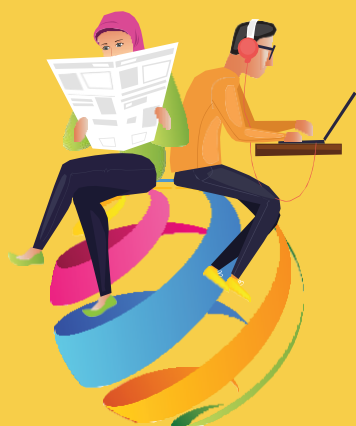


# WHO MAKES THE NEWS?



**GMMP**

Global Media  
Monitoring  
Project  
**2020**

**AOTEAROA  
NEW ZEALAND**

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**NATIONAL REPORT**



# GMMP

Global Media  
Monitoring  
Project

# 2020



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GMMP 2020 is co-ordinated by the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), an international NGO which promotes communication for social change.



Data for GMMP 2020 were collected through the collective voluntary effort of hundreds of organizations including gender and media activists, grassroots communication groups, university researchers, students, mediaprofessionals, journalists associations, alternative media networks and faith groups.

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## Acknowledgements

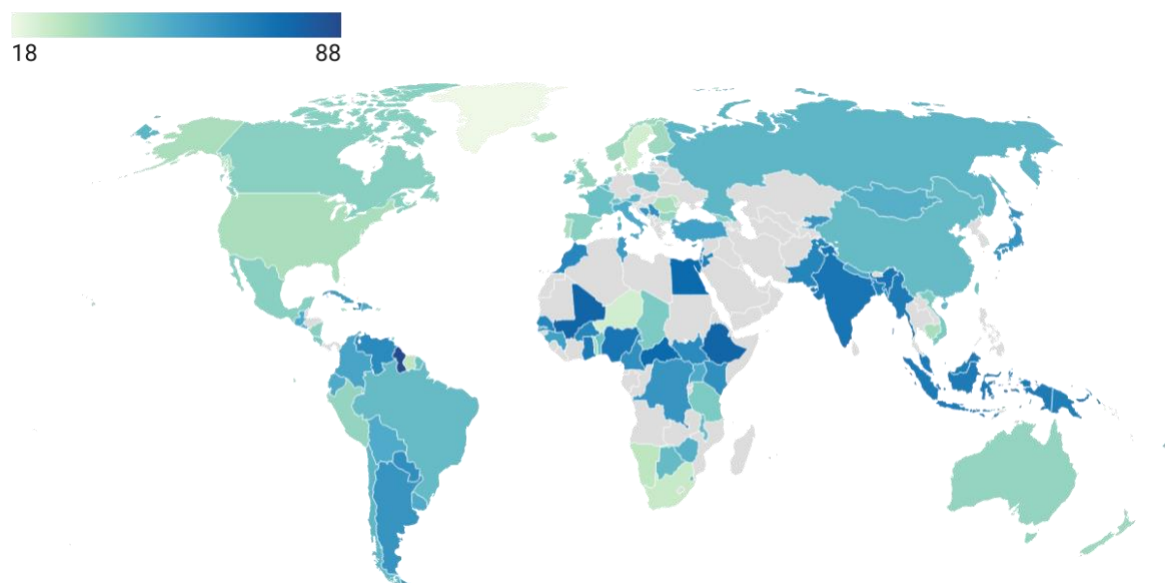
Thank you to Nigel Lowe for technical support, and to the dedicated team of coders who willingly took on this task during a challenging year: Cathy Strong, Flora Galy-Badenas, Leon Salter, and Rachel Billington.

Thanks also to Chris Rudd from Otago University for assisting with the southern sample.

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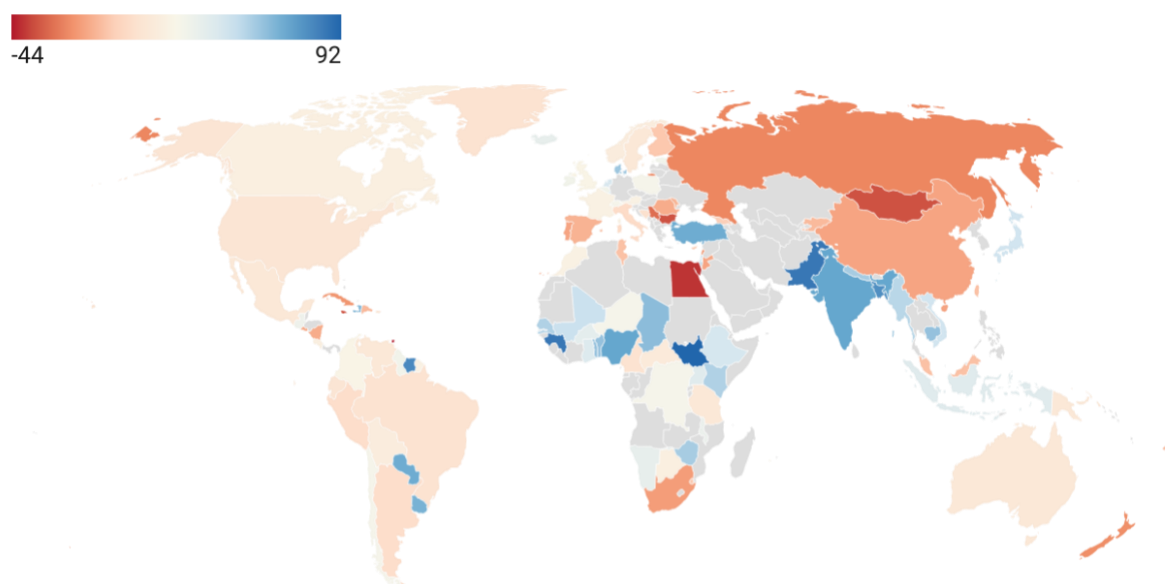
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*THE WORLD AT A GLANCE*  
*GENDER GAP IN SUBJECTS, SOURCES AND REPORTERS IN THE NEWS.*



*Figure 1. Gender Gap: News Subjects & Sources. Newspaper, radio and television news.*

*Data source: Global Media Monitoring Project, 2020*



*Figure 2. Gender gap: Reporters in the stories. Newspaper, radio and television news.*

*Data source: Global Media Monitoring Project, 2020*

# PREFACE

## Global Context

- The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) is the world's longest-running and most extensive research on gender in the news media. The research was designed to capture a snapshot of gender on one 'ordinary' news day in the world news media. An ordinary news day is defined as one in which the news agenda contains the run-of-the-mill mix of stories, everyday articles on politics, economy, social issues, crime and other issues.
- It began in 1995 when volunteers in 71 countries around the world monitored women's presence in their national radio, television and print news. The media monitoring has been repeated every five years since then, taking stock of change in the gender dimensions of news media content and collecting statistical data on new indicators.
- The 1995 research revealed that only 17% of news subjects – the people who are interviewed or whom the news are about – were women. It found that gender parity was 'a distant prospect in any region of the world. News [were] more often being presented by women but [they were] still rarely about women.'<sup>1</sup>
- The first noteworthy change in women's overall presence in the news was registered in 2005 in the third iteration of the research.<sup>2</sup> Women comprised 21% of news subjects, a three-percentage point increase over the period 2000 to 2005. Their near invisibility continued however, with only 10% of stories focusing centrally on women, underrepresentation in the major news topics and as voices in the news.
- By the fifth GMMP in 2015, it was clear that "ordinary" news days could not be predicted or planned in advance: unexpected events take place that dominate the news, from the Kobe earthquake in 1995, to the Germanwings plane crash in the Alps in 2015.
- The 2015 research in 114 countries revealed continued severe gender disparities in news media content. Findings on key indicators suggested that progress towards gender equality had lost traction; women remained only 24% of the persons heard, read about or seen in newspaper, television and radio news, exactly the same level found in the fourth wave of the research in 2010. Three editions of the research – in 2005, 2010 and 2015 – found no change on the indicator measuring women's participation in the news as reporters; only 37% of stories in legacy media were reported by women.
- Women's relative invisibility in traditional news media had also crossed over into the digital news delivery platforms included in the GMMP monitoring for the first time. Only 26% of the people in stories on mainstream news websites and media news Tweets combined were women. The challenges of news media sexism, gender stereotyping and gender bias were apparently intractable across time, space and content delivery platforms.
- UN Under-Secretary-General and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka underlined that the ways in which women are depicted in the media "have a

