#### Setting Up Local Investigative Projects



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#### Problems/solutions observed at the "local level"



Depopulation of rural areas, seen through the experiences of citizens living in Italy and Scotland -

https://www.journalismfund.eu/supported-projects/can-depopulation-europes-islands-be-reversed



How do schools deal with migrant teenagers in France, Germany, Italy, Poland & the UK?

https://www.journalismfund.eu/supported-projects/world-classroom



What is the health & environmental impact of air pollution caused by the petrochemical industry in Antwerp and Rotterdam? https://www.journalismfund.eu/antwerp-bruges-rotterdam-ports

#### The "local": observed in different locations in the EU



In Dublin and in Malakasa, asylum seekers suffer from limited interpretation services <a href="https://www.journalismfund.eu/lost-words">https://www.journalismfund.eu/lost-words</a>



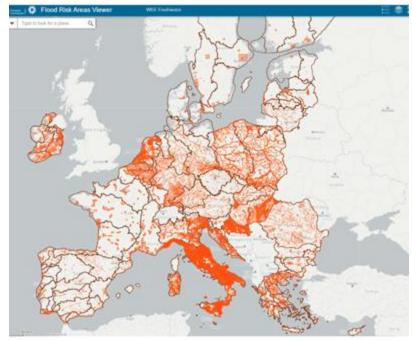
Robust local journalism is facing a decline, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe <a href="https://www.journalismfund.eu/dark-days-of-local-journalism">https://www.journalismfund.eu/dark-days-of-local-journalism</a>



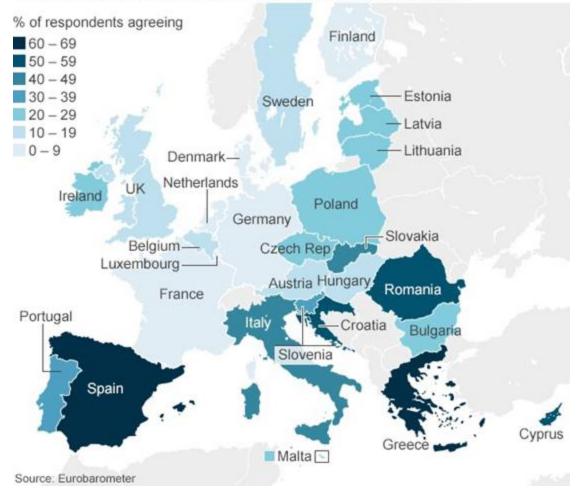
Cities across CEE are struggling to build enough affordable homes for their populations <a href="https://www.journalismfund.eu/housing-blues">https://www.journalismfund.eu/housing-blues</a>

## Finding your story: we all struggle with similar "local" issues





#### Poll: Are you personally affected by corruption in daily life?





- Corruption with EU funds
- Same modus of operandi
- Same industries...
- Mining, water, waste...

Ample opportunity for local investigations with cross-border elements!



## Cross-border investigations: how do you start?

Determine your "angle" - make it a story, <u>not</u> a topic Research the "cross-border element". Same "local" problems, different places/countries One context has "the problem", the other does not - why? Unfair trade practices or trade links multiple locations Links or connections of companies/politicians/decisions/funding Formulate your hypothesis... Find a collaborator (or more!) in another country https://www.iournalismfund.eu/iournalists

Pitch to media outlets in different countries

#### How to make "the local", "cross-border"?

#### THE ROAD OF NO RETURN

2023-11-21

SARAJEVO - Dozens of migrants from Asia and Africa drown every year in the rivers between Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia.



Winner of Special Jury Award of the Tekka International Film Festival

Only a few of them get identified. An even smaller number get returned to their families in their countries of origin. Most of them are buried in local cemeteries, without taking a sample for DNA analysis. This actually means that their families will never know what happened to them or where their graves are. If one day they appear in the Balkans looking for their relatives, due to the lack of records, the institutions will not know which grave to exhume. These are neglected graves, in remote parts of local cemeteries. They are often overgrown with grass and trash. Even the dead are not treated with respect here.





