



GMMP+30

NATIONAL REPORT
SERBIA



GMMP+30

Global Media
Monitoring
Project

2025



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GMMP 2025 is coordinated by the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), an international NGO which promotes communication for social change.



Data for GMMP 2025 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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In Partnership with



Acknowledgements

The research team expresses gratitude to all who contributed to 2025 *Global Media Monitoring Project* within the Faculty of Political Science, University of Belgrade.

The academic 2024/25 has been like no other year. All public universities in Serbia, were in the midst of the widespread student protests against government corruption, following the tragic collapse of the Novi Sad railway station canopy - a disaster that claimed sixteen lives and left one person critically injured.

Despite these challenging conditions, the monitoring team - comprising of media and communication undergraduate and master's students under the supervision of professor dr Danka Ninković Slavnić - demonstrated exceptional dedication in completing the monitoring and the subsequent analytical work required to finalize this Report. Special thanks therefore go to the monitors whose names are listed in the Annex2.

The team shared a conviction that the pursuit of gender equality remains imperative, even, and perhaps especially, in times when society guided by the energy and ideals of its students mobilizes in the struggle for a more just and accountable future.



Professor Dr Snjezana Milivojevic
National GMMP Coordinator
October 2025

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PREFACE

Global context

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action premised that “Women’s empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace” (United Nations, 1995). Specifically, the Declaration in its Section “J” established the following objectives related to women and media: Strategic objective J1. “Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication. Strategic Objective J2. Promote a balanced and non stereotyped portrayal of women in the media” (United Nations, 1995).

The first global monitoring was sparked by a need for empirical evidence on women’s place, role and participation in the news.¹ The Beijing Platform for Action thereafter enshrined media monitoring as a strategy to achieve strategic objective J1. Non-governmental organizations and media professional associations were encouraged to establish “media watch groups that can monitor the media and consult with the media to ensure that women’s needs and concerns are properly reflected” (para 242a).

The GMMP evolved into the largest and longest-running research and advocacy initiative for gender equality in and through the news media. In five-year spurts since 1995, the GMMP takes a snapshot of key gender equality dimensions in the news. Across thirty years to date, the GMMP has built the data from over 160 countries, with at least one observation for each variable and country.

The global news media landscape has changed profoundly, yet women’s place within it has not. The evolution of women’s encounters with the sector across the period has not been as dramatic. The GMMP reveals that, in many ways, the status quo of gross underrepresentation and misrepresentation in content has persisted.

Global findings. The highlights

The global findings are based on 29,935 news articles containing 58,321 people and 26,560 news personnel in 94 countries on the 7th global monitoring day, May 6, 2025.

- 1. Thirty years ago, the report of the first GMMP called for a shift in coverage beyond the male-dominated realms of political and economic power. Not only has the hierarchy of “hard news” in legacy media persisted across time, it has also crossed over into digital outlets.**

Digitalization did not bring a radical break from the patriarchal norms of traditional journalism. Instead, it continues to reinforce and amplify a news hierarchy that privileges spheres and issues centred on power, namely, those dominated by men. The challenge is threefold. First, to dismantle the “hard news” bias, second, to integrate more intentionally spaces and issues of greater concern to women, and third, to enable visibility and voice to women present in traditionally male-dominated spaces.

¹ Read more in the full text of the Bangkok Declaration, outcome of the 1994 “Women Empowering Communication” conference at which the idea of a GMMP was birthed. <https://whomakesthenews.org/wp-content/uploads/who-makes-the-news/imported/documents/bangkok%20declaration.pdf>

2. After a period of slow but steady improvement, progress toward gender parity in the news has flatlined since around 2010, failing to reach 50% in any media type.

Thirty years after Beijing, women are 26% of those seen, heard, or spoken about in legacy news (29% on news websites). The needle has shifted 9 points in legacy media since 1995, and 4 points in online news during the past 10 years.

Minority groups are five points more likely to be present in digital news than in legacy media. The probability of minority women being featured in the news as the main protagonists or as interviewees is two in a hundred in traditional media (3% for men) and 4% on news websites (5% for men).

3. Women’s visibility in political and economic news has increased significantly – by 15 points each – over the past three decades.

The severe underrepresentation noted in 1995 (7% in political news, 10% in economic news) has improved. Women’s presence in sports news is abysmal, at only 15% of news subjects and sources.

4. The proportion of women providing expert testimony has grown remarkably over the decades, showing the highest increase (+7 points) in digital news since 2015.