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<sup>1</sup> *Global Media Monitoring Project, Women's participation in the news*. National Watch on Images of Women in the Media (MediaWatch) Inc. 1995

<sup>2</sup> Gallagher, Margaret. *Who makes the news? Global Media Monitoring Project*, 2005. World Association for Christian Communication.

profound effect on societal attitudes and reinforce traditional gender roles. Women and girls are half of humanity. Giving equal time and weight to their stories, featuring them as positive models not victims, plays an under-appreciated part in creating a better, freer world for all of us.”<sup>3</sup>

- Events during the 2020 GMMP year were even more extraordinary; beginning in late 2019 and intensifying during the year, the world was ravaged by the novel coronavirus Covid-19. This sixth wave of the research offered an opportunity to scrutinize gender in media coverage during a global catastrophe, a time marked by a worldwide health crisis, and the intensified inequalities accompanying the crisis.
- GMMP teams in 116 countries monitored 30172 stories published in newspapers, broadcast on radio and television, and disseminated on news websites and via news media tweets in 2251 outlets. The stories contained 58,499 news subjects and sources, and were reported and presented by 28,595 journalists. The number of participating nations increased by 63% since 1995 as baseline data were collected for eight countries joining the study for the first time. The number of news items monitored has doubled over the past 25 years and risen by over 8,000 since the 2015 edition.
- Findings from the sixth GMMP reveal a mixed picture of progress, stagnation and regression. While some glass ceilings are clearly being edged upwards, others are setting in on certain important news media gender equality indicators. The past five years have seen small incremental changes towards parity, at the same time, the overall pace of change remains glacial.

## Regional Context

News media remain the major and most influential source of information, ideas and opinion for most people around the world. It is a key element of the public and private space in which people, nations and societies live. A nation or society that does not fully know itself cannot respond to its citizens' aspirations. Who and what appears in the news and how people and events are portrayed matters. Who is left out and what is not covered are equally important. Across the world, the cultural underpinnings of gender inequality and discrimination against women are reinforced through the media.

Teams in Australia, Fiji, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea coded 979 news items published or broadcast in 72 print, radio, television, news websites and news twitter feeds were monitored. The stories contained 2344 persons as sources and subjects, and 1094 reporters.

Media Freedom and media regulations vary in the Pacific Island region. For example, while Freedom of Expression is enshrined in the PNG Constitution (Section 46) in Fiji since April 2009, state instituted media censorship through a Public Emergency Decree put in place following the abrogation of the 1997 Constitution resulted in greater control of news media and the promulgation of a Media Decree was considered to further limit news media content and the range of viewpoints presented through the news media.

The Fiji Government's National Gender Policy (February 2014) includes specific strategies linked to 'increasing the participation and access of women to the expression of their

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<sup>3</sup> In *Who makes the news? The Global Media Monitoring Project report*, 2015

opinions and to decision-making in and through the media including their involvement in new technologies of communication; promoting a balanced and nonstereotyped portrayal of women in the media through training.'

In 2013, the Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS) adopted a gender policy to strengthen its approach to gender, with many of the recommendations taken up. The Triennial Conferences of Pacific Women have consistently highlighted the need to challenge the existing roles and responsibilities of the mainstream media to improve the portrayal of women in Pacific society, and to counter the existing factors that inhibit women's engagement with mainstream media.

GMMP is about more than just collecting data; it provides both the quantitative and qualitative basis for collective advocacy on enhancing the implementation of gender equality commitments in the region.

The most important global commitment remains the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) for the Advancement of Women adopted in 1995. In Section J, the BPfA makes several recommendations for States, the private sector and civil society organisations to enhance the role and participation of women in the media.

The GMMP provides global, regional and country data to hold duty bearers to account.

## **National Context**

Aotearoa New Zealand prides itself on its egalitarianism but although the nation has much to be proud of, there are also systematic social inequalities, including in our media, which require ongoing scrutiny. Indeed, New Zealand's performance against key indicators in the GMMP has been far from consistent, moving from a top spot for proportions of female political sources in 2000 to regression in overall proportions of female news subjects in 2015. Since the last GMMP, international social movements such as #MeToo and #BlackLivesMatter have helped focus local attention on the New Zealand media's track record in reporting gender and race. There have been important acknowledgements and shifts in journalism practice, such as Stuff's apology for its historic reporting of Maori and investment in reporting on sexual misconduct and harassment. Perhaps benefiting from these societal shifts, our 2020 results show women's representation in key measures of women as sources and reporters of the news at an all-time high, though still short of parity. History suggests continued monitoring remains vital to achieving long term, consistent change.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Monitoring day 2020 coincided with a spring storm and the general election campaign, but was otherwise a fairly typical news day in Aotearoa New Zealand. Seventeen media outlets were monitored across television, radio, print, internet news and Twitter, and 232 stories were submitted for the global dataset. The overall largest category of local news was politics & government, followed by social & legal news, and the economy. Just one story was classified in the gender & related topic category. A fifth of stories were coded as being related to Covid-19 in some way.

The results show that women were more visible in the news on monitoring day 2020 than in any of the earlier GMMPs, comprising 33% of news subjects in the legacy media and 38% of news subjects in new media. Combining results across all media formats, women were more than half of the science & technology and politician sources, with the latter by far the single biggest category of news source on monitoring day. However, women were clearly under-represented in sports news, with TV3's Newshub show featuring an entire sports section without female presenters, reporters or sources.

Female news subjects were more likely than males to be photographed, especially in internet news. On television, female news subjects became less visible in older age ranges. Overall, women subjects were also more likely to be identified in news stories in relation to their family status. Although men were more than twice as likely to appear in news stories than women, similar (but relatively small) numbers of men and women were classified as victims.

The results show greater equality in the journalistic workforce. Women comprised more than half of all reporters, announcers and presenters on monitoring day in NZ; in fact, all radio newswriters were female. For both male and female reporters, the single biggest topic on which they reported was politics & government but interestingly, women reported more than twice the proportion of economic news but men more than four times the amount of celebrity & sports. Just 3% of the NZ news stories referenced issues of gender in/equality and human rights, but 9% had a woman or women as a central focus. The one topic of news where women did not appear as a central focus in any story was celebrity & sports.

## **A DAY IN THE NEWS IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND**

The main news story that appeared prominently across all media and formats on 29 September was a weather event – a spring storm that brought snow, rain and wind to almost all parts of the country, disrupting travel, schooling and election campaigning. This event came just days after high winds damaged the Auckland Harbour Bridge, so spring weather and travel disruptions were already on the media agenda. Other than this, there weren't any "big" or universally high-profile stories on monitoring day.

The monitoring day fell during the general election campaign (featuring two women leaders of the main political parties), and a relatively quiet time in terms of Covid-19 developments within NZ. The courts were active on this date, but other than widespread (though fairly low profile) reporting of a court appearance for a gasfitter charged with negligence and the sentencing of a man who killed his young daughter, there were no significant crime stories reported. Sports news was also lower profile than usual given continued constraints on sporting events and fixtures linked to the global pandemic. Election campaigning was somewhat disrupted by the aforementioned weather but there were still some routine policy announcements made on monitoring day. Late in the day, the Serious Fraud Office released a report into the deputy Prime Minister Winston Peters, and he held a late media conference covered by some outlets.

## THE CONTEXT

Unlike many other countries, New Zealand does not have a daily national newspaper, but a number of regional print publications (four of which we sampled). Other than state owned TVNZ and RNZ, most significant media outlets are internationally owned although since the last GMMP, a suite of print publications and the associated Stuff website have reverted to NZ ownership. Broadcast media tend to be concentrated in the hands of a small number of cross-media owners, with an increasing number of informal alliances across media types. We made decisions about sampling in line with WACC advice to choose mainstream media with strong audience share and reputation as news providers. Many of these outlets have also been monitored in previous GMMPs.

