased, reaching about 36% of the population in June 2012 (29 million users)⁵, it is still comparatively low⁶ due to the high rate of

¹ Table sources: <http://thecomunicatorspsu.wordpress.com/category/access-to-media/>; and UNESCO

² Naomi Sakr: The Impact of Media Laws on Arab Digital and Print Content. Background Paper for Nagla Rizk's study on The Institutional Context of Knowledge in the Arab Countries. 2008, page 6

³ Toby Mendel: Assessment of Media Development in Egypt. Based on UNESCO's Media Development Indicators. Cairo (UNESCO), page4

⁴ Evaluators' interview of coalition members in Cairo.

⁵ <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm>

⁶ Only Iraq (7.1%), Syria (22.5%) and Yemen (14.9%) have lower internet penetration rates in the Middle East; source: <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats5.htm>

illiteracy in Egypt. However, the usage of broadband services has highly increased in Egypt, opening pathways for online services and participation to surge. With more than 82 million subscribers in 2012, the mobile market penetration in Egypt has jumped to over 100%.⁷

The online media in Egypt, and particularly bloggers, have become trailblazers for the country's revolution. Since the 2011 January revolution, social media in the country has expanded at an unprecedented rate. The number of Facebook users in Egypt grew by 1.95 million between January and April 2011, meaning that more than 7% of the population now has a presence on the platform. In April 2011, Egypt's users represented 24% of the total Facebook users in the Arab world.⁸

ON TV (owned by Coptic billionaire, Naguib Sawiris) and the CBC channel remain shooting stars in the independent TV arena while radio, apart from less than a handful of local stations, is still dominated by ERTU. Several TV stations, like Mohamed Gohar's TV 25, have not survived for long for lack of management and programme expertise. More than a dozen new television channels have applied for licences, and the political debate has expanded over the last twelve months⁹ with *The Economist*¹⁰ saying that the political jousting on American networks looks like child's play compared with the rhetorical fireworks that now regularly erupt on screens in Egypt.

Media reports have suggested that the Muslim Brotherhood has adopted Mubarak-style tactics to stifle dissent accusing the once-banned Islamic movement of using its new political muscle to dictate media policy and appointments. Critics blame the Muslim Brotherhood of using the group's dominance in the Shura Council, the upper house of Parliament, to tighten its grip over the state press by forming a committee headed by a Brotherhood MP that has selected new chief editors for 45 state-run publications.¹¹

Professional and ethical standards including supporting institutions

Although the Higher Press Council, the Press Syndicate and ERTU have all devised professional standards for journalists, their objective of ensuring accurate, objective, fair and impartial news has never been met for all these institutions have operated under government control with no independent body monitoring performance and compliance.

The 50-year old Egyptian press syndicate is the official body governing anyone working in print media. Since its inception it has been controlled by the Egyptian government.¹² All Egyptian journalists are required to register with the press syndicate. Although Egypt has signed the Sana'a Declaration, which encourages the establishment of independent syndicates to enable an independent environment, the Government has not allowed it. Broadcasters have never had a syndicate.

Media education has traditionally been offered by the American University in Cairo (Kamal Adham Center) and Cairo University, with several private universities and colleges like the Al Akhbar Academy and Al Ahran Canadian University also offering academic journalism education and hands-on training. ERTU, the MENA news agency and the Press Syndicate maintain modern media schools equipped by donors.

⁷ <http://www.telecompaper.com/news/egypt-passes-100-mobile-penetration--853147>

⁸ Dubai School of Government, 2011. 'Arab Social Media Report' vol. 1 no. 2'

⁹ http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2012/01/20121227117613598.html#sc_maspero

