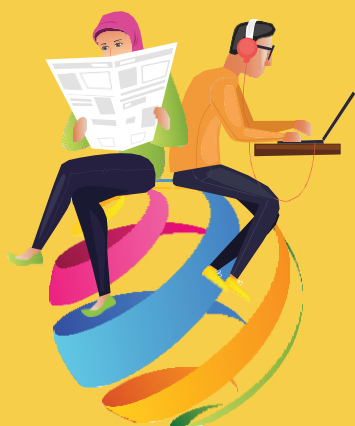


WHO MAKES THE NEWS?



GMMP

Global Media
Monitoring
Project

2020

AUSTRIA

NATIONAL REPORT



GMMP

Global Media
Monitoring
Project

2020



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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.'¹

The first noteworthy change in women's overall presence in the news was registered in 2005 in the third iteration of the research.² 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 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."³

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 and sometimes challenged by the media. Who is behind the camera, who sits in the newsroom and who controls the news desk have an influence on what the public get to read, hear and watch about the world's events and GMMP calls attention to the extent to which news media continue to discharge their responsibilities as the fourth estate.

In 2015, 33 countries participated in GMMP 2015 and in 2020, 32 countries took part (see Annex 2). While there has been a core set of European countries which have participated in all or nearly all the GMMP monitoring days, 2020 was particularly challenging because of Covid-19. That so many people, coordinators and monitors did so, is a testament to their and our commitment to the broader GMMP project. While the impact of the pandemic continues to be felt as I write this report in June 2021, it is interesting that on 2020 monitoring day, only 27% of stories were coded as associated with Covid-19. This gives us confidence to suggest that the data discussed in this report continue to serve an important comparative function in relation to previous iterations.

National Context

In terms of usage, the Austrian media landscape is characterized by a rather slow but steady shift from traditional to digital news usage. TV news, printed newspapers and radio programs still act as the most important news sources, but these are increasingly being complemented with online news websites and news via social media. In this information environment, the public service broadcaster *ORF* in the TV, radio and online sectors, and the daily newspaper with by far the widest reach, *Kronen Zeitung*, in the print and online sectors, continue to be the two market-dominating groups. The online sector is more dynamic with the successful website of the quality newspaper *Der Standard* and the mail account provider *gmx.at* among the top online news sources. News access by social media in Austria happens mainly via *Facebook*, *WhatsApp* and *YouTube*; *Twitter* is only of marginal importance¹.

The state plays an essential role for national media, with subsidies and government advertisements, especially in private-commercial media companies, and the delegation of political members to the board of Austria's national public service broadcaster (*ORF*)². Austria has had a turbulent few years in terms of media policy, particularly since the change of government in 2017, when the long-standing coalition of social democrats *SPÖ* and right-wing conservatives *ÖVP*, was replaced by a coalition of the *ÖVP* with the far-right populist *FPÖ*. This government was criticized for its attempts to influence public discourse through rigid message control. Above all, however, the *FPÖ*'s multiple attacks and attempts to influence the *ORF* and critical reporting daily newspapers caused criticism not only within Austria³. In the wake of this, Austria lost its status in the World Press Freedom index as a country with a good situation for press freedom.⁴ After the *FPÖ*'s so-called *Ibiza scandal* in 2019, this government was terminated and replaced by the current coalition of the *ÖVP* with the Green party. The dominant topics in Austrian news coverage since 2015 have been the migration debate, the *Ibiza scandal* and, soon after, the Covid-19 pandemic.

Gender in Austria's news media: The public service broadcaster *ORF* actively attempts to overcome the issue of gender inequality. On 17 September 2012, the broadcasting corporation put into force the *Equal Opportunities Plan* to eliminate the existing under-representation and any existing discrimination of women, in the workplace as well as in the *ORF*'s media content (radio, TV, online). In areas where women are under-represented, women's participation is to be increased to 45% (*ORF Act*, § 30a). The annual gender equality report highlights that in 2019, 44.7% of the *ORF* employees were female.⁵

Representative surveys, such as the Journalism report I and VI⁶ show that the share of female journalists in Austria has risen from 42% in 2006 to 47% in 2019. Some progress in women's presence in journalism is evident. The gender ratio of journalists working in Austria's newsrooms is now nearly balanced. However, on the middle and top management levels women are still nearly invisible.

¹ Gadringer, S. Holzinger, R., Sparviero, S., Trappel, J., Gómez-Neumann, A. (2020). Digital News Report 2020. Detailliergegebnisse für Österreich. Fachbereich Kommunikationswissenschaft. Salzburg, Universität Salzburg.

² Trappel, J. (2017). Media Landscape Austria. Online: <https://medialandscapes.org/country/austria> [2021-05-05].

³ Sparviero, S., Trappel, J. (2019). Country Chapter: Austria. In: Newman, N., Fletcher, R., Kalogeropoulos, A., Kleis Nielsen, R. [ed.] Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2019. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. Oxford. University of Oxford.

⁴ Reporters without Borders (2019). Austria. Online: <https://rsf.org/en/austria> [2019-12-01]

⁵ Annual Gender Equality Report, 2019. https://zukunft.orf.at/show_content.php?sid=147&pvi_id=2285&pvi_medientyp=t&oti_tag=Dokumente.

⁶ Kaltenbrunner, A., Karmasin, M., Kraus, D., Zimmermann, A. (2007). *Der Journalistenreport 1. Österreichs Medien und ihre Macher. Eine empirische Erhebung*, Vienna: Facultas.

Kaltenbrunner, A., Lugschitz, R., Karmasin, M., Luef, S., Kraus, D. (2020). *Der österreichische Journalismus-Report. (VI) Eine empirische Erhebung und eine repräsentative Erhebung*, Vienna: Facultas.