Media and news programmes monitored in 2020:

Television: TVNZ's One News (6pm) and Newshub's Live at 6pm (TV3) are the two main, locally produced television news programmes in NZ, retaining significant audience share. TVNZ is state owned (though operates on commercial principles) and Newshub is privately owned.

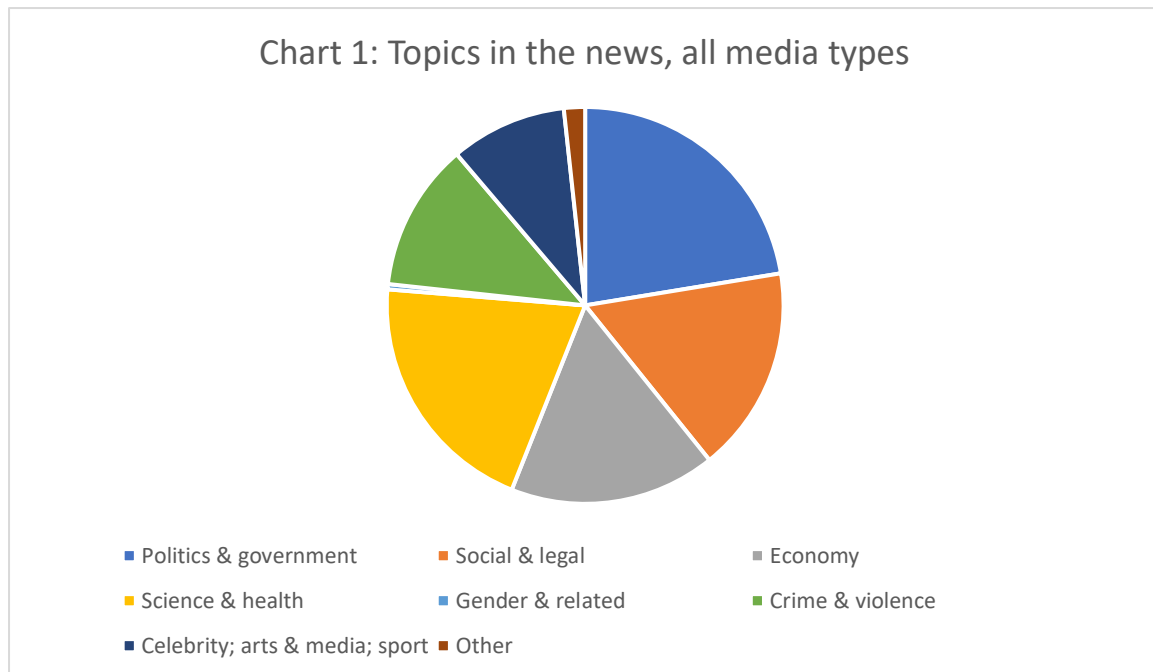
Radio: Newstalk ZB, RNZ National and Mediaworks. Most radio stations in NZ are operated by two large commercial owners (Mediaworks and NZME), and both are represented here (one news bulletin from a commercial music station operated by Mediaworks and one from talkback radio owned by NZME), as well as public service broadcaster RNZ which maintains a respectable audience share nationwide, especially for its morning programming.

Newspapers: Otago Daily Times, Dominion Post, Manawatu Standard, New Zealand Herald. NZ doesn't have a national newspaper so a selection of key publications from around the country were selected, consistent with earlier GMMP samples. The *Otago Daily Times* is NZ's only independent daily newspaper and the other three are owned by the two major newspaper chains.

Online news: Stuff, NZ Herald, RNZ and TVNZ. Virtually all online news providers also operate other media formats in NZ. Stuff draws a chunk of its content from its various newspapers and has the largest online audience, followed by NZH. RNZ and TVNZ offer broadcast-aligned content online, to round out our sample in this category.

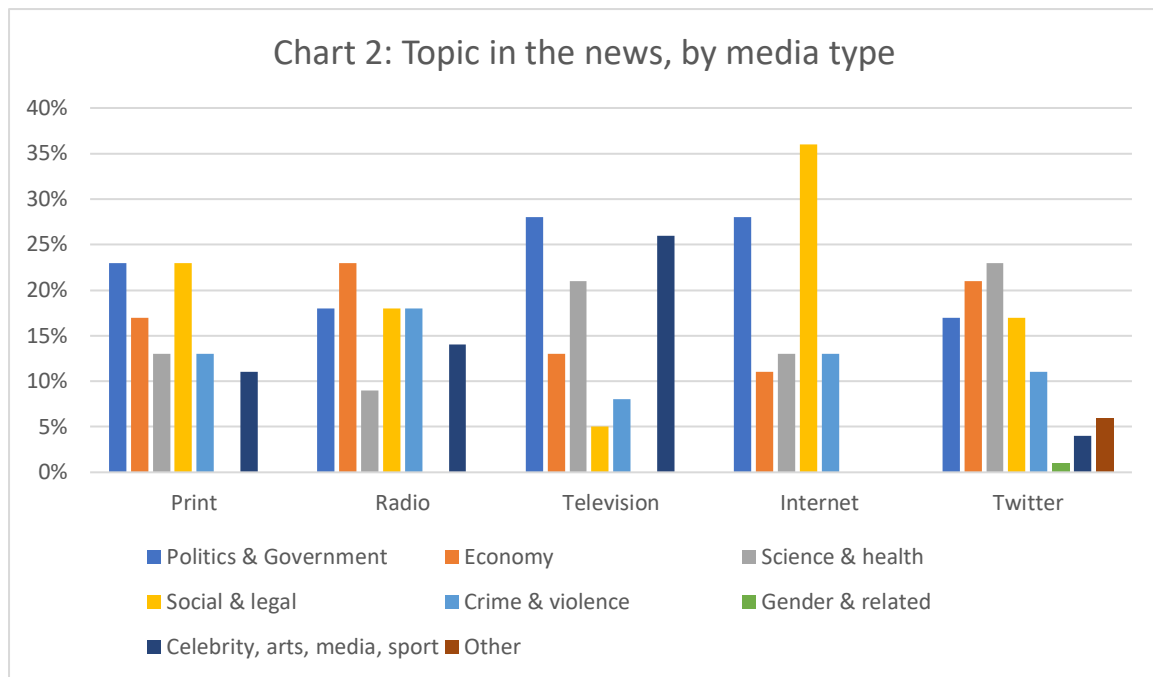
Twitter: @Stuff, @Newshub, @Newstalk, @One News are all regularly updated, well followed news accounts associated with a range of media brands (ie. print/online, radio and television).

## TOPICS IN THE NEWS



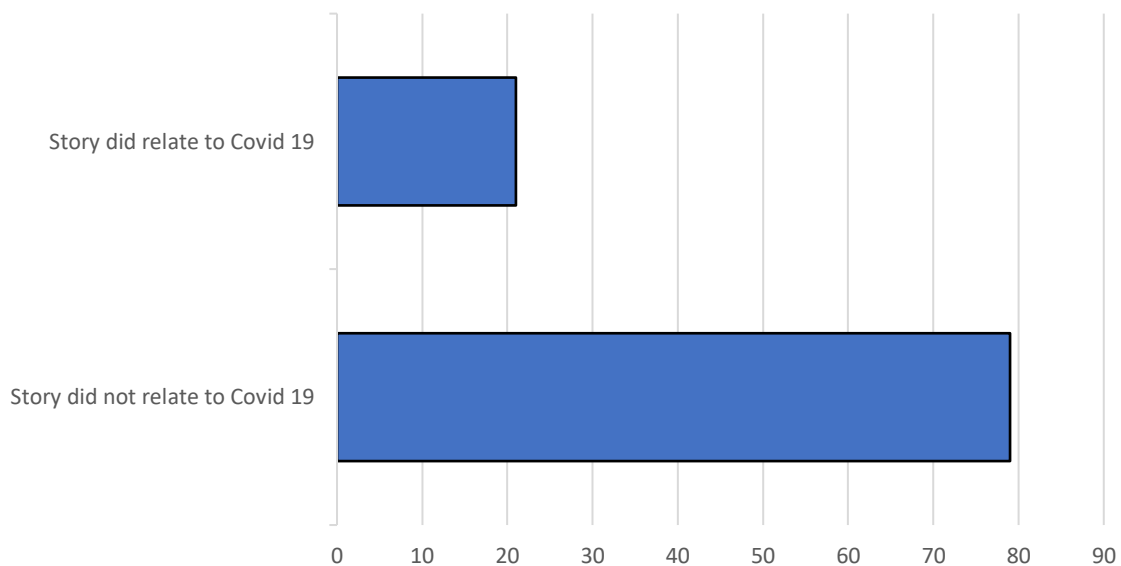
Across the five media formats monitored (print, radio, television, online, Twitter), there were 232 NZ stories included in the global sample. As Chart 1 shows, the largest overall topic of news on monitoring day was politics & government (52 stories, 22%), followed by social & legal news (47 stories, 20%), economy (39 stories, 17%), science & health (39 stories, 17%), crime & violence (28 stories, 12%) and celebrity & sports (22, 10%). Across the whole sample, just one item was classified in the gender & related topic: a tweet about an Australian “Tinder creep” fired from his job for harassing a woman. She was pictured in the tweet along with a screenshot of messaging between the pair.