¹⁰ <http://www.economist.com/blogs/pomegranate/2012/12/media-egypt>

¹¹ <http://www.ipsnews.net/2012/08/veil-falls-over-egyptian-media/>

¹² <http://www.ejc.net/media-landscape/article/egypt/>

Country Brief – Jordan¹³

Freedom of expression and access to media

The 2007 Access to Information Law provides for journalists to obtain official news, data and statistics in a limited way¹⁴. Other media legislation including the 1952 Constitution includes vague clauses and other restrictions that curb media freedom in practise and allow journalists to be tried under the country’s penal code.¹⁵ Print news outlets and online news sites must obtain licences to operate. Journalists must belong to the Jordan Press Association (JPA) to work legally. Reporters that are not JPA members can be fined and/or imprisoned. Editorial restrictions, whether official or unofficial, continue to prevent journalists from freely reporting or expressing viewpoints, and the Government retains an additional measure of control through its appointments of the editors at some news outlets. However, the Government tolerates a certain measure of criticism of officials and policies.¹⁶ Regulatory bodies and media institutions include the Press and Publications Department, the Audio-Visual Commission, the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission, the Jordan Radio and Television Corporation, and the Higher Media Council.

In brief - Jordan	
Inhabitants	5.5 million
Literacy rate	86%
Press outlets	
<i>Newspapers</i>	
daily	8
non-daily	37
<i>Radio</i>	
private	16
community	7
public	7
<i>TV</i>	
private	42
public	2
Internet penetration	40% (2010)
Mobile phone ownership	86% (2010)

In February 2013, 10 deputies submitted a memorandum to amend the disputed Press and Publications Law (PPL), responding to public demands- chiefly from the online media.¹⁷ The politicians called on the Government to scrap various articles, including one that gives the Press and Publications Department (PPD) the authority to block news websites that do not obtain licences for their portals in accordance with the law adopted in 2012. The Government says there are 475 news websites in the Kingdom, more than 80 of which were already registered.¹⁸

Media structures and diversity

According to Freedom House, the Jordanian Government promotes Internet usage: some 40% of the population had access to the web in 2011. Also Jordanian blogs continued to flourish some of which became focal points for the organisation of popular protests.¹⁹ The print market has seen the development of several independent newspapers like *Al Ghad*, which engages in investigative journalism. However, the Government retains a majority stake in *Al-Rai*, a major daily, and a minority stake in the runner-up, *Al-Dustour*.

Thanks to the 2003 Audio Visual Law that ended the Government monopoly on broadcasting, the number of private FM and online radios has increased in recent years, including regional outlets

¹³ Table source: <http://www.slideshare.net/muinkhoury/jordan-new-mediasurveyoffline20100606>; <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Communication/Documents/Media-statistics-pilot-survey-report.pdf>

¹⁴ As under 1

¹⁵ <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2012/jordan>

¹⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷ <http://www.albawaba.com/business/jordan-press-law-470214>

¹⁸ As under 2

¹⁹ <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2012/jordan>

(community radio) that cater to a specific demographic, such as women or students. In this Freedom House sees a signal of greater media diversity although not all applications to launch private radios were approved. Terrestrial television remained under state control.

Professional and ethical standards including supporting institutions

In January 2013, the Jordanian Press Association (JPA) had 921 members²⁰ and its Code of Ethics has been codified into law, as part of the 2007 amendments to the PPL.²¹ These professional standards bar journalists from accepting any funds, financial or symbolic donations, or any help of any shape or kind.²² The Code stipulates inter alia that a journalist must not pay sources or court witnesses.

Journalism training is available at the Petra Media Training Center, which is part of the official news agency's Department of Training and the Jordan Media Institute's (JMI). JMI provides two pillars of services: a one year practical MA in Journalism and journalism training programmes, in Arabic. The school offers a Master's Programme in cooperation with the University of Jordan and in accordance with the academic agreement between the two institutions.²³ The Middle East and Yarmouk universities also offer journalism education.