Previous GMMP studies (1995, 2000, 2005, 2010 and 2015) showed that women are strongly underrepresented in Austrian news media. In 2015, only 21% of news subjects (the people covered in the news) in offline media, and 16% in online news were female. In 2010, the overall presence of women was 25%.⁷ GMMP also showed an absence of women's voices in news content. The presence of women as news personnel (announcers, presenters and reporters) varied in 2015 in Austria: Only 39% of the authors of printed news were female, whereas in TV newscasts, women made up 81% of reporters, announcers and presenters. In radio newscasts women slightly outnumbered men, with a total of 54%.

⁷ Prandner, D., Kirchhoff, S. (2015). *Global Media Monitoring Project 2015. National Report - Austria*.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For 20 years now, the GMMP has been monitoring gender representation in Austrian news reporting. The results of the GMMP 2020 show an ongoing under-representation of women in Austrian news media. The national team coded a total of 151 news items (articles and reports) from internet news sites, radio, television and print, including overall 345 news sources and subjects (people mentioned in the news) and 199 identified reporters. The year 2020 and therefore also the day of data collection were dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic. News topics were regularly connected to political, economic and social impacts of the global health crisis. Overall, the topics of politics and government, economy, science and health as well as social and legal issues were most prominently represented within the examined news media.

For Austria there is a remarkable consistency in the topics. Regarding news subjects, meaning people covered in the news, a clear gender difference was observed, with only about one quarter of all news subjects being female. Women also appeared less often in high-profile positions than men. The identified news reporters were, except for television, predominantly male as well. Only very few articles had women as a major focus and hardly any article addressed issues of gender equality. The results showed that gender stereotypes remain widely unchallenged in the observed news stories.

Of the many influences on how we view women and people of other genders, media are the most pervasive and one of the most powerful, not only since the development of online and social media. All forms of media communicate, i.e., construct images of people, many of which shape or perpetuate stereotypical and limiting perceptions. When it comes to questions of gender equality in and through news media, we see a constant under- and misrepresentation of women and/or minorities, due to a certain selection of news and topics, interview partners, experts, presenters and gender inequalities within newsrooms and in particular on the management level.

As the results demonstrate, there still is a long way to go for a more gender-equal and diverse news coverage in Austria.

A DAY IN THE NEWS IN AUSTRIA

The news on the monitoring day were dominated by regulations and developments around the Covid-19 pandemic. At the edge of the second wave in Austria, developments in the economic sector dominated the news, with stories about the rising unemployment rates and possible counterstrategies. Gender-specific or gender-aware news stories on the effects of the Corona restrictions dealt with the situation of many women balancing working from home and domestic and care work. The rising numbers of Corona patients in neighboring countries (especially Germany and Slovakia) were also of importance.

Besides Corona, in the aftermath of the *Ibiza Scandal* of 2019, the domestic news covered new developments in the committee of inquiry. On an international level, the presidential debate in the USA was covered as well as the conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

THE CONTEXT

Country Background

The Austrian media sector is largely characterized by two media organizations. In the broadcasting market, the Austrian public service media organization *ORF*, which is also the largest Austrian media organization, holds a share of 31.8% of the TV-market and 74% of the radio-market (2019). But being a rather small country, the private commercial TV-programs from Germany still dominate the market. National commercial TV-channels established themselves (*Puls4*, *ATV*, *ServusTV*), but still remain rather marginal with about 3% market share.

With the *Kronen Zeitung*, the second most important player in the Austrian media system, *Mediaprint* owns the newspaper which has dominated the Austrian Newspaper market for decades (27.2% coverage 2019), but *Mediaprint* is also well involved in the segment of quality press, with the *Kurier*. The second big player is the *Styria Medien AG*, owner of *Kleine Zeitung* and *Presse* among others. The concentration of the print market is regarded as very high.

This overall situation is also partly reflected in the online sector, with the websites of *ORF* (*orf.at*) and *Kronen Zeitung* (*kronen.at*) as the most-used news-related websites. However, a few other media organizations managed to establish themselves; i.e., *derstandard.at* as a quality news-focused website or *heute.at* and *oe24.at* with tabloid news.

The usage of news in a digitalized high-choice media environment in Austria can be characterized as still rather traditional, but with a steady and ongoing chance to more digital news sources. *Twitter* for example has hardly been used in Austria during the last years but has come to be a thriving news and information source within the past months.

Media monitored

- **Newspapers:** The rationale for the selection of the newspapers *Kronen Zeitung* and *Der Standard* is that both represent the most read newspapers in Austria in the segment of tabloid news (*Kronen Zeitung*) and quality press (*Der Standard*). Furthermore, the *Kronen Zeitung* is the most read newspaper altogether.
- **Television:** We chose two of the main television news providers for Austria. *ORF2* is one of the two public service television channels, and the overall most-used news source in Austria⁸. Among the few national commercial television providers (*Puls4*, *Servus TV*, *ATV*) we opted for the *ATV news*, which is the most used among them.
- **Radio:** We selected the three most used radio channels in the segments of popular national, regional, and information and culture (*Ö3*, *Radio Niederösterreich* and *Ö1*). All of them belong to the Austrian public service media organization *ORF*.
- **Internet:** Based on the data of the Digital News Report for Austria⁹, which is also in line with the news-related ranking of alexa.com for Austria, we chose the most used online news websites regarding different media types, like public service media and quality news, tabloid news, more locally oriented news and digital-only offerings: *orf.at*, *kronen.at*, *gmx.at*, *standard.at*, *kurier.at*, *heute.at*, *kleinezeitung.at*. Except for *gmx.at*, which is digital-only (it provides mostly German news), this selection represents the online appearance of major national legacy news organizations. *Orf.at* is the online presence of the Austrian public-service media provider *ORF*; *kronen.at* belongs to the tabloid *Kronen Zeitung*, Austria's largest newspaper. *Gmx.at* is actually a provider for email-accounts, but provides daily news as well; *standard.at* is the successful website of the Austrian quality newspaper *Der Standard*; *kurier.at* belongs to the newspaper *Der Kurier*, a provider of quality news; *heute.at* is the website of the

⁸ Gadringer, S. Holzinger, R., Sparvierio, S., Trappel, J., Gómez-Neumann, A. (2020). Digital News Report 2020. Detaillierergebnisse für Österreich. Fachbereich Kommunikationswissenschaft. Salzburg, Universität Salzburg.