As captured in Chart 2, broadcast media exhibited slightly different topic interests: on television, the emphasis on sports news saw a quarter of all television stories classified as celebrity & sport (no other media type devoted more than 14% of its items to this topic), and radio devoted 18% of its stories to crime & violence. By far the biggest proportion of social & legal news was published in the online news sample.



## **Covid-19 stories**

Chart 3: Proportion of stories related to Covid-19



Although all stories were classified into the well-established GMMP topic categories, the 2020 coding also noted if a story was related to Covid-19 (see Chart 3). A fifth of stories in the NZ sample did relate to Covid-19 in some way: the highest proportion was on television news (where 26% of items were coded as related to Covid-19) and the lowest proportion was in the online news sample (just 6%). There were some interesting variations in this Covid-19 reporting across media types: over half of television's celebrity & sports stories were related to Covid-19; and the legacy media all had high proportions of their Covid-19

stories falling into the topic of crime & violence whereas for new media, Covid-19 stories were more likely to be about the economy or science & health.

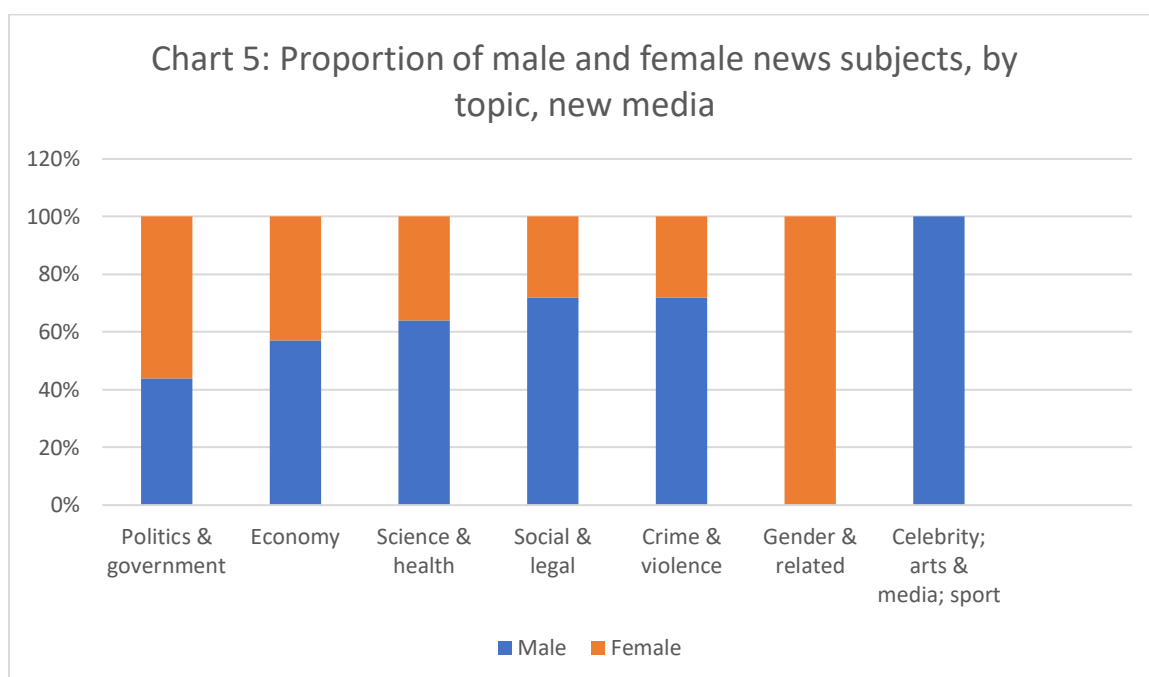
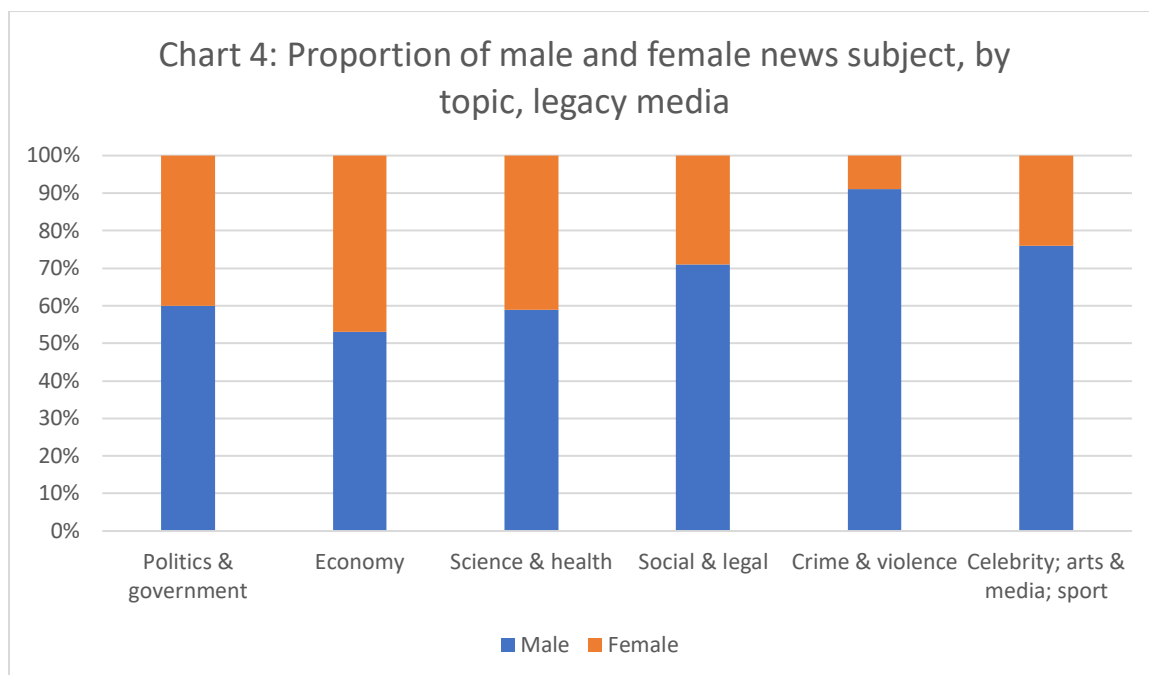
## NEWS SUBJECTS AND SOURCES

A key measure for GMMP is the overall presence of women in the news. Here we turn our attention to the findings for the presence of women as news subjects in the NZ sample. A news subjects is defined as “any person whom the story is about, even if they are not interviewed or quoted”.

| 33%   | 38%   |
|---|---|
| Proportion of women as news subject in NZ legacy media (print, radio, television) | Proportion of women as news subjects in NZ new media (online and Twitter) |
| ↑ up from 18% in 2015   | ↑ up from 23% in 2015   |

The good news is that on monitoring day 2020, NZ women were more visible in the news than at any other time in the past 25 years of GMMP monitoring. The bad news is that this proportion still falls well short of equal. Overall, women were just 33% of news subjects across print, radio and television and slightly higher, 38%, online.