Key changes during MCP phases

Following the Arab Spring, the Jordanian authorities in 2012 tightened the Internet screws for news media. In September, King Abdullah endorsed an amended media law (PPL), which requires "electronic publications" in Jordan to get a licence from the government. The Human Rights Watch NGO accused the government of using such legislation to "go after opponents and critics", according to the BBC.²⁴

In addition to editorial restrictions, in March 2008, the Ministry of the Interior issued instructions for monitoring Internet cafes, requiring owners to install cameras and record users' personal data including their names, telephone numbers, and time of use. Later, Amman municipality blocked access at its offices to 600 websites, among them all Jordanian news sites. The municipality stated that the aim was to prevent employees from misusing their time.²⁵

In 2007, Parliament passed the Right of Access to Information Law but its implementation is making only slow progress. According to the Amman-based Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists, implementation of the law suffers from arbitrary classification and distribution of information by the different ministries and state institutions. Journalists complain that while the outlets for news have increased, they are often blocked from obtaining information on government policies and officials.²⁶

²⁰ <http://www.civilsociety-jo.net/en/index.php/professionals-org/professional-associations/282-the-jordan-press-association>

²¹ http://www.global.asc.upenn.edu/fileLibrary/PDFs/revisedjordanprimer_eng.pdf

²² JPA Law, Article 42; JPA Code of Ethics, Article 11

²³ www.jmi.edu.jo/en/

²⁴ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-19634056>

²⁵ <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2012/jordan>

²⁶ *ibid*

Country profile – Lebanon²⁷

Freedom of expression and access to media

Although Lebanon is often referred to as arguably the freest Arab media country, journalistic content has been marred by civil strife, sectarian politics, an out-dated legislation and resulting self-censorship. Media expert, Magda Abu-Fadil, says Lebanese media laws “are archaic and desperately need updating, but ensuring they reflect realities today requires a gargantuan effort by various stakeholders.”²⁸ Subsequently draft bills on print, broadcasting, online media and access to information have been mulled over by a Parliament committee since 2011, tabled by two Parliamentarians, one working with the Maharat Foundation²⁹ and a second, with members of the parliamentary National Audiovisual Media Council (NAMC). Journalists have been slow supporting the drafts since they believe vital provisions have been ignored.³⁰

In brief - Lebanon	
Inhabitants	4.2 million
Literacy rate	>90%
Press outlets	
<i>Newspapers/magazines</i>	
daily	up to 25
non-daily	>1,000
% of households with access to	
Radio	75% (2005)
TV	98%
Computers	32% (2011)
Internet penetration	52% (2011)
Mobile phone ownership	68% (2010)

The broadcasting bill is said to seek legalising satellite TV stations, strengthening the NAMC as a regulatory body and a diminishing role for the Minister for Information who controls broadcasting.³¹ Sidelining a similar draft by the newspaper owners’ Press Federation, the committee has instead been studying the MP’s bill that seeks to reduce the number of 109 articles on the books to 75 dealing with updating clauses on penalties and fines, licensing and media-related crimes like defamation. However, critics lament that the proposed legislation does not pay enough attention to substantial issues including freedoms, new definitions of journalism, or online media, the letter of which is dealt with in a general way as “electronic publishing”.³² According to Ms. Magda Abu Fadil, an Access to Information law draft has been promoted by the Maharat Foundation with the help of the Lebanese Transparency Association, the American Bar Association, and other organisations. The 2008 Electoral Law has further reduced the boundaries of criticism so that in addition to defamation and slander, press offences for the first time in legislation include “intimidation”, “treason” and “blasphemy.” These new offences may be used to restrict media freedoms instead of widening their scope.³³ The current Press and Publications Court appointed in 2009 began to sentence press offenses with imprisonment, whereas formerly punishment was restricted to fines.³⁴

²⁷ Table source: UNHCR AND OSF (see below)

²⁸ Middle East Media Educator: <http://ro.uow.edu.au/meme/vol1/iss1/4>

²⁹ “MAHARAT Foundation” (Arabic for 'Skills Foundation') is a team of Lebanese journalists united by a common purpose, which is to achieve a freer journalism and to defend and promote free expression in order to build a much more democratic society." Source: website of Maharat Foundation, http://maharatfoundation.org/?page_id=2

³⁰ Middle East Media Educator: <http://ro.uow.edu.au/meme/vol1/iss1/4>

³¹ *ibid*

³² *ibid*; Article 92 of a separate 185-clause draft law to regulate Lebanon’s IT sector stipulates that anyone providing online services must apply for a licence.