In legacy media, the gender gap in authoritative roles as experts and spokespersons has closed at a slower pace than for persons providing testimony based on popular opinion and personal experience – ordinary roles that require no specialized knowledge.

5. Patterns of gender-biased portrayal endure despite decades of change in women’s roles in the physical world

Women have remained about twice as likely as men to be portrayed as victims since 2010. Historically, women were most often portrayed as victims of accidents or poverty. This pattern was overturned in 2025, with “other crime” and “domestic violence” (by intimate partners and family members) becoming the top victim categories.

Women depicted as survivors in legacy media were most likely to have survived “accidents, natural disasters, poverty, and disease” in previous GMMP studies. In 2025, they are most frequently portrayed as domestic violence survivors in equal proportion to accident/disaster survivors.

The over-representation of women as homemakers/parents decreased from 81% in 2000 to 73% in 2025, indicating progress although a persistent journalistic bias toward defining women by domestic roles, despite women’s current unprecedented engagement in work outside the home. Underrepresentation in occupations and in positions of power has remained consistent.

The tendency to describe women by their age and physical attributes has also persisted. They have been photographed more often than men (a 7–9-point difference) over the past two decades, with qualitative analysis continuing to show patterns of sexualized portrayal.

6. Gender inequality in the news is much more acute than in the lived experience.

Gender equality in the news, measured by the GEM Index, is moderately correlated with gender indices in other development sectors such as the Gender Social Norms Index. Between 65% to 75% of media gender inequality cannot be explained by reality, indicating the presence of other confounding factors at play that co-mingle to produce the prevailing gendered news narratives.

7. Women's share as reporters in stories published in newspapers and aired on television and radio has risen and stagnated in spurts since 1995.

Globally, the proportion of women as reporters in legacy media rose 6 points from 2000 to 2005, stalling at 37% for 10 years until 2015, rising 3 points again between 2015 to 2020, and gaining just two points in the past five years. The regions approach and consistently fail to achieve parity, except for the Pacific and the Caribbean, exactly at equality, and North America just a single point below. The findings suggest most news systems are willing to absorb a certain proportion of female labor in the reporter role, but not to cede to full numerical gender equality.

In legacy news media, the gender gap in political reporting has narrowed the fastest (+13 points in 25 years) – outside the sports beat – yet it remains the topic least reported by women. For the first time in 25 years, women now constitute a majority (52%) of science and health reporters. The new tracking of sports news reveals a severely low proportion of female reporters (17%).

Women's share as reporters in national and international stories has seen significant long-term growth (+18 and +16 points, respectively).

8. The sex of the journalist influences the gender lens in stories

The gender lens has historically been found to be sharper in articles by women reporters. Across three decades, a consistent 5–6-point gender gap has existed in source selection, where female reporters feature more female sources than their male colleagues. This gap is even wider (9 points) in digital news. The gender-lens gap between female and male journalists is largest on the indicator regarding women's centrality in the news. The difference is just 1-2 points on other indicators measuring news quality from a gender perspective, but that it exists is an important finding.

9. Gender-based violence is a blind spot in the news. When GBV makes the news, however, the gender lens in reporting is sharper than in stories on all other topics.

Less than 2% of stories cover gender-based violence. This low count is at odds with the serious nature of GBV affecting one in three women and girls worldwide.

Stories on gender-based violence produced by female journalists are more likely to raise gender (in)equality issues than those by men.

While the gender lens is sharper in GBV stories compared to other major topics, there remains enormous room for improvement if news media are to participate in creating a society in which GBV is understood as deviant, criminal, and a violation of fundamental

human rights.

10. The bulk of news stories remains deficient in the GMMP dimensions of quality from a gender perspective

The proportion of news stories that clearly challenge gender stereotypes rose from 3% (2005) to 6% (2010) but declined and has remained stagnant at 3-4% since 2015. This indicates an entrenchment of stereotypes in reporting and a consistent journalistic failure to produce content that disrupts stereotypical narratives.

The regional comparisons show significant variations. North American news is exceptional, clearly challenging gender stereotypes in 19% of stories, in sharp contrast to Middle Eastern news, where only 1% overturn simplistic narratives about the roles, attributes, and capabilities of people based on gender.