ID CBL/2023/044

rant CBLocal

Tags Migration Trafficking

## Formulate your hypothesis first...

A hypothesis has the following characteristics:

- It can be tested.
- It is based on established and documented facts.
- It is concise.
- It is coherent and based on facts that the journalist is looking to gather as well as information they already have.
- It deals with a single problem.

Resources: <a href="https://institute.aljazeera.net/en/ajr/article/2075">https://institute.aljazeera.net/en/ajr/article/2075</a>



#### Europas Gier nach Gummi

in Kamerun wird im großen Stil Regenwald abgeholzt, um such die EU mit Kautschuk für Automifen zu versorgen. Derunter leiden Natur und Menachen, Doch der Kampf um entwaldungsfreie Lieferketten ist kompfistert

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#### Hypothesize away...

#### Hypothesis:

"Our hunger for rubber in Western Europe, for our large car industry, is fuelling destruction and human rights abuses in the rainforest of Cameroon, where the rubber is being harvested"

#### Initial indications:

- Reports from Greenpeace
- Reports from EU legislators
- Concerns of citizens and human rights organisations (which our colleague from Cameroon was familiar with)



Later: land deals, concessions, company information, photographic evidence, trade data, interviews.

## Cross-border investigations: from idea to proposal

#### Questions to answer:

	How much time do you and colleagues need for the investigation? Do you need to travel? Who? Why?
	How will you plan for the investigation? In person meeting? Online?
	What investigation methods/tools will you use? Do you have the right skill set?
Мар	the kind of finances you need to carry out the investigation.
	Travel costs - accommodation, tickets, local transport, etc.
	Fees – investigation, writing, photography, filming, maps, sound, translation, etc.
	Other costs - communication, FOI-request, legal fees, etc.

#### Do you need to apply for funding?

- https://www.journalismfund.eu/
- □ <a href="https://gfmd.info/fundings/">https://gfmd.info/fundings/</a>
- □ <a href="https://ijnet.org/en/opportunities">https://ijnet.org/en/opportunities</a>

## Pitching to a cross-border audience

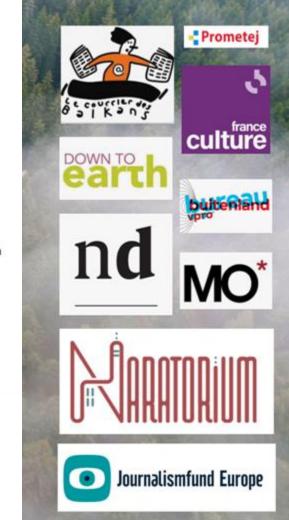


2023-04-11

SARAJEVO - Around half of Bosnia-Herzegovina is covered by forests and wood is one of the Balkan country's most valuable natural resources. But instead of developing the nation, some politicians and private companies enrich themselves with the profits of the 'green gold'. Forests are cut down for private interests and governments and companies in Western-Europe close their eyes to gain cheap wood.

Mapping illegal deforestation and who profits from it

Money and politics are strongly intertwined in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the greed of those in power



# DAILY

Cherished by many, haunted by some, read by them all

National Interpools:

#### ISOHSA keeps Elite Two dream alive after stunning Sporting Maroua

Second Division tops Group A.

This they did by securing the morale-boosting revival after recording a 5nil victory over Sporting Interpools, ISOHSA of Club of Maroua, yester-Limbe, has revived their day. With the victory, the dream of qualifying for Limbe-based club now

Investigative report

## **How Europe's greed for rubber destroys Cameroon's** nforest, threatens livelihood of indigenous forest dwellers

For selfless services to nation:

## Biya knights South Governor, Nguele Nguele shrine to protest!

By Doh Bertrand Nua

President of the Republic was decorated with a elebrated senior and Grand Master of the medal and elevated to

#### Editorial

In Chieftaincy issues in kaleidoscopic masquerade. the Anglophone Regions, In 2019, South especially in the North Governor.

How Europe's greed for rubber destroys Cameroon's rainforest, threatens livelihoods of indigenous dwellers



in Cameroon, the Baka people are not seen as equal to the Bantu villagers, and ofter discriminated against by their neighbours. PHOTO/Nathalie Bertrams

A global investigation can make local news & local news can make global headlines...