Putting aside the one female who comprised the entirety of subjects in the one gender & related story in the online sample, across all topics of news and media types there was just one topic area where women were more than half of news subjects: in politics & government stories online (see Charts 4 and 5). Arguably, this result can be explained by the monitoring falling during NZ’s election campaign, featuring two female leaders of the main political parties. Indeed, NZ has previously led the world in results for this category, in 2000 when we also had a female Prime Minister, Helen Clark. Further, NZ’s relatively poor performance in 2015 occurred on a monitoring day where there were relatively few political news stories and sports dominated the headlines.



These overall findings are an improvement on the poor results from 2015, where women comprised just 18% of news subjects in legacy media and 23% of online media, but still fall well short of equality. The 2020 findings continue the pattern in NZ of online media being more likely to include women subjects. The findings are also an improvement on NZ's relatively strong performance in the 2005 and 2010 GMMPs, where there were 26% and 23% women subjects respectively.

Interestingly, as Charts 4 and 5 show, news stories about the economy came close to equality in male and female subjects, across both traditional and new media, whereas the category of crime and violence featured just 9% and 28% women subjects respectively. It might be argued that lower levels of women subjects in crime & violence stories is a “positive” result for women, suggesting they are depicted as neither victims nor instigators of crime and violence, though this might also belie the lived realities of women’s lives in Aotearoa New Zealand. Perhaps more unexpected is the proportion of women in stories about the economy, which is close to 50% and much higher than the regional Pacific average (of 27% in women in traditional media and 28% in new media). Many of these economic stories featuring women were specifically about employment; see the qualitative section for examples.

### **Women’s roles and occupations**

Two further and important dimensions of women’s presence in the news relate to their role in the story (for instance, are they an eyewitness to an event or an expert commentator?) and stated position or occupation.

**Women’s roles in the news:** News subjects have different functions in a news story: they might simply be subjects (mentioned or talked about), or be spokespeople, experts or commentators, providers of personal experience or popular opinion, or eyewitnesses to important events.

**On monitoring day in NZ, women comprised 36% of all news subjects, 35% of spokespeople, 34% of experts, and 27% of those sharing personal experience.**

While these proportions are all relatively low, they are consistent with the overall picture of women’s visibility and indicate a good distribution of roles for female subjects. Further, compared to the 2015 findings, women were relatively well represented in the key news roles of spokesperson (at 35% this was up from 21% in 2015, mostly driven by the presence of female spokespeople in news about politics & government) and expert or commentator (mostly in the news area of science & technology).

Broadly equal proportions of female and male subjects were quoted in news stories (62% and 64% respectively). However:

**Female news subjects are more likely than men to be photographed (overall, 21% compared to 15% men), especially in internet news (33% women, 22% men).**

The higher proportions of photographs of both male and female subjects online is at least partly reflective of the looser spatial restrictions for online news stories, which often include many photographs.

Putting aside these small occupational categories completely dominated by one gender, Table 1 shows the proportion of female sources in the sample’s larger categories, capturing the more meaningful results about female occupations represented in the news media.

**Women were more than half of the science and technology professionals (56%) and politician sources (54% overall).**

The latter was the single biggest category of source across the NZ sample, reflecting the



prevalence of politics and government topics on monitoring day, which fell during the general election campaign.

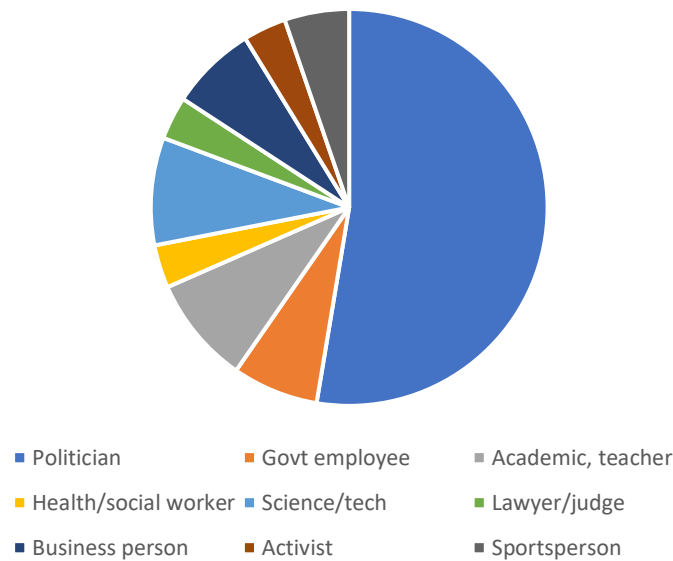
It is also encouraging that during a pandemic, women were roughly half of the academic expert and activist sources. However, greater inequalities appear in other sizeable categories of source, namely government employees, sportspeople and businesspeople. The latter is surprising given the economy was the overall topic in which women were close to equally visible, but the low presence of women sources in sports news continues a well-established trend towards male sports topics and sources, though the proportion of women in 2020 is, as with the findings overall, up from 2015.

Table 1: Women as proportion of main occupational groups in NZ sample

| <b>Occupation</b>               | <b>Percentage of female sources</b> | <b>Overall number of sources</b> |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Science/technology professional | 56%                                 | 9                                |
| Politician/MP                   | 54%                                 | 56                               |
| Activist/civil society member   | 50%                                 | 4                                |
| Academic expert, teacher        | 45%                                 | 11                               |
| Not stated                      | 41%                                 | 22                               |
| Lawyer, judge, magistrate       | 33%                                 | 6                                |
| Health worker, social worker    | 29%                                 | 7                                |
| Government employee             | 24%                                 | 17                               |
| Business person                 | 24%                                 | 17                               |
| Sportsperson, athlete, coach    | 17%                                 | 18                               |
| Villager or resident            | 17%                                 | 6                                |
| Agriculture, mining, fishing    | 14%                                 | 7                                |
| Police, military                | 6%                                  | 16                               |
| Child or young person           | 4%                                  | 4                                |
| Tradesperson                    | 0%                                  | 6                                |

Chart 6 offers a different perspective on the occupational data, presenting numeric data about women sources' occupations, showing which occupations women who appear in the news are most likely to occupy (again, leaving out the categories with one or no women in them). Here the contribution of the politician to women's overall visibility in the news is even clearer. Interestingly though, the presence of women as political news sources is not correlated with a focus **on** gender in political reporting, suggesting the presence of women in politics, including in senior leadership roles, is no longer especially noteworthy in NZ.

Chart 6: Occupation of female sources



Globally, there are various other measures of women's visibility in the news, but some of these results are less meaningful when broken down at country-level, due to the small NZ sample. Worth at least a mention are the age range of television subjects, women as victims and survivors, and reference to family status in the news.