Gender stereotypes are most prevalent in stories about politics and the economy, both spheres where men are the majority power holders. Over time, challenging stereotypes remains largely confined to topics in which it is safer to challenge the skewed gender power relations status quo. These are celebrity/arts/media, and social/legal news. GBV stories challenge gender stereotypes more than any other news, at 17%. While commendable, this level is insufficient to transform the harmful norms that perpetuate such violence.

The likelihood of news stories to cite human rights or gender equality frameworks has fluctuated modestly, hovering between 7% and 11% over the 15 years that this indicator has been measured. A human rights lens is absent in approximately 9 out of 10 stories.

Online stories are less likely to integrate a human rights lens than those published in legacy media, but the probability of women being the central protagonists in a news story is higher in digital news (15%, compared to 10% in traditional news).

In all story topics except for GBV news, the sex of the reporter matters slightly for the integration of a gender lens. 3% of stories by women clearly challenge gender stereotypes, compared to 2% of those by men. 12% of stories by women highlight gender (in)equality issues, compared to 10% for men. 8% of articles by women adopt a human rights framing, compared to 7% of those by men. In the case of GBV stories, for instance, female reporters are more than 10 points more likely to call attention to gender inequality than those by men.

The GMMP message in 2025, thirty years post-Beijing, is a global news industry whose progress towards gender equality has reached a crossroads.

The almost standstill pace of change in the past 15 years points to a need for a radical shift in strategies by all actors in the news ecosystem to break the inertia. Under the current conditions and with the current tools, remarkable change towards gender equality is unlikely.

The negative impacts of digitalization on the news industry and gender relations online as a whole will undoubtedly make the task of securing women's rights in and through digital news more complex.

Regional Context

In Central and Eastern Europe, the broader political and institutional environment in which media operate has a significant impact on how women are portrayed. Public service media across the region continue to face intense political pressure, and this fragile environment shapes both the quantity and the quality of coverage related to women and gender equality. Political actors increasingly view public broadcasters as strategic tools, and in several countries restructuring processes, changes in leadership, and weakened governance structures have been used to assert direct political control over public media. In such contexts, issues related to women, gender equality, and minority rights—including the portrayal of women in public life—are often marginalized or framed through ideologically driven narratives rather than through an impartial public-interest lens.

Where public media have been captured or heavily influenced by ruling parties, content about women tends to mirror dominant political agendas, which frequently emphasize traditional family roles, motherhood, and conservative gender norms. This is reinforced by the wider regional phenomenon in which gender-related issues, from reproductive rights to LGBTQ+ rights and protection from gender-based violence, have become central points of ideological contestation. The rise of populist and anti-gender movements in many CEE countries has further intensified this dynamic, as these actors politicize gender topics and promote retrotopian visions of rigid, traditional gender roles. As a result, public media often provide limited or distorted representation of women's issues, portraying them through moralistic, family-centric, or nationalistic narratives rather than addressing structural inequalities or women's political, economic, and social contributions.

At the same time, the legacies of state socialism continue to influence both media and public debate. Although the socialist period formally promoted gender equality in education and employment, it did not meaningfully challenge traditional gender roles within the private sphere. This historical "path dependence" still shapes media representation: formal references to gender equality may coexist with deeply rooted stereotypes, limited sensitivity to gender bias, and a lack of critical engagement with patriarchal norms. These tendencies are reinforced by weak constitutional protections for gender equality in several countries, a reluctance of authorities to properly address gender-related human rights issues, and the limited representation of women in high-level judicial and political institutions.

Europeanisation has provided an important counterbalance, as EU and Council of Europe standards have driven progress on gender equality, violence against women, and anti-discrimination. However, the impact of these norms is uneven across the region, and in some cases public media have amplified Eurosceptic or anti-gender narratives that portray gender equality as an imposed "Western agenda." Resistance to instruments such as the Istanbul Convention exemplifies this trend and often spills over into media discourse, further polarizing public perception of women's rights.

Overall, the regional context of CEE is characterized by politically vulnerable public media systems, intensified ideological contestation around gender, and long-standing structural and cultural barriers to gender equality. These factors combine to shape a media environment in which women remain underrepresented, stereotyped, or framed through politicized narratives, conditions that ultimately hinder the development of a diverse, evidence-based, and rights-centered portrayal of women in the region.

Across Central and Eastern Europe, public service media (PSM) are under growing political and economic pressure. Funding mechanisms are being questioned, licence fees challenged, and more voices ask: "Why should I pay for something I don't use?" At the same time, digital platforms and global tech giants dominate advertising markets and capture audience attention, destroying the advertising model that sustained free and independent

media for decades.