⁹ Ibid.

tabloid newspaper *heute*; *kleinezeitung.at* is the website of the more locally oriented newspaper *Die Kleine Zeitung*.

- **Twitter:** We did not include Twitter because in Austria, it still does not act as an important news distributor. Over the last years, Twitter was only rarely used on a regular basis and it rather functions, for some news stations, as an occasional opportunity to post links from their news websites to specific articles. Austrian news stations do not use Twitter as a platform to share ideas or comments or to have a discussion with their readers. However, individual journalists do use Twitter as a platform for these purposes and, generally, Twitter is gradually gaining attention and influence in the Austrian media landscape.

The monitoring team

The monitoring team consisted of five PhD candidates, four of whom are staff members from three different units (Media Use and Digital Cultures, Transcultural Communication, Media Politics and Media Economics) of the Communication Studies Department, and one team member of the interdisciplinary Doctorate School (DSP) *gender transcultural* at the Paris Lodron University of Salzburg, Austria. None of the team members had participated in the GMMP before. Two of the team members coded the TV and radio news items, while the other three coded the newspaper and Internet news items.

News items

The monitoring team coded 29 newspaper articles, from which 14 stem from tabloid newspapers and 15 from quality press newspapers, and 87 news stories within the Internet sample. The broadcasting sample included 18 news stories on the radio, 5 stories on commercial television and 12 on public service television.

TOPICS IN THE NEWS

The topics in the news were highly influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic and its outcomes for the Austrian economy. Due to the rising number of infections in the neighboring countries Germany and Slovakia as well as in Austria, news coverage on all examined news sources was mainly about the increasing rates of unemployment and the impact of the health crisis on the Austrian economy. The day of the data collection was further dominated by political topics such as the presidential debate in the US and conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Thus, a high number of the coded news items fell into the respective category of politics and government issues.

Apart from these two main topical areas, crime and violence were also relevant, although not to the same extent as politics and economy. For example, the category of crime and violence included news about the *Ibiza Scandal*. Other news stories covered science and health, which were mainly Covid-19 related or focused on celebrities, arts and media, sports or others.

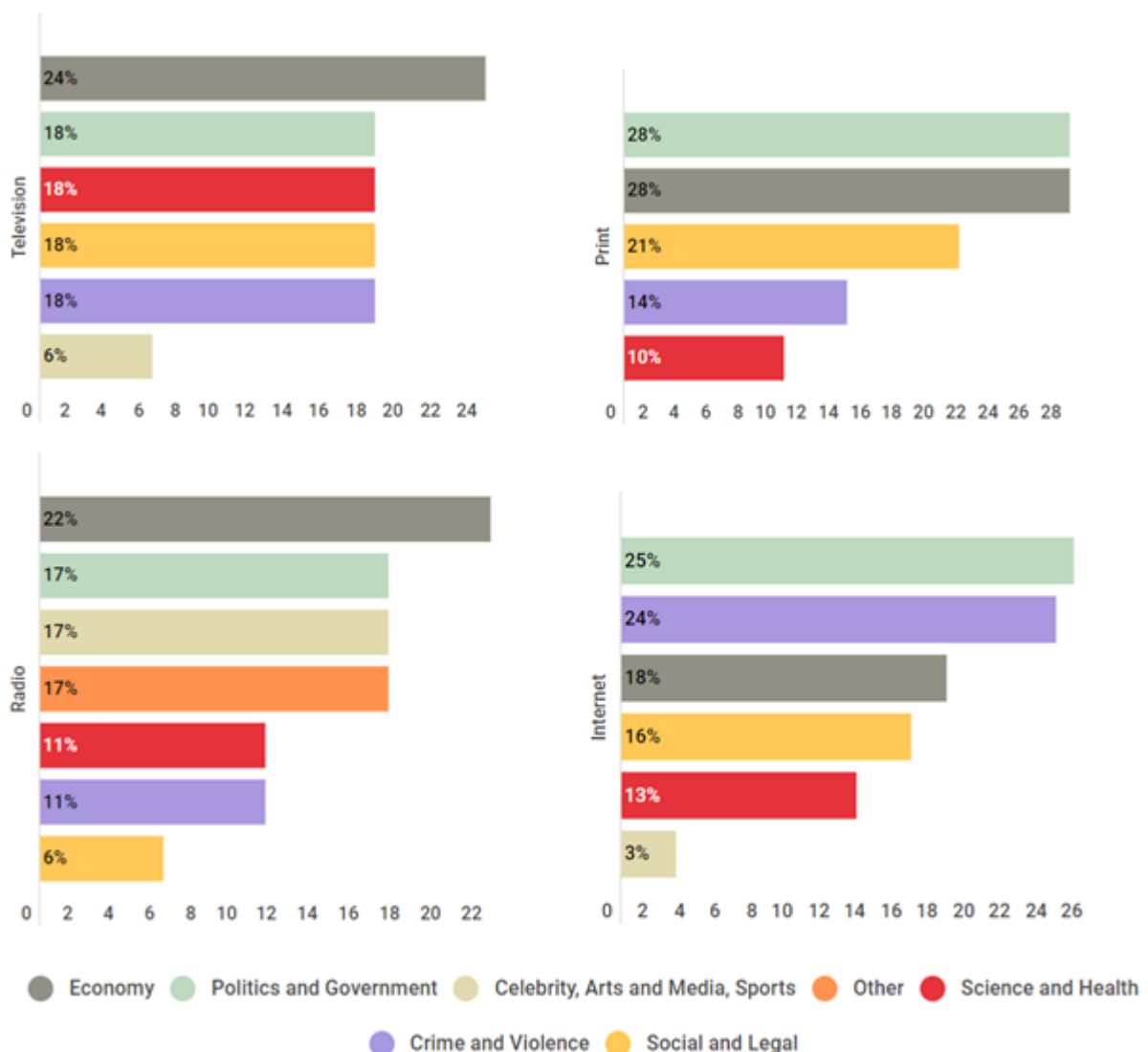


Figure 1: Major news topics in Austria by medium
 Base: Television (17), Print (29), Radio (18), Internet (87)

Graphic 2 shows which topics were prevalent in Covid-19-related news coverage. As mentioned above, the pandemic influenced almost all areas of the covered news topics on the day of the data collection.