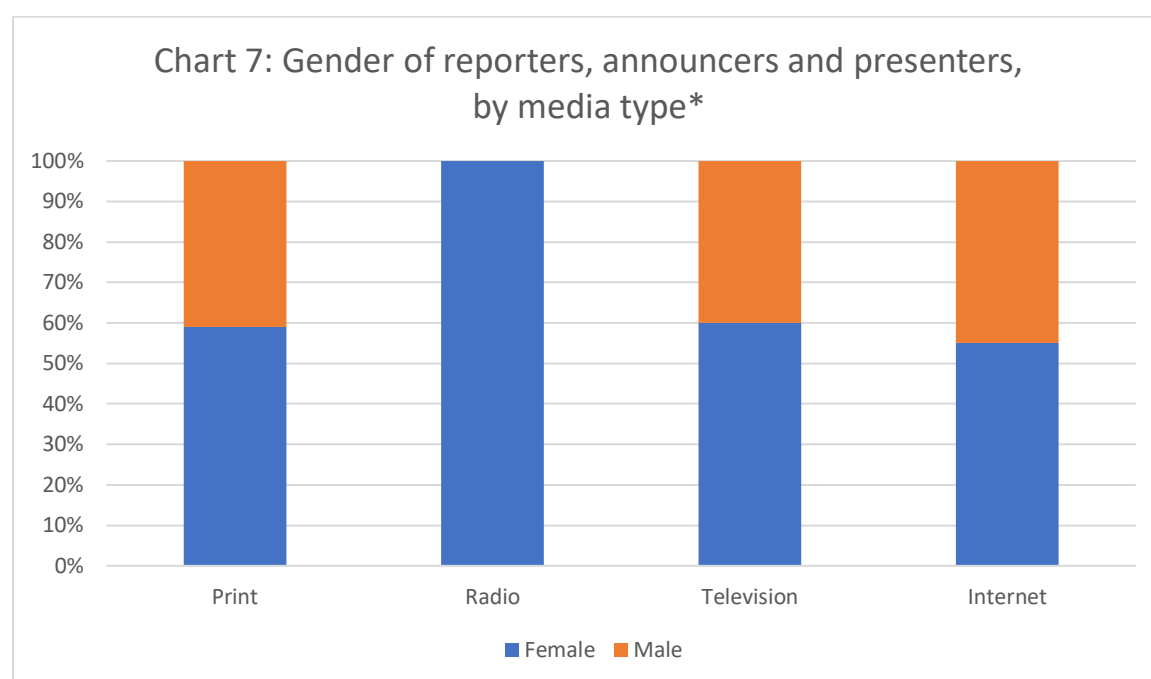
**Age:** The most robust age data comes from the television sample, where all visible subjects were coded by their known or apparent age (in contrast, print subjects are only coded by age in the GMMP when this is specified in a news story). **Women subjects were at their most visible in the 19-34 year age range (35% of television subjects in this age range were women; 65% men), and this proportion tracks slowly downwards as the age range increases:** women were just 26% of those aged 35-49, 23% of 50-64 year olds, and just 14% of the 15 television news subjects aged over 65.

**Victims and survivors:** Some news subjects appear in the news because they are victims or survivors – of accidents, abuse, discrimination, etc. **Although overall men were more than twice as visible in the news as women, there were nine female news subjects and 12 men portrayed as victims, and five men and women classified as survivors.** For both genders, victims were mostly of accidents or deaths, and there was one instance of gender-based discrimination for both. Three of the male victims were victims of murder or violent crime, but there were no women in this category (which also includes domestic violence). Men generally appear in relatively high proportions in these categories in NZ, mostly due to accidents and violent crime. A “typical” example was the fairly widely covered story on monitoring day about three male divers rescued off the coast from Gisborne.

**Family status:** The proportion of women identified in the news in relation to their family status was just 7% in 2020, and 3% for men. These proportions are down from 23% for women and 10% for men in 2015. Women are still more than twice as likely to be identified in relation to family status, but the occurrence of this is much lower than previously and not especially high overall. There is a slight tendency for family status to be mentioned for news subjects, of both genders, in internet news. While the dataset is small, there is some suggestion that women reporters are more likely to identify their female news sources by family status: for female reporters, 11% of their female sources were identified in this

way, compared to 4% of their male sources. Interestingly, male reporters did identify the family status of other men, albeit to a lesser extent than women reporters included their women sources' family connections (in 5% of instances), but did not report family connections of **any** of their female sources.

## JOURNALISTS AND REPORTERS



\*There is no Twitter data reported here because of the very small number of tweets with visible reportage.

**Women comprised well over half of all reporters, announcers and presenters on monitoring day in NZ; indeed, all those involved in reporting and presenting radio news were women.**

Across all media types, these figures are up from the 2015 findings, where women were 46% of print, 64% of radio, 51% of television and 53% of online reporters. There was a slight tendency for women presenters to skew younger than men: 100% of female television presenters were 35-49 years old whereas 67% of male presenters fell into this category and 33% in the 50-64 year range. None of the television reporters in the NZ sample were coded as being over 50 years old.

There was also a slight tendency for male reporters to report more foreign/international or sub-regional news (10% of male reporting comprised international news compared to 7% of women's) but also more local news. Two thirds of women's reportage fell into the category of national news. For both male and female reporters the single biggest topic of reportage was politics & government (27% of women reporters' output and 31% of men's), with women reporting more than twice the proportion of economic news (25% vs 10%) but men reporting more than four times the amount of celebrity & sports news (24% vs 5%), driven by the dominance of male sports reporting.

Although the NZ results, with record proportions of both female sources and female newswriters, suggest a correlation between gender of reporter and the presence of women subjects in news stories, the breakdown of women sources by media type points to the limitations of such an interpretation. Women sources were most prevalent in print media (42% of all print sources were female), followed closely by Twitter (41%) and internet news (37%). As in previous GMMPs, there was a pattern of online or new media averaging better in terms of women's inclusion as sources. Broadcast media lagged well behind in 2020. Television had 26% female sources with radio the poorest performer by far, on just 18% - fewer than one in five - female sources. Yet **every** one of the 24 radio announcers and reporters in our 2020 sample was female.

However, other data indicates that overall female news subjects **are** more likely to appear in stories written by female journalists: 69% of the 68 female sources in the NZ sample appeared in stories written by women. Drilling down by media type shows that male and female reporters of online news tend to use female and male sources to highly similar degrees, with women reporters selecting female news subjects in 31% of instances and men reporters in 29%. This is almost an exact match with the rates at which online news reporters of both genders used male and female sources in the 2015 study.

It should also be noted that the methodology of the GMMP does lead to the inclusion of more sports news for broadcast media outlets (as these tend to include sports as part of the main broadcast, whereas print and internet sources generally report sports on separate sections), and the pattern is for this news to be male dominated. The sports pages and sections of newspapers and online news providers were not included in the sample, though it is reasonable to believe that if they were, these media would have higher proportions of male sources.

## **JOURNALISTIC PRACTICE: ON WOMEN'S CENTRALITY, GENDER STEREOTYPES AND RIGHTS-BASED REPORTING**

Across the Pacific region there were just six stories about gender & related topics on monitoring day, and as noted earlier, just one of these was from NZ. However, NZ did better with respect to referencing issues of gender in/equality and/or human rights in news. Overall, 3% of stories in our 2020 sample did this, and they were across the topics of social & legal, politics & government, and celebrity & sports news. Most of them were reported by internet news outlets.

This finding for 2020 is an improvement on the 2015 results, where 9% of global stories made reference to issues of gender in/equality and/or human rights but NZ reported just one item or less than 1% on monitoring day. Earlier, in 2010, there had been eight stories classified in this way in the local sample. Overall then, NZ news stories focus less on gender topics and issues of in/equality than the global average but tend to demonstrate a consistency in the modest engagement they do demonstrate with these topics. The small numbers here make it difficult to establish any relationship between gender of reporter and attention to this aspect of news but do suggest that online news is more likely to approach reporting using such a lens, perhaps linked to the much greater prevalence of social & legal topics in internet news.

Data were also gathered about women as a central focus in news stories. Overall, 9% of stories in the NZ sample had a woman or women as a central focus, up from 7% in 2015. Again, a good chunk of these stories was published online. A woman or women were most

