

Reporters Without Borders

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Europe/Ex-USSR - Greece

Police violence

Riot police injure woman photographer during Athens demo

13 June 2014

Members of Greece's MAT riot police injured photographer Tatiana Bolari during a demonstration in Athens yesterday, beating her legs and back with their riot shields although her equipment clearly identified her as a journalist. Another journalist was also beaten.

Bolari, who had to be rushed to hospital for treatment to her injuries, had been covering a peaceful demonstration outside the finance ministry by about 50 maintenance employees in protest against a government decision to confirm their dismissal.

In 2012, Bolari had been attacked by a member of MAT. [The photo of the aggression went around the world.](#)

The riot police also hit **Marios Lolos**, another journalist covering the protest. He told Reporters Without Borders: "We were on the grounds and the riot police walked on us. It lasted a good 30 minutes."

He added that there had been no need for the riot police to charge the protesters because the finance ministry was well protected, having "closed its doors and lowered steel curtains." Lolos was hospitalized in 2012 [for a serious head injury from a member of the MAT](#). A steel plate in his skull testifies to its gravity.

"The behaviour of the riot police is intolerable," Reporters Without Borders said. "The number of cases of MAT violence against journalists has kept on growing for years without any significant punishment being imposed to compensate the victims, and now a photographer is in hospital.

"This kind of violence is carried out with complete impunity. The impunity must end, and journalists must be able to cover what is going on without fearing for their physical safety. We call on the police to investigate these two new cases and to punish those responsible."

The plight of Greece's journalists keeps on getting worse. The economic crisis is steadily sapping the media and journalism. At demonstrations, riot police attack peaceful protesters, troublemakers and reporters without distinction. Journalists are often exposed to very aggressive behaviour by demonstrators themselves, as well as violence by the neo-Nazi party Gold Dawn. Assailed on all sides, they are unable to work properly.

Greece was ranked 30th in the Reporters Without Borders press freedom index in 2007. [It is now ranked 99th](#), the second lowest position of any European Union member country.

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