Overall, while the news mainly discussed the pandemic in the context of science and health issues, it was also centered in news items regarding economy, as well as social and legal issues throughout all channels examined.

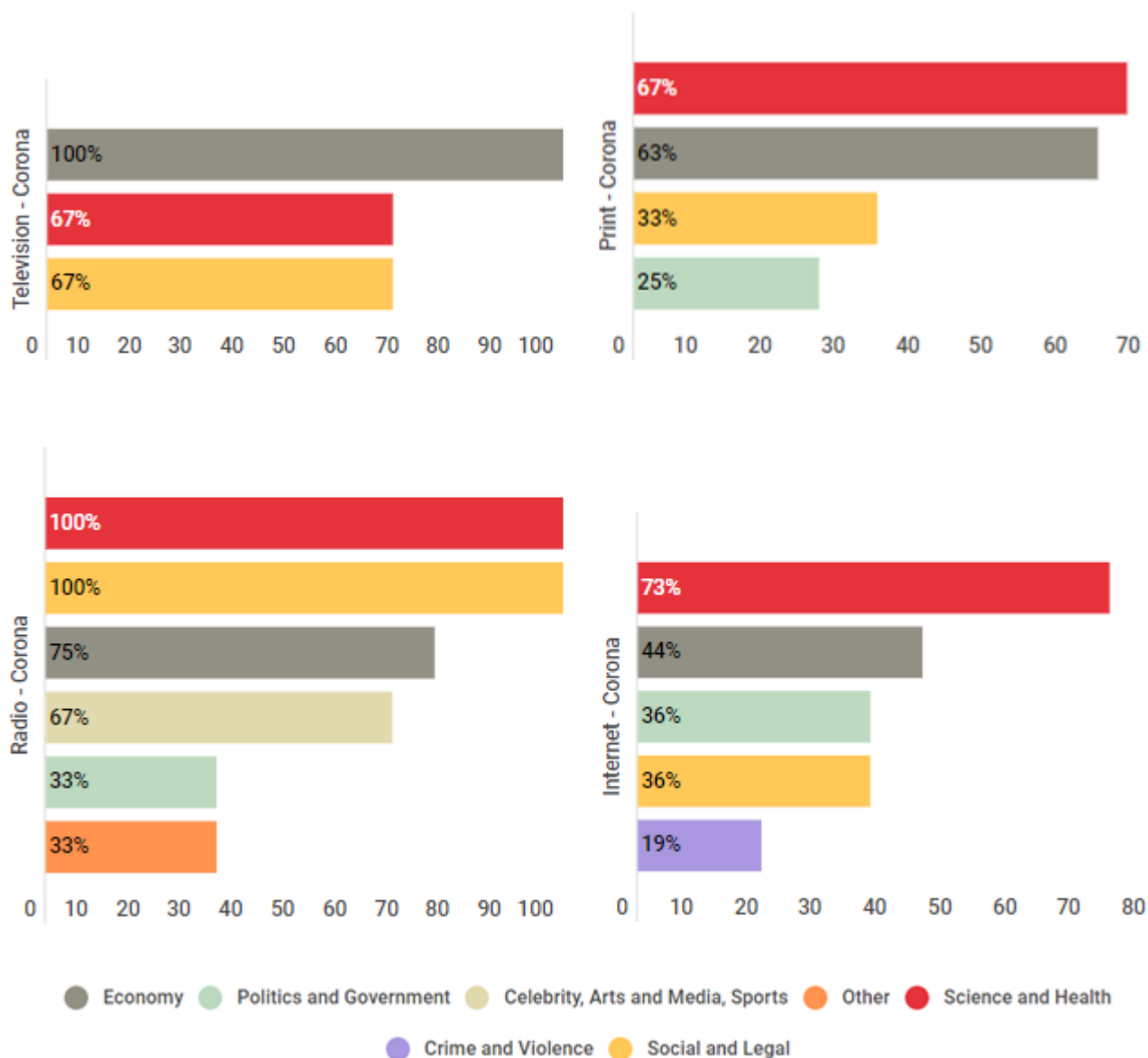


Figure 2: News Story related to Covid19, by topic and medium

Base: Television: Economy (4), Science and health (3), Social and Legal (3); Print: Science and health (3), Economy (8), Social and Legal (6), Politics and Government (8); Radio: Science and health (2), Social and Legal (1), Economy (4), Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports (3), Politics and Government (3), Other (3); Internet: Science and health (11), Economy (16), Politics and Government (22), Social and Legal (14), Crime and Violence (21)

NEWS SUBJECTS AND SOURCES

Overall presence: Out of a total of 345 news subjects only 91 were women. Overall, women account for 25% of the people appearing in news stories in traditional media (print, radio and television) and for 27% of the internet sample. Looking at the different types of media, the relation between female and male news subjects was most balanced in print with 28% female news subjects, followed by internet (27%) and television (26%). The media type with the lowest proportion of female new subjects was radio (12%).