³³ see Nizar Saghih/ Rana Saghih /Nayla Geagea: Censorship in Lebanon: law and practice. A Collaborative Study. http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/7671/censorship-in-lebanon_law-and-practice

³⁴ *ibid*

Media structures and diversity

The Lebanese media has traditionally been characterized by sectarian division and a confessional Government system. A report of the Open Society Foundations (OSF)³⁵ states that although digitisation has had little or no effect on changes in the media market or the impact of ownership on media performance and independence, thanks to digital media, Lebanon's residents have access to a variety of news platforms, from 24-hour cable channels to Internet sites and text message services. Although Lebanon some 20 years ago was among the region's first adopters of mobile communication services, current Internet access and mobile telephony are relatively stagnant. The OSF study believes the reason may partly be attributed to the high cost of mobile telephony, reporting Lebanon is among the region's most expensive providers of mobile phone and Internet services. But the local blogosphere is vibrant and coverage of anti-government protests in Syria in 2011 heightened tensions between the Lebanese government and some media outlets, particularly online publications and blogs.³⁶

Despite a 1953 decree limiting the number of licences for newspapers to 25 permanent political dailies, Lebanon has had one of the highest ratios of private newspapers per head in the MENA region. Circulation numbers cannot be verified in the absence of a recognized auditing mechanism that almost all Arab countries lack. *Annahar* (Christian) and *Assafir* (Muslim) have been among Lebanon's top daily newspapers since their foundation in 1933 and 1974 respectively, according to Ipsos Stat.³⁷

Being the first country in the Middle East to authorise private ownership of radio and TV stations, Lebanon's media map includes eight TV networks and 42 radio stations. Award-winning investigative journalist, Habib Battah, deplores that while Beirut was often lauded for having the freest and most vibrant television landscape in the region, the reality was that most Lebanese stations produce very little journalism. According to Ipsos audience research for TV ranking in the country, Lebanon's top performers are LBC at 38.4% average daily viewership, Al Jadeed/New TV at 35% and MTV at 28.7%, with Future News at 10.9%, trailing closely behind state broadcaster Tele Liban at 11.6% and Al Manar at 12%.³⁸

Professional and ethical standards including supporting institutions

Magda Abu-Fadil, the Media Unlimited Director in Lebanon, says media in essence are accountable but that the country's laws and codes of ethics are not or loosely implemented, or totally ignored, depending on the issue, the politics involved, and the persons influencing them.³⁹

Although the country offers journalism education at the American University of Beirut, State University of Lebanon, Institute for Professional Journalists (Lebanese American University), Notre Dame University-Lebanon, the University of Lebanon plus An-Nahar and LBC TV providing occasional training, content quality has suffered not least from political strife and violence in the country that also contribute to an increased level of self-censorship and security risks for journalists.

The four media unions have not been able to change this and for many years have been bogged down in in-house fighting and inactivity. After more than 25 years of an admission stop, the 1942 Journalists Union has recently admitted 233 new members, which is likely to bolster the role of the union and brings membership up to 1,100 again. Members get 50% discount on their telephone and mobile bills and they will also receive a 50% discount when they purchase tickets for Middle East

³⁵ Open Society Foundations (OSF): Mapping Digital Media: Lebanon. OSF 2012, page 6
<http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/reports/mapping-digital-media-lebanon>

³⁶ <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/type,ANNUALREPORT,,,50e1612bc,0.html>

³⁷ See Middle East Media Educator: <http://ro.uow.edu.au/meme/vol1/iss1/4>

³⁸ http://www.bold-mag.com/article.php?issueId=1&catId=1&articleId=213#.USB65o5c_dk

³⁹ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/magda-abufadil/lebanese-media-far-accountable_b_2607122.html

