



MEDIA THROUGH GENDER LENSES

Key findings

Gender Mirror of the Montenegrin Media

- **Women make only 21% of persons** who speak to, are read about or are being spoken of in newspapers, on television and on internet portals in Montenegro. This is 4% less than the **global average** when it comes to the presence of women in the media, i.e., **25%** according to data from the GMMP (Gender Media Monitoring Project).
- The percentage of presence of women in **newspapers is 19.2%, on internet portals 23.7% and on television 20.1%.**
- In Montenegro, **the presence of women appearing in the articles and pieces on politics** is increasing – today that percentage is **18.8%**, compared to 13.2% 6 years ago, which is an increase of about 5% at the national level. At the same time, it is somewhat lower than the global average, which is 20%.
- **The representation of women in the articles and pieces on economy is 14.8%.** This is the **largest gap, since we are 9 percentage points behind the global average**, which confirms that women in Montenegro are least present in the sphere related to business and money.
- In the media content related to **socio-legal topics**, women's representation is **32.2%**, which corresponds to the global average.
- In the field of **science and health**, women made **33.3%** of those who spoke to or were read about in the media, which is better than the global average, which is 30%.
- In news related to celebrities, art and sports, the presence of women was 19.1%, while at the global level it was 20%. If we single out the **sports news, representation of women in the Montenegrin media content was only 12.4%, which was the lowest percentage of representation of all the media contents.**

Women's voices in media content



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- **Only 26.2% of voices in the Montenegrin media are female voices**, which means that of all those who speak, only one in **four is a woman, while the rest are men**.
- The percentage of presence of women sources in newspapers is 25%, on internet portals 27.9% and on television 26.9%.
- It is **worrying** that there are still **too few women's voices in politics and economics**, where the greatest power, influence and capital are concentrated, and where incomparably greater media space is given to men and their views. The percentage of women's voices **in the field of economics is only 15.6% and in politics 16.6%**.
- The research showed that women are still present the most in the so-called "soft topics", such as health, education, child care and entertainment, i.e., that they are mostly focused on the private sphere, while men enjoy much greater visibility in the public and professional sphere.
- **Women speak the most in the fields of health/science 39.4%, socio-legal topics 35.8%** (which include education), 26.1% in the fields of crime/violence and celebrities/art/sport 27.5%. The fact that women talk more often about health shows that the gender gap in reporting on these topics is decreasing due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, during which much more attention is being paid to covering the area of health care. But at the same time, this also points to the strengthening of gender stereotypes that women are caregivers and men are leaders. The pandemic has again highlighted the phenomenon of shoehorning women into niche areas they have dominated before, such as health care, education and child care.
- An extremely low presence **of female voices** is also recorded in the field of sports, **slightly less than 17%**, if sports are considered individually, i.e., excluding the celebrities and the arts spheres.
- Multiple discrimination in the media suffered by women from minority groups, women with disabilities, women from rural areas, Roma and Egyptian women, female members of the LGBTIQ community and migrant women has been confirmed, as evidenced by their almost complete absence from the media. Lack of interest in their problems and perspective increases the discrimination of these marginalized groups, to whom public space is inaccessible.



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Being a source, women and men as victims, stories about gender equality

- **Less than a third of experts** speaking in the media were women (31.2 %), compared to male experts, who amounted to more than two thirds (68.8 %). When it comes to expertise in the fields of **politics and economics, men still rule, as the percentage of female experts in politics-related topics is 24.1%, while only 11.1% of female experts in economic issues are recorded.**
- At the same time, women make the majority of those who speak as *vox populi* in the field of economics (66.7%), since when it comes to these topics, traditionally the women's point of view is more sought after. For example, the opinion of housewives who take care of the family is sought when it comes to current price increases and the decline of purchasing power.
- **Women make up 59.5% of victims mentioned in the news.** However, if only domestic and **gender-based violence is observed, the share of women** who are portrayed as victims in the news amounts to **94.8%** and is incomparably higher than the share of male victims. This confirms once again that women are victims of gender-based violence in the majority of cases.
- **Stories about gender equality make up only 1.7 % of the total media content.** 1.3 % of observed media content refers to topics about gender-based violence.

RESUME AND CONCLUSIONS

Although the visibility of women in the news has improved by several percentage points in the field of politics, it remains a concern that there are still too few female voices in politics and economics, where the greatest power and influence is concentrated.