The major topics politics and government as well as economy had a vast majority of over 70% of news subjects being male. News stories about crime and violence showed a similar split with slightly over 20% of female news subjects. Although men dominated most topics, there are some notable differences between traditional news media and internet news media. The largest difference in percentage could be found in social and legal news stories, where 17% of the news subjects in traditional news media (print, radio and television) and 43% in internet news media were female. However, this gap can be explained by the small total number of stories in this field in traditional news media. A similar contrast can be observed in news reports related to science and health as well as celebrity, arts and media, sports, whose significance, again, is limited by the low total number of examined stories. In multimedia web components, female news subjects (32%) were slightly more represented than men (29%).

Functions in the stories: Women appeared less often in high-profile positions than men. In print, radio and television news stories, only 6% of experts commenting on a topic and 28% of spokespersons were female. While the proportion of female spokespersons is relatively similar in internet news stories (27%), female experts are much more represented online with 37% or 11 news subjects.

Slightly more than 20% of politicians or members of parliaments appearing in the examined news items, and one third of government employees and public servants were female. At the same time, women accounted for 60% of office or service workers or non-management workers. However, this split may again be explained by the overall small number of news subjects and sources in this field. The only person identified as a homemaker or parent was female. Two retirees were also women.

Portrayal as victims/survivors: The portrayal of victims showed very limited results. In two cases, women were identified as victims of domestic violence, rape or murder. They account for the total number of people portrayed as victims. One male news subject was referred to as a survivor of domestic violence, rape or murder.

Identification by family status: In the observed news media, 12% of female and 3% of male subjects were identified by their family status. This gap is lower in internet news media with 8% of women and 8% of men being identified by their family status.

Special questions: The special questions defined for Austria showed very clear results. In none of the observed news media reports was a news subject identified as being a member of a religious minority, as having a disability or as being an immigrant or refugee. However, previous studies have shown that marginalized groups are generally less likely to appear as subjects in news media.¹⁰

¹⁰ Fleischmann, A. (2016). *Frauenfiguren des zeitgenössischen Mainstreamfilms*. A Matter of What's in the Frame and What's Out. Wiesbaden: Springer VS.

Prommer, E., Linke, C. (2019). *Ausgeblendet: Frauen im deutschen Film und Fernsehen*. Köln: Herbert von Halem Verlag.

Thiele, M. (2015). *Medien und Stereotype*. Konturen eines Forschungsfeldes. Bielefeld: transcript.

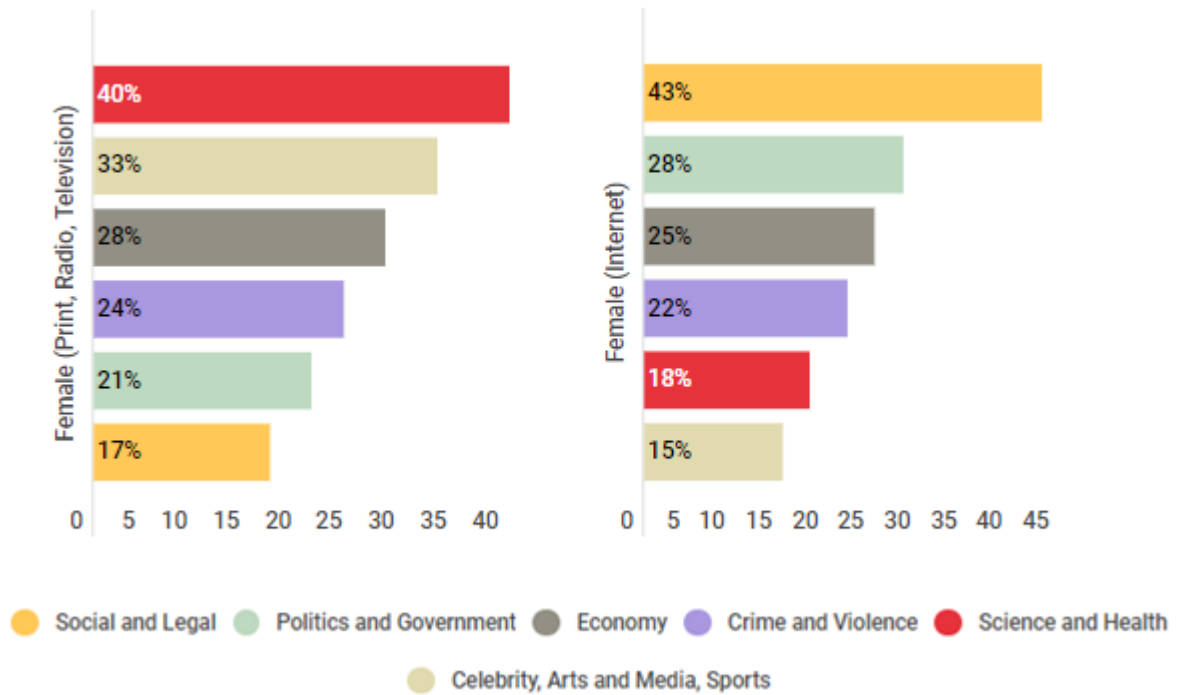


Figure 3: Overall presence of women in news in Austria

Base: Print, Radio, Television: Science and health (10), Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports (3), Economy (36), Crime and Violence (17), Politics and Government (24), Social and Legal (12); Internet: Social and Legal (37), Politics and Government (86), Economy (32), Crime and Violence (60), Science and Health (11), Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports (13)

JOURNALISTS AND REPORTERS

Overall reporters and presenters: Six (33%) of the people who could be identified as authors of newspaper articles were women. However, 11 of 29 articles were published without a name in the byline. On the two monitored commercial TV stations, 28 female reporters, announcers and presenters appeared – a majority of 70% compared to the 12 men that were present. In the monitored radio stations, the 15 women accounted for 47% of the staff.

Reporters, by scope in all monitored media: In 33 of 85 cases, reporters could be identified as women. Women (13 cases or 62%) reported more often on stories with a national scope than on foreign or international topics (7 cases or 33%). Out of five local stories, four were provided by men. The only sub-regional or regional story was also covered by a male reporter.

