

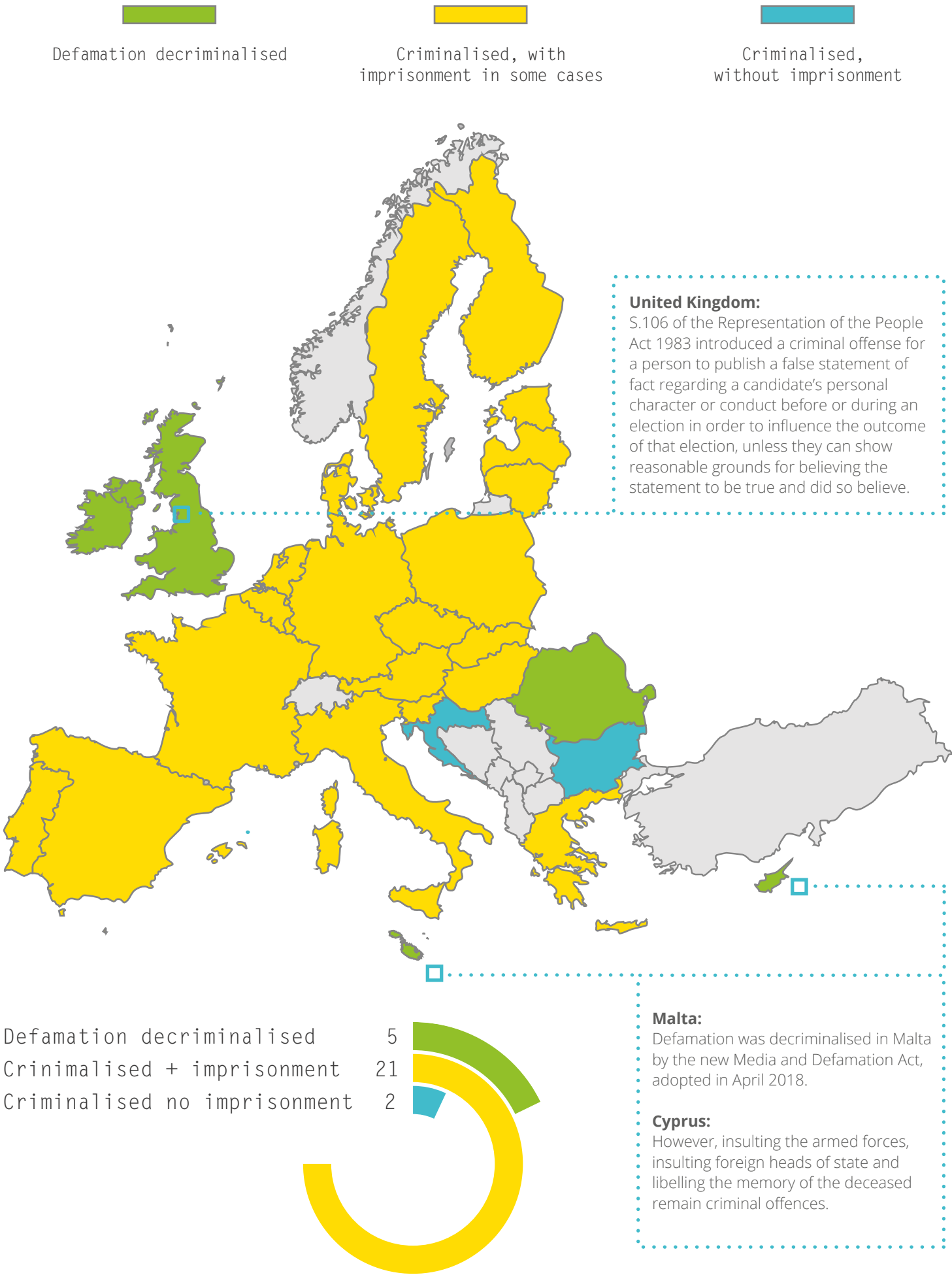
DECRIMINALISATION OF DEFAMATION

While defamation laws are an important tool in protecting people from false statements that damage their reputation, such laws can easily be misused and the criminalisation of defamation may pose risks for the freedom of expression, producing a chilling effect on journalistic freedom. Journalists, instead, should enjoy a position in which they can exercise their job without fear.

In the EU **only 5 Member States have decriminalised defamation**, but even among those countries that did so 2 still have some sort of defamation-related criminal offense in force (Cyprus and UK), with only Ireland, Malta and Romania having completely abolished defamation as a criminal offense.

The Media Pluralism Monitor

The Media Pluralism Monitor (MPM) is a tool that has been developed by the CMPF to assess the risks for media pluralism in a given country. The MPM project is co-funded by the European Union. The Monitor assesses the risks for media pluralism based on a set of twenty indicators covering four different areas: Basic Protection, Market Plurality, Political Independence and Social Inclusiveness. The indicators cover legal, economic and socio-political questions. All types of media are covered: The results of the MPM implementations are available [here](#).



Imprisonment for defamation is possible in most EU member states (even if not often implemented, in practice), along with pecuniary sanctions; high damages requests are very common remedies to libel in cases of civil defamation. In fact, the only EU Members states that do not provide for imprisonment for defamation in any situation are Bulgaria and Croatia.

Sources: The main source for this Factsheet is the Media Pluralism Monitor 2017 (MPM2017) Database, created under the Media Pluralism Monitor 2017 Project. The factsheet relied also on additional information provided by the MPM2017 country teams.

For more information on the independence of PSM in the EU visit <http://cmpf.eui.eu/mapping-media-policy-journalism/>

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CMPF

The Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom (CMPF), established in 2011 at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute - Florence, aims to develop innovative and relevant lines of research on media freedom and pluralism and on fundamental rights in Europe and beyond. The Centre, directed by Prof. Pier Luigi Parcu, coordinated by Elda Brogi, is composed of a team of experts in media markets and economics, law, political science, and communications studies.