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Bulgaria

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## Bulgarian Journalist Viktoria Marinova Killed

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ Unknown

CATEGORY  ▶ Attacks on physical safety and integrity of journalists

**PARTNER: AEJ, CPJ, EFJ/IFJ, Index, PEN**

Bulgarian journalist and TV presenter Viktoria Marinova was found dead on 6 October 2018 in a park in the northern city of Ruse, where she had reportedly been out jogging. A regional prosecutor said she had suffered blows to the head and had died from suffocation. Bulgarian Interior Minister Mladen Marinov told journalists that the thirty year old journalist had also been raped. Her mobile phone, car keys, glasses and some of her clothes were also missing. The minister stated that no evidence had been found to suggest the killing was related to her work, and that officials were unaware of any information that she had been threatened. The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media urged the Bulgarian authorities to investigate thoroughly to determine whether or not the attack was linked to her work. Bulgarian media voiced concern that Marinova may have been targeted on account of her recent TV appearances. They pointed out that on 30 September she had presented an investigative programme called 'Detector' on the private regional TV channel TVN, which featured interviews by another colleague with two well-known Bulgarian and Romanian journalists about their investigation into the alleged misappropriation of EU funds by politicians and businessmen. The owner of investigative journalism website Bivol.bg, Asen Yordanov, was cited by media as saying that the journalists who appeared on the TV programme were in danger because of their investigation into the issue, which has for some time been the focus of fierce controversy. Mr Yordanov suggested that Ms Marinova's murder had been meant as a warning to other journalists. In October 2017, hundreds of Bulgarian journalists staged a public protest in Sofia after Deputy Prime Minister Valeri Simeonov and another senior politician threatened a TV journalist with dismissal for asking probing questions about sensitive political matters on air.

### UPDATES

**NEW**

**11 Oct 2018:** On 10 October 2018, police in Germany have detained a man in connection with the rape and killing of Viktoria Marinova.

➔ Article published by RFE/RL : 'Germany Detains Suspect In Brutal Slaying Of Bulgarian Journalist'

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ➔ Mapping Media Freedom report: "Bulgaria: Investigative journalist Viktoria Marinova raped and murdered"
- ➔ Bulgarian police put in custody a Romanian citizen of Ukrainian origin for questioning.
- ➔ AEJ-Bulgaria statement : 'A TV Host is Murdered in Ruse'
- ➔ Sky news report: 'Bulgarian journalist's rape and murder was 'a warning' '


## STATE REPLIES



25 Oct 2018 | **NEW** Reply from the Bulgarian authorities

- ➔ Letter from the Permanent Representation of Bulgaria to the Council of Europe

## FOLLOW-UPS

 12 Oct 2018 | **NEW** OSCE media freedom representative welcomes progress in investigation of killing of Bulgarian journalist, urges full and thorough investigation.

- ➔ Statement by Harlem Désir



09 Oct 2018 | **NEW** Co-rapporteurs of the PACE for post-monitoring dialogue with Bulgaria appalled by the murder of the journalist Viktoria Marinova urge the Bulgarian authorities to thoroughly investigate her murder and abuse immediately.

- ➔ Statement by Mr Frank Schwabe and Zsolt Nemeth



08 Oct 2018 | **NEW** CoE Secretary General calls on the Bulgarian authorities to rapidly conduct a thorough investigation of the horrific killing of investigative reporter Viktoria Marinova.

- ➔ Tweet by Thorbjørn Jagland



**08 Oct 2018** | CoE Human Rights Commissioner calls on the authorities to urgently and fully investigate this horrendous crime and ensure that those responsible, including the masterminds, are held accountable.

➔ **Statement by Dunja Mijatović**



**08 Oct 2018** | OSCE Representative shocked by murder of Bulgarian journalist, calls for justice and thorough investigation.

➔ **Statement by Harlem Désir**