Reporters, by major topic: The share of female reporters identified in the sample (n=21) was evenly distributed among media reports on politics and government, economy as well as 'social and legal' (each 5 cases or 24%). However, men (n=31) were more likely to cover the topics of economy (32%) and crime and violence (23%).

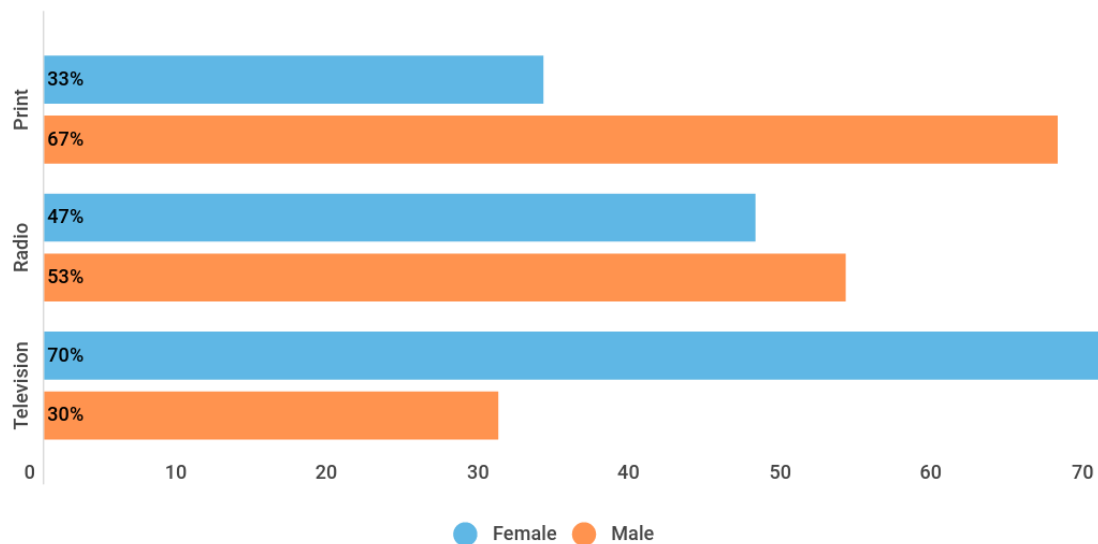


Figure 4: Reporters, announcers and presenters in Print, Radio and Television in Austria
Base: Print (18), Radio (32), Television (40)

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

News stories with a central focus on women: Only 9% of 64 news stories (categorized by major topic) in traditional media centrally focused on women. Women were only rarely the central focus of news stories about politics and government (14%), economy (13%), crime and violence (11%), and social and legal issues (10%). They were never in the spotlight in stories on science and health as well as in celebrity, arts and media, and sports issues. In internet news stories, 11% of the observed articles had women as a central focus.

Gender equality: In traditional news media, none of the covered news stories made reference to issues of gender equality, legislation and policy. In internet news media, 2% of news stories focused on gender equality and HR policies. One of 21 stories related to politics and government and one of three stories in the field of celebrity, arts and media, sports had issues of gender equality as a central focus.

Stereotypes: In none of the observed news stories could we find gender stereotypes being challenged, despite some efforts for gender-aware news reporting (see case studies, pages 18ff.)

FOCUS ON COVID-19 NEWS

As the discussion on remarkable results already showed, Covid-19 has been and still is one of the most mentioned topics. Regarding the complete set of stories that covered the pandemic, there is a tendency of a nearly balanced gender ratio. Although some of the base figures are rather low with respect to Covid-19 news items where the gender of the respective journalist was apparent, it may be interpreted that the topic of crime and violence is slightly more often presented by female reporters and that social and legal issues are clearly more often covered by female reporters.

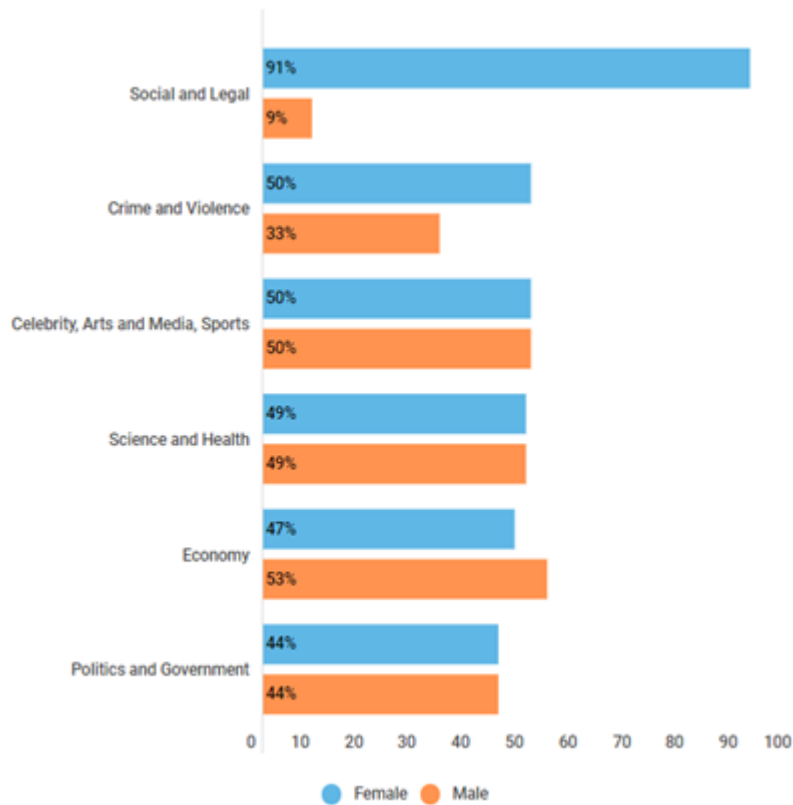


Figure 5: Covid stories: reporters by sex

Missing percentages: Gender specification: Do not know; Base: Social and Legal (11), Crime and Violence (6), Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports (8), Science and Health (35), Economy (49), Politics and Government (9)

CASE STUDIES

In the Austrian news media sample, there are still blatant stereotypes to be observed, in areas such as the visual presentation of articles. For example, one article deals with the lack of legal youth protection measures concerning porn websites. The article itself is written in a sober style, focusing solely on the legal aspects. However, the visual component of the article is a photograph of a woman depicted in a sexualized manner, and since the photograph is also cropped, she is objectified. In another article, the job market is represented by tiny human figures, but only the male figures are pictured as having actual jobs (construction worker, men with briefcases), while the women are just standing around wearing dresses.