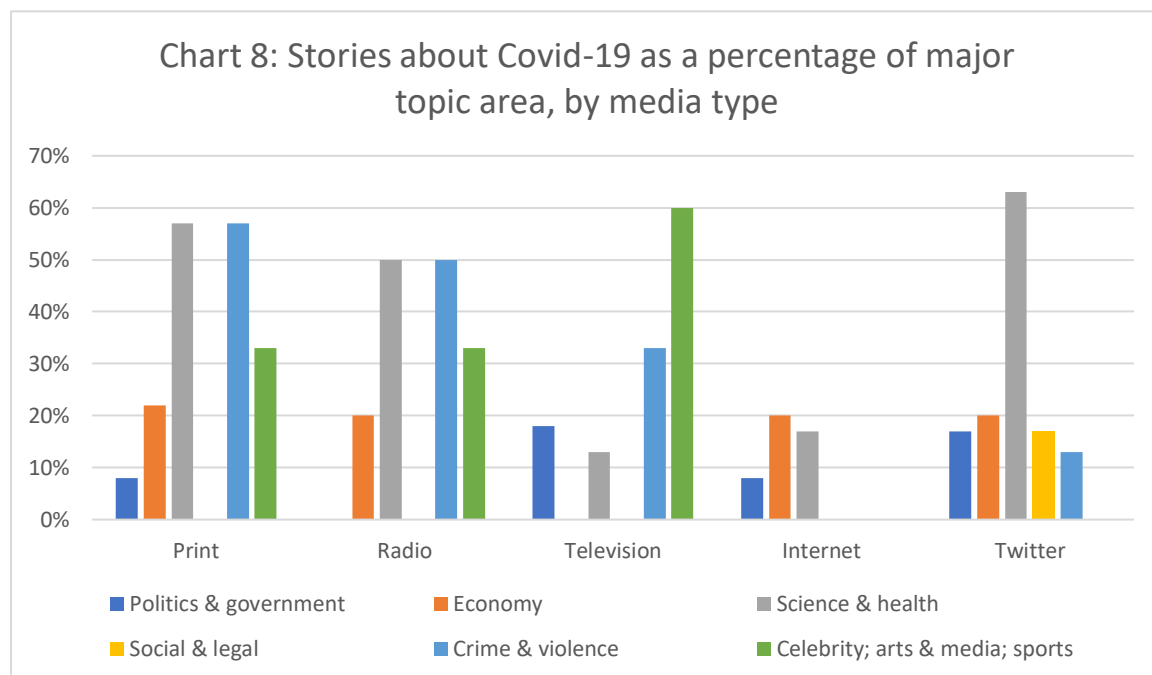
likely to be a central focus in stories about social & legal topics (17% of such stories had women as a central focus), politics & government (11%), the economy (11%), crime (7%) and science & technology (6%). The one topic of news where women did not appear as a central focus was celebrity & sports: of the 19 stories in this category, not one had a focus on female subject/s.

Finally, there were three items in the NZ sample that challenged stereotypes, within the topics of economy and celebrity & sports: one written by a female reporter, one from a male, and one an authorless tweet. It is worth noting here that the tweet (from @OneNews) was about a celebration of 30 years of service to NZ prisons by Fabiola Matapule, featuring a photo and text: "Trailblazer: one of Tonga's first female cops celebrates 30 years as NZ prison officer".



## FOCUS ON COVID-19 NEWS

Overall, a fifth of NZ news stories related to Covid-19 in some way, with similar emphasis across all media types except for internet news which only had 6% of its stories related to the pandemic (see Chart 8). The legacy media all had high proportions of Covid-19 stories within the crime category (57% of print media stories about crime related to Covid-19, 50% of radio and 33% of television crime items) and no stories at all within the topic of social & legal. While it might be expected that during a pandemic high proportions of science & health news would be about Covid-19, this was true of just 13% of television stories on this topic; conversely, Twitter devoted two thirds of its science & health tweets to Covid-19. The emphasis on sports news within the television sample is again apparent, and here over half of the stories were about Covid-19's impact on local and international sport.

The majority of Covid-19 stories (69%) were reported by women, with women particularly likely to be writing the Covid-19 stories that fell into categories of economic news (86% written by women) and crime news (83% written by women). The only category in which male reporters were almost as likely as female reporters to produce stories relating to Covid-19 was celebrity & sports (55% of stories in this category were written by women and 45% by men). News subjects and sources in Covid-19-related stories about crime and sports were at least 80% male, with more gender balanced sourcing and subjects in the topic areas of politics, the economy, and science & health.



## CASE STUDIES: NZ news stories about employment and sport

| MEDIA ACCOUNTABILITY SCORECARD  |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <p>A: Excellent B: Good<br/>C: Fair D: Weak E: Poor</p>   |  |   |
|    |  |   |
|   |  |   |
| <h3>Young jobseekers hit hard</h3> <p>Online version of this newspaper story can be viewed at<br/> <a href="https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/education/new-figures-show-young-job-seekers-hit-hardest-by-covid-19/2NDO6XP7O74JP5ROXL3QECWB5I/">https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/education/new-figures-show-young-job-seekers-hit-hardest-by-covid-19/2NDO6XP7O74JP5ROXL3QECWB5I/</a> </p> |  |   |
| <p><u>Professionalism</u><br/>           Story is fair, accurate and balanced from a gender equality perspective</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Good, 4<br/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair, 3<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Weak, 2<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Poor, 1         </p>   | <p><u>Rights-based approach</u><br/>           Story clearly highlights the human and/or women's rights dimensions of the issue</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Good, 4<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Fair, 3<br/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weak, 2<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Poor, 1         </p> | <p><u>Respect for Freedom of Expression</u><br/>           Story contains the views, perspectives and concerns of women as well as men, told in their own voices</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good, 4<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Fair, 3<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Weak, 2<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Poor, 1         </p> |
| <p>Total points: ____9____</p> <p> <b>A</b>: 10 – 12 points<br/> <b>B</b>: 9 – 10 points<br/> <b>C</b>: 7 – 8 points<br/> <b>D</b>: 5 – 6 points<br/> <b>E</b>: 3 – 4 points         </p>   |  | <p><b>GRADE: B</b></p>  |

The data show near equality in the number of male and female news subjects in the overall topic of economic news, with the subcategory of employment providing two case studies noted by coders as “lost opportunities” for journalists to engage with the gendered dimensions of news, in this case the economic consequences of Covid-19.

The most straightforward of these was an item on RNZ's midday news, which announced the latest unemployment figures but did not mention the different rates of unemployment for male and female workers. A more complex picture of unemployment was presented in the *New Zealand Herald* newspaper story headlined "Young jobseekers hit hard", but again this story about the impact of Covid-19 on 18-24 year olds did not explicitly address gender variations within this age group. However, the story included a photo of young Pacifica woman, Faytarina Tepulolo, with her three young children, and she explains her circumstances in the story, involving a new job following the completion of a course helping with youth career paths.

On one hand, it is encouraging to see a young Pacifica woman appearing as a news subject and source in mainstream news, and representing the "face" of youth un/employment, especially given the positive outcome for her as an individual. However, it is also a lost opportunity that the story does not engage with the wider figures for male and female unemployment, given the pandemic's differing impact on male and female workers.

Less positive is the continued overlooking of women's sport in the NZ media, best demonstrated in the sports segment of Newshub's 6pm television bulletin. In contrast to the One News' sports segment, which was presented by a female presenter and included various female sports angles and sources, Newshub did not include a single female presenter, reporter, or subject on monitoring day. The very same story, about NZ Cricket's announcement of forthcoming summer fixtures under Covid-19 restrictions, was covered differently by the two channels. One News included discussion of the schedule for women's cricket and featured the women's team captain as a source (interviewed over Zoom), whereas Newshub ignored the women's team completely, and included only male administrators and players as sources. In fact, Newshub paid more attention to the schedule for Australian cricket than the New Zealand women.



## MEDIA ACCOUNTABILITY SCORECARD

A: Excellent B: Good  
C: Fair D: Weak E: Poor



### Newshub sport: 29 September

#### Professionalism

Story is fair, accurate and balanced from a gender equality perspective

- ☐ Good, 4  
☐ Fair, 3  
☐ Weak, 2  
☒ Poor, 1

#### Rights-based approach

Story clearly highlights the human and/or women's rights dimensions of the issue

- ☐ Good, 4  
☐ Fair, 3  
☐ Weak, 2  
☒ Poor, 1

#### Respect for Freedom of Expression

Story contains the views, perspectives and concerns of women as well as men, told in their own voices

- ☐ Good, 4  
☐ Fair, 3  
☐ Weak, 2  
☒ Poor, 1

Total points: \_\_\_\_3\_\_\_\_

- A**: 10 – 12 points  
**B**: 9 – 10 points  
**C**: 7 – 8 points  
**D**: 5 – 6 points  
**E**: 3 – 4 points

**GRADE: E**

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Overall, women in Aotearoa New Zealand were more visible in the 2020 GMMP than in any previous study. Women reporters and presenters comprised over half of all newsworkers on monitoring day, and women were 33% and 38% of news subjects in legacy and new media respectively. This is an improved result for women's visibility but falls well short of equality.