Airlines.⁴⁰ A competing but less influential union is the Press Club in Beirut, and 2012 saw the birth of the audio-visual workers' union with members fighting over by-laws, rules and other political and sectarian issues.⁴¹ The fourth industry association is the publishers' Press Federation that forms a committee with the syndicate to issue press cards.⁴²

⁴⁰ <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Local-News/2012/Dec-06/197413-lebanese-journalists-union-admits-233-new-members.ashx>

⁴¹ See Nizar Saghieh/ Rana Saghieh /Nayla Geagea: Censorship in Lebanon: law and practice. A Collaborative Study. http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/7671/censorship-in-lebanon_law-and-practice

⁴² http://www.journalismnetwork.eu/index.php/_en/country_profiles/lebanon/

Country profile – Tunisia⁴³

Freedom of expression and access to media

A new vision of Tunisian media regulation has emerged as a core result of the country's revolution two years ago, but it has yet to be implemented by the transitional administration. It centres on a set of three decrees that were prepared by the National Authority for the Reform of Information and Communication (INRIC), the body that was tasked with overseeing the reform of the media after the uprising and is now dissolved.⁴⁴ Replacing the previous regime's Press Code, Decree 115–2011 sets out to ensure basic media rights, such as journalists' access to information, the confidentiality of sources, and journalists'

protection against physical or economic threats, while Decree 41–2011 regulates access to information e.g. obliging governmental bodies to facilitate access by journalists and the public. A third Decree 116–2011, guarantees freedom in the broadcast sector and establishes an independent communications authority – the High Independent Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HAICA) – tasked with regulating the industry. In contrast to the dissolved INRIC, the HAICA is a statutory body with executive powers. In January 2013, the TAP news agency quoted committee member, Tarek Kahlaoui, as saying the body's debates are close to a consensus on its composition.⁴⁵

The President will appoint the HAICA Chief who will preside over two members representing the judiciary (elected by the representative Union of Judges), two members appointed by the speaker of the Constituent Assembly, two members proposed by the Union of Journalists and one member appointed by representatives of the broadcast sector (from the technical field). Anyone who has held political or governmental posts in the past two years is barred from membership. The new opposition has described the delay as a tactical manoeuvre to retain control over the broadcast industry.⁴⁶

The EBRD also takes note of the slow implementation: “The annual report of the Tunisian Journalists Syndicate details many ‘violations’ perpetrated on its members by security forces and by the Interior Ministry, and accuses groups related to political parties in the coalition of attacking journalists while covering demonstrations. There appears to be confusion on which media laws are being currently applied. Tunisia's Penal Code continues to criminalise certain speech offences.”⁴⁷ In contrast, Reporters Without Borders rated Tunisia 134, up from 164 in the previous ranking in its most recent Press Freedom Index (2011-12). The media watchdog praised “the end of the harassment of journalists by the Ben Ali regime, the emergence of real pluralism of opinion in the print media and, albeit possibly only for the time being, the end of massive and systematic Internet filtering.”

In brief - Tunisia

Inhabitants	11 million
Literacy rate	74% (2010)
Press outlets	
<i>Newspapers</i>	
daily	8
>228 ‘post-revolution’ publications	
<i>Radio</i>	NA
<i>TV</i>	NA
Internet penetration	39% (2011)
Mobile phone subscriptions	12.4 million

⁴³ Table source: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ts.html><http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country/TUN.html><http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/type,ANN,UALREPORT,RSE,TUN,46e692cdc,0.html><http://www.freedomhouse.org/country/tunisia><http://www.tradingeconomics.com/tunisia/households-with-television-percent-wb-data.html>

⁴⁴ Tunisian Media in Transition, Fatima el-Issawi, July 2012, Carnegie Endowment

⁴⁵ <http://tap.info.tn/en/index.php/politics2/4410-progress-of-consultation-on-cabinet-reshuffle-haica-composition-tarek-kahlaoui>

⁴⁶ *ibid*

⁴⁷ http://www.ebrd.com/downloads/country/technical_assessments/tunisia-assess.pdf

