

# What gender for information? Final report of GMMP 2010 for the French-speaking community of Belgium

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On 10 November 2009, volunteers in several countries around the world monitored their local news media for the 4th Global Media Monitoring Project. News media outlets monitored were selected on the basis of reach, density, and diversity. Of special interest in national, regional and global reports are statistics on trends in women's presence in the news since 1995, trends in reportage on different topics disaggregated by sex of news reporters and presenters, and trends in the quality of reportage from a gender perspective. A plan of action for media professionals and civil society committed to gender-ethical news media was developed.

## **Key information on EU or National policies/legislation on women's' representation on the Media:**

The first aim is to raise awareness about gender inequalities in the media among policy-makers and media regulation and auto-regulation bodies in order for regulation and auto-regulation mechanisms to (better) include gender issues. In a second stage, in order to fight against mediatised gender stereotypes, the aims is also to raise awareness among representatives of the police and judicial courts, judges and magistrates in media affairs, public officers in the field of culture, and so forth. Third, it is also the aim to initiate an analysis of the reasons for women's underrepresentation in journalism in the French-speaking community of Belgium and to invite managers in the field to include gender and equality questions in recruitment procedures, work, pay and promotion conditions. With regard to the redactions of the different components of the written press, the aim is to convince them that a balanced gender representation in the media is an ethical necessity that is bound to fundamentally improve the quality of all journalist work. Awareness raising activities included a mapping of good practices and instruments that could help the target public to improve its practices toward more gender equality in journalism. A series of good practices were identified in the GMMP report.

## **Key information on trends and challenges on women and the media:**

28% of people interviewed, seen or heard in the media of the French-speaking community of Belgium are women. The representation of women is highest at 34% in television. Given that 51% of the population is female, one woman out of two is erased from the world presented through the media of the French-speaking community of Belgium. In terms of information treatment, 82% of articles are gender neutral, 12% strengthen gender stereotypes and 6% denounce these stereotypes. Hard news or political and economic themes are those where women are least visible (26% of women on political topics and 20% on economic issues). Women's visibility is especially high on social themes (42%), criminal affairs (38%) and health issues (38%). Even in fields where women are much more active than men such as social work, health, the family, parity is not reached. In the media covered, women are twice as likely as men to be identified based on their household/family situation: 19% are described as wife, daughter or mother whereas this holds true for just 8% of men. Of the 83 news items covered where women figure as main protagonists, just 15 really give them a central position.

### **Key stakeholders mentioned:**

policymakers, media regulation and auto-regulation bodies, representatives of the police and judicial courts, judges and magistrates in media affairs, public officers in the field of culture, redaction heads and media company managers, journalists themselves, communication professionals, teachers and students

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