As in 2000, the presence of high-profile women in political leadership has positively impacted these findings for news content. Monitoring day in 2020 fell during the NZ General Election campaign and the dominance of politics on the day's news agenda (it was NZ's single biggest news topic), combined with the newsworthiness of women politicians, pushed women to the fore of this news category. Fifty four percent of the 56 politician news sources on monitoring day were women. Women also comprised over half (56%) of science and technology news sources, although this category was much smaller, despite the finding that one fifth of our news stories related to Covid-19 in some way.

Sports news clearly remains male territory in the local media landscape. Monitoring day offered an emblematic result, when the entire sports section of Newshub's 6pm news bulletin included no female presenter, reporter or news source. A story about NZ Cricket releasing its summer schedule was covered differently by the two television networks: One News' male reporter included information about the schedule for women's cricket and interviewed captain Sophie Devine via Zoom whereas Newshub neglected the women's game altogether and interviewed only male administrators and players. Such results are not anomalies in the GMMP: our 2015 report remarked on the NZ Herald devoting its first five news pages to the Black Caps win in the semifinal of the Cricket World Cup.

Put simply, 25 years of GMMP analysis show that women's visibility in the NZ media is intrinsically linked to the day's news agenda. If the news of the day is dominated by politics, women will be relatively well represented (at least when our political parties are led by women); if it's about sport, women sources will be virtually invisible.

New Zealand's overall results, featuring record proportions of women both producing and appearing in the news, suggest a tentative correlation between women as newsworkers and women as news sources. However, despite decades of rhetoric about the potential of female reporters to boost women's visibility in the news, this relationship is far from clear. For instance, radio news featured fewer than one in five female sources, yet **every** one of the 24 radio announcers and reporters in our 2020 sample was female. Other data in our GMMP dataset indicates that male and female reporters of online news tend to use female and male sources to highly similar degrees, with women reporters selecting female news subjects in 31% of instances and male reporters in 29%. Further research and monitoring is necessary to better understand the impact of gender on reporting in the NZ context, particularly given the glacial change in sports news, and concomitant claims that newsroom culture in New Zealand is masculine and toxic (e.g. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/sexual-harassment-and-bullying-workers-claim-toxic-culture-in-sky-tvs-sports-department/ZVZGBEDHS7FDJV5E3XKJH7PMWA/>; <https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/mediawatch/audio/2018796576/sportscaster-s-conduct-put-spotlight-back-on-media-culture>)

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN 2021-2025**

Over the next five years, the following actions will be taken to advance gender equality in and through the media in NZ.

- Students studying journalism and media at Massey University will be trained in media content analysis around gender, and the NZ results will be included as set reading material in relevant courses. Results will also be shared with colleagues at other universities, for possible inclusion in communication, politics, sports and sociology classes.
- The NZ results will be shared with staff at the Massey University Journalism School, and they will be invited to share these results with their students (future journalists) and industry members, from a range of media, who sit on their Advisory Board.
- The local results will be promoted through forums such as The Conversation, and academic and industry publications and seminars.
- The NZ results will also be shared with the National Council of Women, which has previously expressed an interest in undertaking research work around gender and the media, as well as Sport New Zealand.

## Annex 1. Methodology

A key characteristic of longitudinal research is the assessment of change over time on the observed indicators. In the case of the 2020 Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), the methodology, indicators, approach to data collection and analysis are consistent with past editions of the research in order to allow for the usual historical comparisons.

### *Process*

The global monitoring day scheduled initially for the first quarter of 2020 was postponed to later in the year due to the upheavals caused by the first coronavirus (Covid-19) wave worldwide. As the April monitoring day approached, it became quickly clear that proceeding as planned would result in a news sample that would be almost entirely focused on coronavirus stories. A new need emerged to address the practicalities of monitoring during the lockdowns and curfews imposed to contain the spread of the virus, as the regular sit-down communal coding sessions were now out of the question for most teams. The risks to health and livelihoods, the need to find ways of coping with everyday life, would shift the GMMP down on the ladder of priorities for the volunteers, potentially increasing the drop-out rate. These new challenges called for a pause on the plans to search for solutions and put in place the tools and resources necessary before monitoring could proceed.

The GMMP technical advisory group and the database development team Code for Africa worked to systematically address the issues. A new monitoring date was set for September, the coding tools were tweaked to capture Covid-19 stories without compromising on the ability to compare results across time based on story topics, exhaustive audio-visual training resources on how to code in a pandemic were put in place, electronic coding instruments were developed and the teams were re-trained in numerous webinars.

As with previous waves of the GMMP, the initial data capture was conducted offline by volunteer teams across the 116 participating countries. For the 2020 GMMP, a spreadsheet version of the coding sheets was provided, to allow for electronic recording of the observations.

In the period leading up to the monitoring day, a series of regional and national training sessions were organised to build a uniform understanding of the teams on the methodology and approach to coding. The teams received training on media selection, newscast and article selection, and the number of media to code.

For the 2020 GMMP, teams could choose from two possible options for the monitoring:

- **Full monitoring**, whose results provide a comprehensive picture of the status of gender equality dimensions in news media.
- **Short monitoring**, a shorter version which focuses on the key GMMP indicators, for teams who wished to participate but for various reasons could not implement the full monitoring.

To ensure accuracy in the coding process, radio and television bulletin were recorded, and copies of digital and print media items were collected. Across the different media types- both for the full and short monitoring-monitors captured information about the story, its main themes and the people in the story, as journalists, as story subjects and sources. Additionally, three optional special questions, unique to each country, allowed individual countries to analyse issues of national interest. For standardisation purposes, as well as the multilingual nature of this study, all responses were numerically coded from fixed lists.

To enable comparability of data gathered from a pandemic-heavy news agenda with the historical results, an additional question was included which asked whether the story was related to Covid-19. For such stories, monitors were requested to select the most relevant secondary topic. While global news stories had diversified to pre-pandemic levels by the global monitoring day in September 2020,

the regional analysis demonstrated the significance of this question, particularly for North America and the Middle East, which recorded 37% and 36% of Covid-19-related stories respectively.

#### *Media bands*

The media bands system was introduced in 2005 to ensure a more even spread of data and also serve as each country's reference point on the minimum number of media to monitor. This system was retained for the 2020 GMMP and was updated with the input of the country coordinators.

#### *Weighting*

While the GMMP seeks to understand how gender is represented in media across the world, differences in media access and impact across the participating countries mean that a simple aggregation of the data would lead to biased results. For example, if a country like France submitted data from 100 media, the entries from a smaller country like Fiji would have little, if any, impact on the results. Additionally, while two countries may have similar numbers of newspapers, their impact, in terms of the number of people who read them, may be significantly different. To address these challenges, GMMP 2020 updated, re-tested and applied the weighting system first developed for the 2005 edition.

#### *Accuracy*

The GMMP involved several thousand people across 116 countries from diverse gender and media stakeholder groups, with different research abilities and working in a wide range of languages. For a study of this scale, it was crucial that accuracy was considered at each stage, to maintain the high levels achieved in previous years. Data entry and processing errors can have severe biasing effects on the data analysis, resulting in misrepresentation of the observed variables. To minimise this risk, we leveraged on a variety of automated processes, as well as the extensive media monitoring experience of the country coordinators.

#### *Limitations*

As with any study, great effort was made to ensure accuracy of the data. As observed in previous GMMPs, an exact error of measurement cannot be determined due to the study's magnitude. Conventional error measurement would involve different researchers coding the same story and then calculating a level of error from the differences between the results. Although this was not possible for GMMP, we followed best practice to make sure that there were minimal errors in the data capture and analysis generation process.

#### *About Code for Africa*

[Code for Africa](#) (CfA) is the continent's largest network of indigenous African civic technology and investigative data journalism laboratories, with over 70 staff in 19 countries, who build digital democracy solutions that are intended to give citizens unfettered access to actionable information that empowers them to make informed decisions and that strengthen civic engagement for improved public governance and accountability.

## **Annex 2. List of Monitors**

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