Media structures and diversity

Many in the region have looked to Tunisia as a model for the new chapter on Arab media reform—in particular Egypt which witnessed an unregulated growth of independent and private channels and newspapers while little was done to curb the continuing control of the state and private media owners.⁴⁸ INRIC head, Kamel Labidi, described how Tunisia had abolished the Ministry of Information (although the functions of that institution did not entirely disappear) and that all bodies regulating media ceased to function, leading to a period of chaos and “media drift” in both the print and broadcast sector.⁴⁹ He reported that 228 new Tunisian print publications sprang up after the uprising. Most of them, however, are not currently in operation, with many vanishing soon after being launched. The state-run press and the media owned by the former ruling party and the Ben Ali family were restructured while press outlets owned by the ruling party – *al Hurriya* and *Le Renouveau* – were shut down and their staff merged into the state-run media. Outlets that once belonged to the Ben Ali family were confiscated by the Prime Minister’s office. According to a Carnegie report, the public broadcasting scene now includes two television channels – Wataniya 1 and Wataniya 2 – and nine radio stations, of which four are national and five regional.⁵⁰ The Carnegie report quotes Adel Thabti, editor in chief of *Al-Mouatinoun* magazine (published by the ruling coalition Ettakatol party), as saying state-run television channels are controlled by “hidden lobbies” without elaborating.

An EBRD July 2012 Tunisia assessment reports that “active and dynamic Internet and digital communications have offered many young Tunisians new ways of voicing their views and new routes for political participation. New digital media has also played a conspicuous role in triggering the Tunisian revolution.”

Professional and ethical standards including supporting institutions

According to the Carnegie report progress toward impartial reporting can pave the way for reconciliation between journalists and their audiences. The fragile working conditions of the local media community, however, represent a major obstacle to professionalism. A “rehabilitation” process, as described by some of the mainstream Tunisian journalists interviewed, has recently begun to help Tunisian society move on from what audiences once called the “reporters of the clan.”⁵¹ But journalists are asking how they can provide quality content and voice concern about increased restrictions and censorship that are highlighting the Government’s refusal to adopt the new press law that would protect press freedoms.⁵²

The National Union of Tunisian Journalists (SNJT) is also fighting to win the right to represent journalists in negotiations with owners in the media industry. Its effort is led by the General Labor Union, which represents workers in all industries. The amelioration of these poor working conditions will require journalists’ solidarity and for them to form a lobbying body under a unified banner.

INRIC’s Mr. Labidi (who since has left INRIC in protest) has provided samples of content quality in the post-revolutionary Tunisian media saying rumors and defamation were commonplace. Labidi noted that the chaos reached its peak when a television station interviewed a citizen who called for the prosecution of Rachid Ghannouchi, the founder of the Islamist Ennahda Movement, who had just returned from 22 years of exile in London.⁵³

⁴⁸ http://www.arabmediasociety.com/articles/downloads/20120906094413_Allam_RashaLabidi.pdf

⁴⁹ *ibid*

⁵⁰ Tunisian Media in Transition, Fatima el-Issawi, July 2012, Carnegie Endowment

⁵¹ *ibid*

⁵² <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2013/01/29/government-failing-to-protect-press-journalists-charge/>

⁵³ http://www.arabmediasociety.com/articles/downloads/20120906094413_Allam_RashaLabidi.pdf

To enhance quality reporting, Western media schools and NGOs were racing to offer Tunisia help in media training, including American institutions like IREX, Internews, E-Mediat, Search for Common Ground-Tunisia (SFCG) and Speak Out-Tunisia⁵⁴ to name but a few, and various universities as well as European organisations including the BBC, Deutsche Welle and IMS.

While Deutsche Welle⁵⁵ jumped on the bandwagon to assist the 1967 Institute of Media and Information Sciences (IPSI) at Tunisia's Manouba University (with which US academic institutions had teamed up with long before the revolution), IMS in February 2013 announced a partnership with the African Centre for Training of Journalists and Communicators (CAPJC) in Tunis.⁵⁶ According to IMS it has been exploring how to engage active media professionals in quality and comprehensive mid-career training. IMS has ascertained that the new leadership of the school is keen to carry out profound reform of the institution and to adapt to more demanding and higher professional standards.