There is a growing tendency in the usage of gender-neutral and gender-sensitive language (for example, in the German language, “team” instead of “Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeiter” or “Forscher*innen” instead of “Forscher”), but it is still rather rare within Austrian news coverage. There was one article on the everyday effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the additional burden on families, especially on working (single) mothers, that raised awareness about the unequal working arrangements within working couples with children. A disproportionate share of unpaid labor at home (childcare, housework) is carried out by working women compared to their partners, therefore, the current Covid-19 pandemic affects women’s and men’s lives differently.

However, other articles or radio reports on the same or similar topics fail to recognize or acknowledge gender-based issues. For example, in one article, the definition of the economically more vulnerable groups that suffer particularly due to the pandemic, only refers to age-specific challenges for people on the job market. In another radio report, social aspects of the economic effects of the pandemic are completely ignored, talking about “redundancies” or “waves of insolvencies”.

In the following, we would like to present two articles in detail, one of which we considered gender-aware, and the other to be gender-blind. Both articles are from the same quality newspaper (*Der Standard*) and were published online.

Case Studies, Example 1: A story that is gender-aware

Title: *Homeoffice: Das Zuhause ist für Frauen das schlechtere Büro* (Working from home: The home as an office is worse for women)

Publish online on: [DerStandard.at](https://www.derstandard.at)

Summary:


This article presents the findings of a survey (1.353 people, 78% women, 22% men) that was carried out by a female economist and her team from Vienna University of Economics and Business. The survey shows that the first Covid-19 lockdown (during spring 2020 in Austria) including school closures, working from home, etc. have placed an additional burden on families, especially on working (single) mothers.

Analysis:

The article raises awareness about the unequal working arrangements within working couples with children. A disproportionate share of unpaid labor at home (childcare, housework) is done by working women compared to their partners, therefore the current Covid-19 pandemic affects women’s and men’s working lives differently. Apart from the critique on the current working arrangements among families, the authors of the study stress the need for the expansion of public childcare services.

The journalist uses gender-neutral (“team”) or gender-sensitive language (“Forscher*innen”), which is rather rare within Austrian news coverage. The article can be read as a critique of current gender roles, gendered norms in Austria.

The chosen pictures in the news story (<https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000120329157/homeoffice-das-zuhause-ist-fuer-frauen-das-schlechtere-buero>) need to be looked upon critically: On the right side, we see a woman at work; we see the woman from behind, sitting in a tiny room in front of two computer screens. The small room seems rather dark, without a window, filled with work non-related stuff (barbells, boxes). This picture reinforces the fact that the “home office” situation for women is more than challenging, with children at home. The image on the right side shows a child in its room (illuminated in pink from the pink curtain), jumping on their bed, wearing a fairy-like dress with wings. This image conveys more subtle stereotypes, i.e., the cliché that all girls like pink and like to dress up as fairies.

MEDIA ACCOUNTABILITY SCORECARD  GMMP		
A: Excellent B: Good C: Fair D: Weak E: Poor		
<u>Professionalism</u> Story is fair, accurate and balanced from a gender equality perspective <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good, 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Fair, 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Weak, 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Poor, 1	<u>Rights-based approach</u> Story clearly highlights the human and/or women’s rights dimensions of the issue <input type="checkbox"/> Good, 4 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair, 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Weak, 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Poor, 1	<u>Respect for Freedom of Expression</u> Story contains the views, perspectives and concerns of women as well as men, told in their own voices <input type="checkbox"/> Good, 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Fair, 3 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weak, 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Poor, 1
Total points: ____ 9 ____ A : 10 – 12 points B : 9 – 10 points C : 7 – 8 points D : 5 – 6 points E : 3 – 4 points		GRADE: <u>B</u>

¹¹ EPA / SERGEI ILNITSKY; <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000120329157/homeoffice-das-zuhause-ist-fuer-frauen-das-schlechtere-buero>

Case Studies. Example 2: A story that is gender-blind

Title: *Corona-Krise bedroht Wohlstand der Österreicher massiv* (Corona crisis threatens prosperity of Austrians massively)

Published online on: DerStandard.at

Summary:

The news story reports on the consequences of Covid-19 on the Austrian economy, summarizes findings from the prosperity report published by the Viennese Chamber of Labor.

Analysis:

Three experts from the Austrian Chamber of Labor (“Arbeiterkammer”) are interviewed: two women, one man. Nevertheless, the female journalist only uses the male form in the entire article instead of gender-sensitive language (“Experten”, “Statistiker”). Beyond that, the male expert is cited more often than the two women altogether (male expert: four direct quotations, female experts: one statement each).

The male expert (Marterbauer) is quoted with the statement that the crisis primarily affects economically more vulnerable groups without specifying who these groups are. The photo caption (stating: “Young people have difficulties being integrated into the labour market. Others who lose their jobs may not even manage a re-integration at all without appropriate retraining”) refers to the age-specific challenges and discrimination on the job market. Gender-specific effects are not elaborated in the article, even though women are at greater risk of job loss, (old-age) poverty etc.

