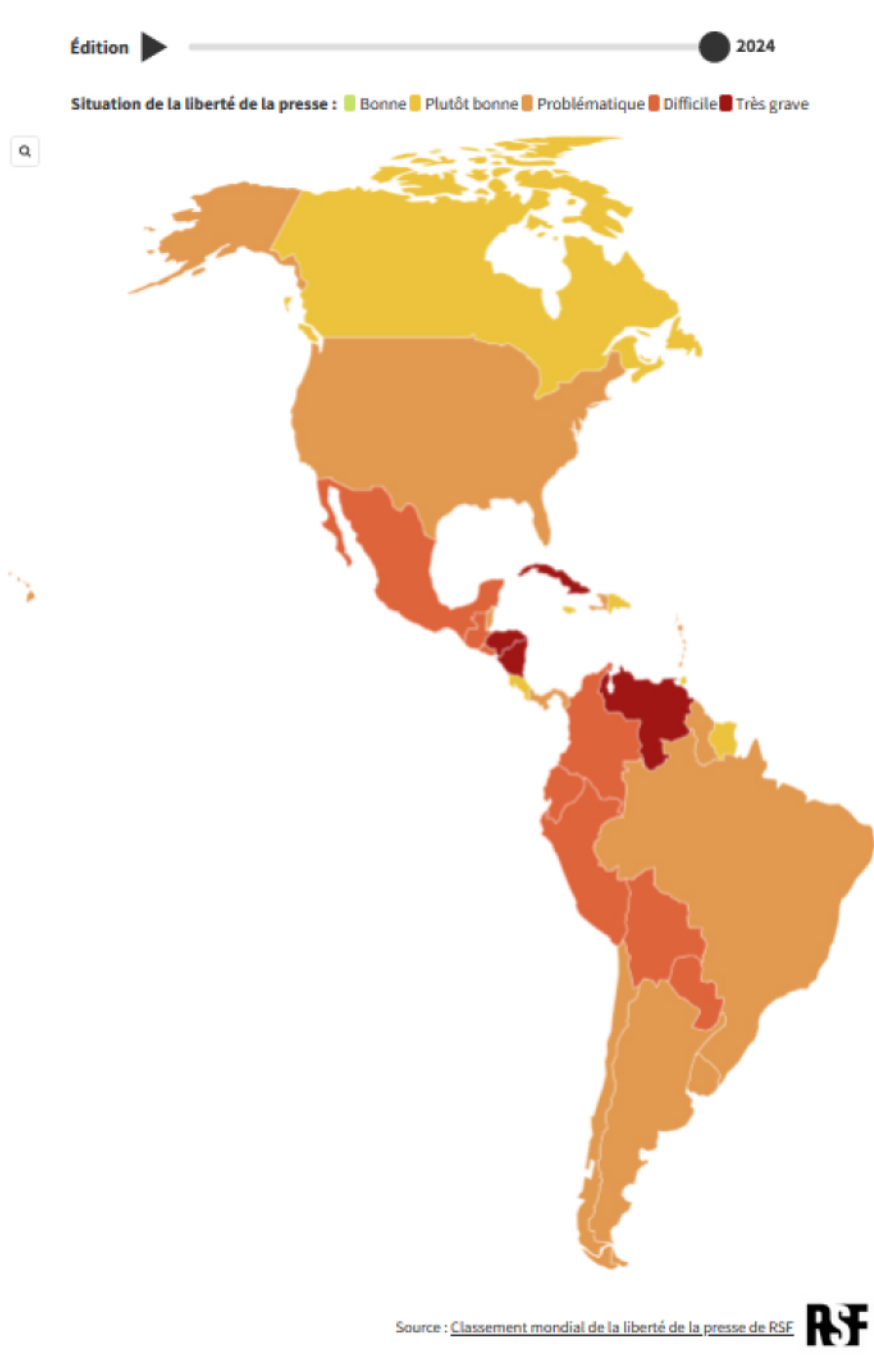


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Americas : Political pressure increasingly threatens journalistic independence and safety

In the 2024 World Press Freedom Index, more than half the countries in the Americas region have seen their situation deteriorate, particularly due to the fall in the political indicator.



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More and more politicians are stigmatizing journalists and the media in their speeches. On top of this, political actors employ disinformation campaigns, abusive prosecutions and state propaganda that openly fosters distrust of the press and encourages polarization. This violence, combined with physical attacks on journalists with total impunity, is fuelling a climate of censorship in South and Central America.

The [United States](#) (55th) falls 10 places as it prepares for the 2024 elections amid growing distrust in the media, which is least in part fueled by open antagonism from political officials, including calls to jail journalists. In several high profile instances, local law enforcement has carried out chilling actions, including raiding newsrooms and arresting journalists.

Similar forces are at play in [Argentina's](#) (66th) in the wake of President Javier Milei coming to power, whose aggressive stance towards journalism stifles pluralism. In [Peru](#) (125th), the conditions for journalism are deteriorating as the political system becomes increasingly opaque. The country has fallen 48 places in the past two years. In Central America, President Nayib Bukele's openly hostile stance towards investigative journalism is behind [El Salvador](#) (133rd) free fall since 2019.

Censorship, political pressure, and forced exile

In the three countries at the bottom of the Index, [Cuba](#) (168th), [Nicaragua](#) (163rd) and [Venezuela](#) (156th), journalism is subject to censorship based on arbitrary decisions that can take the form of detentions, broadcast interruptions, and administrative chokeholds. In [Guatemala](#) (138th), the criminalization of journalists, and the imprisonment of Jose Rubén Zamora bear witness to the critical threats that journalism has faced in the past years.

In [Ecuador](#) (110th), the political crisis and the rise of organized crime have disrupted the democratic environment. Despite the absence of journalists killed compared to last year (six killings), [Haiti](#) (93rd) remains 131st out of 180 in terms of security. In [Mexico](#) (121st), the country with the highest number of journalists killed (72) in the world in the last 10 years, President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has little to offer in the last year of his mandate beyond speeches that seem more concerned with confronting journalists than promoting a safer environment for media workers.

Positive movement and new challenges

The good news comes from [Chile](#) (52nd), which has risen 31 places. The de-escalation in polarization and the will shown by the government to prioritize press freedom to create a

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safer environment for media workers contributed to this comeback. In [Brazil](#) (82nd), President Lula's government has made general progress in normalizing relations with the press after a period of escalating tensions during the mandate of former President Jair Bolsonaro. Once the best ranked country in the region, [Costa Rica](#) (26th) continues to fall, mainly due to the tensions between the government and the media. [Canada](#) (14th) performs the best in the region, but is not immune to problems, notably the economic uncertainty facing the media industry.