⁵⁴ <http://www.emediat.org/where-we-work/tunisia/>

<http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1924314583/speak-out-tunisia-a-citizen-journalism-training-pr/posts>
www.sfcg.org/programmes/tunisia/

⁵⁵ <http://www.dw.de/dw-akademie-trains-tunisian-journalists-prior-to-elections/a-16183310>

⁵⁶ <http://www.i-m-s.dk/tunisias-mid-career-journalists-to-receive-boost/>

Country Brief – Yemen⁵⁷

Freedom of expression and access to media

Since 1994, some ten media laws have been drafted with the involvement of the Information Ministry, the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (YJS), both houses of Parliament and NGOs⁵⁸ but only the Access to Information law was adopted in 2012 and is awaiting serious implementation. According to the *Yemen Post*, now politicians, journalists and civil society have started a fresh attempt at formulating a new Press law and legislation regulating the audio-visual industry with a joint vision for enhancing media freedom. Key demands in the proposal include the abolition of imprisonment as punishment for journalists, cutting journalists' salaries and replacing licensing of print publications with registration as an enterprise.

In brief - Yemen

Inhabitants	25 million
Literacy rate	61%
Press outlets	
<i>Newspapers/magazines</i>	
Government	10
Partisan	20
Private	50
% of households with access to	
<i>Print</i>	<10%
<i>Radio</i>	90%
<i>TV</i>	60-70%
Internet penetration	14.9% (2012)
Mobile phone subscriptions	12 million

While the draft law on the broadcast sector envisages an independent regulator with members from universities, public and private media, the Communication Ministry, the chambers of commerce, parliament and YJS, the disputed inclusion of websites are a stumbling bloc for more rapid progress in adopting the Press law. The parties to the negotiations are also contemplating the option of amalgamating all above laws into one comprehensive media law.

Media structures and diversity

A poverty rate of 45% and 61% illiteracy are serious obstacles to the development of the print market in Yemen. Subsequently the print sector with 70-80 outlets has largely remained static and is dominated by the government's *Al Thawra* daily (with a claimed circulation of some 60,000 copies- the biggest paper in Yemen) and other official or partisan outlets. However, print has been augmented by some new independent weeklies and free "revolutionary" newspapers like the improvised, four-eight pages *Shabab al-Thawrah* (Youth of the Revolution) and *Sawt al-Thawrah* (Voice of the Revolution).

The broadcast sector in contrast, while still dominated by the Government's two broadcasting systems of the Yemeni General Corporation for Radio and Television (YGCRT), has witnessed key changes with a handful of private radios and ten private TV stations⁵⁹ established that are not

⁵⁷ Table source <http://www.internetworldstats.com/me/ye.htm>;

<http://www.uis.unesco.org/Communication/Documents/Media-statistics-pilot-survey-report.pdf>

; <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/yemen/literacy-rate-adult-female-percent-of-females-ages-15-and-above-wb-data.html> (World Bank)

⁵⁸ <http://www.yemenpost.net/Detail123456789.aspx?ID=3&SubID=6447&MainCat=5> (Jan22, 2013)

⁵⁹ Source: <http://www.asharq-e.com/news.asp?section=5&id=30502>: Yemen's television network is made up of "Suhail TV" which is owned by businessman Hamid al-Ahmar who is a senior member of the Yemeni Joint Meeting Parties [JMP]; "Yemen Youth TV" which is administered by the Yemeni Youth Change Party and al-Islah party; "al-Saeeda TV" which is owned by a group of Yemeni businessmen; "al-Maseera TV" which has ties to Yemen's Shiite Huthi movement; "al-Saha TV" which is affiliated to the Yemeni Youth Change Party and well-known figures in the JMP; "Yemen Today TV" which is owned by Brigadier General Ahmed Ali, son of former Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh; "Azal TV" which is affiliated to senior member of the General People's Congress party, Mohamed al-Shaif; "al-Aqeeq TV" which is affiliated to people close to former president Saleh, "Aden Live TV" which is affiliated to former