It is striking that a female perspective is mentioned only once in the entire article, when one of the female experts (Hruska-Frank) claims for adequate payment for the female employees (“Leistungsträgerinnen”), speaking here particularly of women’s job situations.

Additionally, the chosen picture (<https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000120339650/corona-krise-bedroht-wohlstand-der-oesterreicher-massiv>) creates the impression that the business world is still (predominantly) a men’s world. The picture shows a “Scrabble” game board with the words “economy” (“Wirtschaft”) and “jobless” (“Arbeitslos”) and ten small figures on it, whereof eight were identified as male (two construction workers, businessmen, holding briefcases in their hands, talking on the phone, ...), and only two as female (wearing skirts, not in a professional role).

MEDIA ACCOUNTABILITY SCORECARD

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



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: ____ 6 ____

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

GRADE: D

¹² <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000120339650/corona-krise-bedroht-wohlstand-der-oesterreicher-massiv>

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The 2020 GMMP is dominated by news around the pandemic. The effects and ongoing developments around Covid-19 influenced all of our lives and found its way into all news topics. In this year's monitoring for Austria, the most present news topics were politics and government and economy in all media channels that we examined. However, there was no particular focus on gender in the news coverage of the pandemic.

The analyzed day in the news of Austria is contextualized in a still rather traditional media landscape, with the Austrian public service media *ORF* being the dominant actor in the TV and radio-sector and the tabloid *Kronen Zeitung* as the main newspaper. While the *Kronen Zeitung* is known for a rather gender stereotypical reporting, the *ORF* actively tries to tackle the issue of gender inequality in media content as well as in its news rooms. Even in general, gender ratios in Austria's newsrooms are becoming balanced, but not in the upper management positions. Furthermore, within news reporting in Austria, it can by no means be assumed that there is a balanced gender representation of gender, which is also very well documented by previous GMMP studies.

The results of the GMMP 2020 showed that women were underrepresented in news media stories. Out of a total of 345 news subjects only about a quarter of the people appearing in news stories were female. The major topics of politics and government as well as economy had a large majority of news subjects being male. While the relation of female and male news subjects was best in print (28%), the media type with the lowest proportion of female news subjects was radio (12%). Overall, women appeared less often in high profile positions than men. However, some results are limited by the low total number of news stories in specific categories. The portrayal as victims or survivors showed very limited results with two cases where women were identified as victims of domestic violence, rape or murder. In the observed media, 12% of female and 3% of male subjects were identified by their family status. Regarding the special questions, the outcome was limited: In none of the observed media reports was a news subject identified as a religious minority, as having a disability or as an immigrant or refugee.

At the level of media production, most of the identified reporters in newspaper articles (67%) and radio reports (53%) were male. An exception here is television, where 70% of reporters and presenters were female.

From a qualitative perspective, there were only a few articles that either tackled or reinforced gender stereotypes, and among these, the gender issues were not always perfectly obvious. The gender stereotypes found in our sample were mostly in the form of article photos (see also above in the case studies) and less within the article texts. The striking results are rather found in the overall numbers.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN 2021-2025

Based on the results of the GMMP 2020, we suggest further steps for the Austrian media landscape on the levels of regulatory measures, media organizations and news production. It is important that diversity in newsrooms and reporting does not only include so-called gender balance which often results in tendencies towards a binary, male-female balance, but also diversity concerning age, class, gender identity, religion, migrant background and disability.

Regulatory measures

One approach in media policy to achieve a balanced gender representation in news coverage would be to connect public funding for the media to corresponding criteria.

There is a debate in Austria that seeks to link public press subsidies, as well as other media funding (funding for digital transformation, special Corona funding), to the quality of media content. One feature of these quality requirements must then also be the establishment of diversity in the newsrooms and their reporting. In this way, media policy incentives could be created to overcome the imbalances in gender representation that still exist in Austria.

Media companies

On the level of the respective media organizations, leadership that demonstrates commitment to gender equality and diversity, to including women, transgender people and non-binary people at all levels of media production and in the media content, is fundamental to promote gender-egalitarian (mediated) realities.

Longstanding issues, such as gender pay gaps, gender-based discrimination in recruitment and employment, more flexible work/part time for people with children need to be addressed.

Action is required to ensure that equal pay is enforced, to reach the highest possible standards of transparency and fairness. Research shows that the use of gender quotas in recruitment is an effective measure to redress gender imbalances within media organizations. Extending access to mentoring programs and networking opportunities to women is also recommended.

The *ORF* (Austria's national public service broadcasting corporation) put into force the *Equal Opportunities Plan* to eliminate the existing underrepresentation and any existing discrimination of women, in the workplace as well as in the *ORF's* media content (radio, TV, online). Private, commercial media organizations (e.g. *ATV*, *Puls 4*) in Austria should follow initiatives like these.

News production

A key priority for media companies, journalists and societies as a whole must be to deconstruct discriminatory norms and attitudes, including unconscious biases, sexist, racist and other stereotypes, in order to address gender inequalities effectively. Gender workshops (e.g. on the use of gender-sensitive language), targeted training and awareness raising for journalists to promote gender egalitarian practices and values should be supported by decision-makers.

Trained journalists tend to portray a more balanced, diverse view of our societies; they are aware of a gendered media environment and their role in combating discrimination.

For future journalism, it should also be noted that the selection of article photos has a huge impact on the perception of the article itself. When a journalist writes an article about a specific group of people, e.g. about women who wear headscarves, it makes a significant difference

for the readers if the photo, for example, depicts the women from the front or from the back. The latter may have the effect that the subjects of the photo are depersonalized and therefore “othered”, meaning that readers could get the impression that the depicted people are not considered “normal” or not being in the center of society.

Annex 1. Methodology^[1]

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.

^[1] See the global report for the extended discussion on the GMMP 2020 methodology

Annex 2. List of Monitors

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