## The budget

- Money is a sensitive topic: it can be a source of conflict and even project failure:
  - Be transparent and develop a budget together.
  - Cost of living is different in countries. Discuss average pay in the country colleagues live in.
  - Discuss how you will share the profit you make from selling your stories to newspapers.
- Fairness above all else!
  - In accommodation, travel allowances, bank fees, etc.
  - Plan out (fair) work packages and responsibilities. Also take into consideration:
    - The burden of translation and interpretation
    - Budget for time spent coordinating, managing, reporting and accounting
    - Presenting the work in the end on conferences and other activities
  - Also discuss potential gains: e.g. days covered by media, payment for speaking engagements
- Write down "agreements" (Memorandum of Understanding or just in e-mail...)
- Don't forget to think about VAT. How will you send your invoices, etc?

## Project management tips!

- Set up a shared team drive
- Map people's skill sets against tasks
  - Language, skills, preferences, character, location...Play to your strengths! Decide who will "lead" on which aspect.
- Foster a culture of sharing and trust.
- Share all research/findings. Agree on the "how"...
  - Which language, when, where, by whom?
- Record who you spoke to and if you made any promises like "off the record" or to check quotes
- Discuss how you will do write-up, fact checking.







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#### Srbija, groblje za evropske krntije



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## Risks, project management, and partnerships

- Be realistic about the risks, and map them beforehand:
  - **Financial:** Your budget is not sufficient inflation, change in ticket prices... etc.
  - Partnerships: one of your publications drops out or is delayed.
  - **Teams**: Your team members get in some sort of a conflict, or can not work together. One person does more than others, there is another personal conflict within the team.
  - Legal/reputational: you get sued for your publication, or face a SLAPP lawsuit for your reporting. (Verbal or physical) abuse of team members before or after publication. Accident within the team whilst travelling, etc.

## Try to discuss and make mitigation plans beforehand...

- For example...
  - Financial: have a plan for co-funding or cost-saving measures.
  - Partnerships: think of alternative media you could pitch to, in case your media partner faces a challenge. Keep your media partners well informed of your project's progress.
  - **Team:** who leads what? Set regular meetings, be collaborative, share everything, set up a project folder. Make sure to ensure "team bonding" before and during the project. Check in.
  - **Legal/reputational:** insurances... & map the risks that you will face in your project... There are a range of useful resources that can help you. <a href="https://ejc.net/resources/risk-assessment-for-freelance-journalists">https://ejc.net/resources/risk-assessment-for-freelance-journalists</a>; <a href="https://rorypecktrust.org/how-we-help/freelance-resources/safety-and-risk-assessment/">https://rorypecktrust.org/how-we-help/freelance-resources/safety-and-risk-assessment/</a>. E

#### Check-list

L	<u>h</u> ave:		
	Found a cross-border idea, with local relevance		
_	☑ Framed an hypothesis		
_	Determined my methods		
	Secured interest of at least two media in different countries (by way of a letter of intent)		
	Set up a partnership with a colleague from another country		
L	■ Mapped out the finances and made a budget with my new team		
Ļ	Established a publication plan and timeline		
L	Mapped out the risks and set mitigation measures		
F	Final check:		
_			
Ļ	My investigation has not been published		
L	■ My investigation was not funded before		

You are ready to apply! Good luck!

#### Resources / ideas

https://www.storybasedinquiry.com/manuals

https://gijn.org/resource/

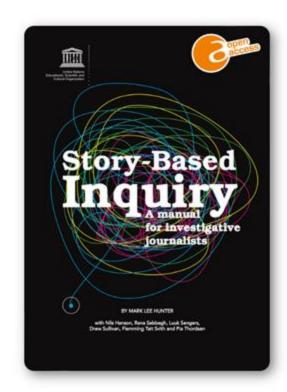
Become a member of your local investigative association...

Go to international conferences to meet others, if you can!

Become a member of Arena for Journalism in Europe:

https://journalismarena.eu/ or Correctiv.Europe:

https://europe.correctiv.org/join



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