licensed in the absence of a new law providing for private broadcasting. One of the wildcat radios, Yemenna, is owned by the *Yemen Times* group that has been publishing the award-winning (IPI 2006 Free Media Pioneer Award) weekly newspaper since 1990 and a twice-monthly supplement in Arabic since 2012. An IMS attempt at providing the station with modern equipment was thwarted by the government in Sana'a that caused the return of the shipment arguing there was no legal basis for a private radio station. Satellite reception is unrestricted.

Urban audiences are increasingly using the Internet as source of news, and Mr Hakim al-Masmari, publisher and editor of the Yemen Post, reports while circulation of his newspaper two years ago stood at around 12,000 a week, his website can now receive over 60,000 hits a day, representing a significant increase in readership.⁶⁰ In fact, Internet usage jumped from 420,000 in 2010 to 3.7 million in mid-2012.⁶¹ This is a significant media consumption change in the poorest country of the MENA region, partly triggered by dozens of news websites including Ma'rib Press www.marebpress.net; Al-Sahwa (Awakening) www.alsahwa-yemen.net; Sahafah (Press) www.sahafah.net; and Al-Taghyir (Change) www.al-tagheer.com.

Professional and ethical standards including supporting institutions

With the arrival of new sources in the form of print, broadcast and online media, the quality of journalism remains a pressing issue. Journalists are being pressured from all sorts of political and business directions⁶² and sourcing, accuracy and diversity lack professionalism. Reporting on parliamentary debates is not yet live, yet is more balanced, because of the inclusion of coverage of the opposition.

The YJS's role is largely limited to denouncing media and journalists' rights violations by issuing statements. Professional standards that have been drawn up need urgent implementation. Main YJS objectives remain the improvement of professionalism and cleansing the fraternity from non-journalist elements. A new YJS constitution is expected to be adopted by the 1,500 member strong general assembly in June 2013.

Women Journalists Without Chains (www.womenpress.org) was set up by the Yemeni human rights activist and 2011 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Tawakul Karman, to defend women journalists while the Media Women Forum aims to promote balanced media coverage and provide media training. The IMS-supported Mass Communication Training and Qualifying Institute (MCTQI) of the Government is the only Yemeni institution that provides regular professional journalism training. The universities of Sana'a and Aden offer courses in mass communication and media studies. The Taiz-based Human Rights Information and Training Centre (HRITC) NGO aims to enforce laws to protect journalists and raise awareness among journalists about their rights and responsibilities. The non-profit Studies and Economic Media Centre in Sana'a tries to support the creation of a more professional media in Yemen.

The Arab Press Network describes the Yemen press, as "one of the region's most vibrant, socially critical and politically engaged".⁶³ The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists takes a similar view, saying: "Yemen's outspoken press is one of the country's most important centres of dissent and political debate and, over the last two years, it has become noticeably bolder in exposing

vice president Ali Salim. al-Beidh and "al-Masier TV" which has ties to former president of South Yemen, Ali Nasir Muhammad, amongst others.

⁶⁰ See <http://www.dc4mf.org/en/content/press-freedom-shifting-yemeni-media-landscape-0>

⁶¹ See <http://www.internetworldstats.com/me/ye.htm>

⁶² See <http://www.dc4mf.org/en/content/press-freedom-shifting-yemeni-media-landscape-0>

⁶³ <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Yemen%20media%20and%20telecoms%20landscape%20guide%20%20120212.pdf>, page 62

high-level corruption and tackling sensitive political issues."⁶⁴ After former president Ali Saleh agreed to step down in November 2011, the country's media has been in "the golden reign" of freedom, and non-censorship, but at the same time, professionalism is very weak," says political analyst Najeeb Ghallab, author of three books on the Yemen crisis and often quoted by *The New York Times*.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ibid, pages 64-65.

⁶⁵ In interview with evaluators, Sana'a, January 2013.