The research showed that women are still present the most in the so-called "women's topics", such as health, education, child care and entertainment, i.e., that they are mostly focused on the private sphere, while men enjoy much greater visibility in the public and professional sphere. Male voices dominate the news, talking about what other men are doing, even during a global pandemic that has affected the whole world.



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The presence and visibility of women in media content, especially in certain areas, does not reflect their contribution to our society, economy, politics and culture.

The world as presented by the media remains mostly "male". The actual composition of society is not reflected in media content and various human experiences are also not being shown, while a large, mostly female part of the population remains relatively invisible. All this limits the opportunities for women to express their views and to influence the shaping of society.

There is a lack of a fair and balanced representation of women and men through the elimination of stereotypes and the promotion of their multidimensional representation and portrayal.

It can be summarized that **in the Montenegrin media there is not yet a sufficiently developed awareness of the importance of encouraging and promoting gender equality in accordance with the recommendations of numerous international documents, as well as domestic regulations.**

Stories and analytical approaches that question gender stereotypes or clearly point to gender inequalities are rare, and the occasional sensationalist and unethical reporting on gender-based violence that is more appropriate to tabloid media and that neglects the treatment of these topics as a social problem, has insufficient influence on the systemic and structural changes in society, as well as on changing awareness among citizens.

For this reason, the media should improve on their selection of sources and stories, in order to fairly and honestly represent both sexes and achieve a balanced representation of women and men, thus reflecting the diverse composition of society and different human experiences and perspectives.

Gender-aware ethical journalism should be the commitment and the only path for deconstruction of patriarchy, opening the media space to women, empowering them and building a society of equality, in which the media should play a proactive role as carriers of progressive social changes.

RECOMMENDATIONS



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- Achieve a balanced representation of both sexes by increasing the number of women appearing and speaking in the news. Pay special attention to the different stories and voices of women who are discriminated against and almost invisible, such as older women, Roma women, women with disabilities and women from rural areas.
- Increase the number of female experts as sources, especially in the fields of politics and economics.
- Increase the number of female experts and recommend the media to create directories of women who are experts, analysts and commentators in various fields, first and foremost in the spheres of politics and economics.
- Ensure a fair and just portrayal of both sexes, which implies that gender inequalities and differences in the position of women and men are *de jure* and *de facto* highlighted, gender roles are deconstructed, gender-based discrimination and stereotypes are eliminated, and women are empowered and supported in exercising their rights and advancement.
- Portray women and men in non-traditional roles and contexts in order to eliminate stereotypes.
- Increase media proactivity and the number of stories related to the elimination of stereotypes, gender inequality, women's rights and gender-based violence.
- In addition to stories about physical and sexual violence, raise topics about psychological and economic violence against women.
- Increase the number of stories that represent positive examples of women who have won their fights against violence, gender inequality and discrimination.
- Eliminate sexist language and consistently apply gender-sensitive language.
- Do not publish photos, videos and comments from the readers/viewers, in which women are insulted, attacked, discriminated against and/or presented as sexual objects.
- Proceed with the continuous education of journalists, editors and management on gender equality, dealing with stereotypes, introducing a gender perspective in media content and gender-aware ethical journalism, with an emphasis on the specificity of reporting on certain



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topics such as gender-based violence, sexual violence against women, gender-responsive communication and gender-sensitive language, etc.

- Supplement ethical codes, laws and secondary legislation in the field of media with guidelines and provisions related to the obligation to promote gender equality, use of gender-sensitive reporting and gender-sensitive language, and ban the use of gender stereotypes, sexist advertising and language, which will enable balanced representation and fair portrayal of men and women in the media.
- Create manuals with guidelines for gender-sensitive and ethical journalism, for reporting on gender-based and sexual violence against women, for using gender-sensitive language, etc.
- Introduce measures that encourage and promote gender equality in media organizations, in order to promote gender-sensitive ethical journalism and to give male and female journalists equal opportunities for work and advancement.
- Initiate a broad social debate on the most common problems and challenges for gender-sensitive ethical reporting.
- Invite the media, professional associations of journalists, regulators and non-governmental organizations to monitor, conduct regular research and analyses and point out ethical problems in media reporting, especially on gender-based violence. Invite ombudsmen/ombudswomen and the Media Self-Regulation Council to do the same.
- Increase public promotion of positive examples of ethical and gender-sensitive reporting, and at the national level establish an award for the best media reporting on gender-based violence, which could be under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice, Human and Minority Rights.
- At the Faculty of Political Sciences, at the department attended by future journalists, introduce into the curriculum topics on gender-sensitive reporting and encourage graduate, master's and PhD theses on this topic.