References:

Barbara Havelková, Mathias Möschel, Anna Śledzińska-Simon (2025), Women, gender, and constitutionalism in Central and Eastern Europe: Introduction to the symposium; *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, Volume 23, Issue 2, April 2025, Pages 486–500, <https://doi.org/10.1093/icon/moaf026>

<https://www.ebu.ch/news/2025/11/why-investing-in-public-service-media-is-an-economic-imperative>

National Context

The importance of gender equality as a fundamental principle has been recognized in numerous legal and policy documents in Serbia such as the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia (2006), the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination (2009) and the National Strategy for Gender Equality for the period 2021–2030.

Another important legal instrument, the Law on Gender Equality was scheduled to enter into force in 2024. However, the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Serbia temporarily suspended the implementation of the law, following the submission of a request for constitutional review. The articles of the law that triggered significant public debate and ultimately led to the court review concern the use of gender-sensitive language and usage of the term "gender".² As this situation illustrates, certain gender-related topics continue to provoke strong resistance from conservative actors in Serbian society.

According to the most recent Global Gender Inequality Index (GII) for 2023, Serbia ranked 38th out of 190 countries.³ The Gender Equality Index (GEI), which focuses on European Union member states and candidate countries, reported that Serbia scored 58 points in 2021, which is 10 points below the average. The smallest gaps, according to this report, were recorded in the areas of work (2.3 points) and health (4.6 points), while the largest gap was in the domain of money, amounting to 22.4 points. The most significant progress was observed in the domain of power, which includes women's representation in decision-making positions.⁴

Following the parliamentary elections held in 2023, women make up 38% of the representatives in Serbia's National Assembly. A similar level of representation is observed at the local level, where women constitute 37% of local assembly members. This increased presence of women in political institutions is largely the result of a legislative amendment adopted in 2022, which introduced a mandatory 40% gender quota on electoral lists for the underrepresented gender. However, women's representation decreases significantly in higher-ranking positions. As of 2025, only 30% of ministerial positions in the national government are held by women, and just 13% of municipalities and cities are led by female mayors or municipal presidents.⁵ The highest-ranking political position currently held by a woman is that of President of the National Assembly, a role now occupied by Ana Brnabić,

² <https://www.otvorenavratapravosudja.rs/teme/ustavno-pravo/privremeno-obustavljena-primena-zakona-o-rodnoj-ravnopravnosti>

³ https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2025_HDR/HDR25_Statistical_Annex_GII_Table.pdf

⁴ https://socijalnoukljucivanje.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Gender_Equality_Index_for_the_Republic_of_Serbia_2021.pdf

⁵ <https://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/izvestaji/> - Izveštaj za 2024. godinu

Serbia's former (first female) Prime Minister.

Despite the fact that women, on average, have a higher level of education than men, they are less represented in the labor market and earn lower wages. According to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, the employment rate among men aged 15 and older is 58%, compared to 43% among women. The gender pay gap stands at 8.8%, although this figure varies depending on the sector of employment, age, and level of education.⁶ One of the consequences of this disparity is that women receive, on average, pensions that are 17% lower than those of men.⁷

Among the most pressing issues affecting women and increasingly gaining public attention are gender-based violence and poor conditions in maternity care. During last five years, at least 123 women were killed by their intimate partners in Serbia.⁸ All cases of femicide were reported by the media, as the femicide watch mechanism (recommended by the United Nations in 2018) has yet to be established. While the number of women reporting violence has increased⁹, many survivors still refrain from reporting due to mistrust in institutions and other complex personal and social factors. These reasons were widely discussed during the 2021 #NisamPrijavila ("I Didn't Report") campaign on Twitter, where over 15,000 women shared their experiences of violence within just two days, highlighting the widespread nature of the problem. In addition to domestic violence, women in Serbia also face increasing threats from online sexual abuse, particularly in the form of revenge pornography.¹⁰

Another major concern that has come increasingly into the public eye in recent years is the quality of maternity care. The stories about women losing baby during childbirth due to a doctor's negligence, triggered a wave of testimonies from other women with similar experiences¹¹. Obstetric violence thus became a significant public issue leading to the development of the first national guidelines for pregnancy and childbirth, which, among other things, explicitly prohibit certain practices¹².

Media and journalism

The way media in Serbia represent women and report on gender-based violence is frequently criticized for containing misogynistic and sexist narratives. The Gender Equality in the News Media Index (which reflects six indicators and would be zero in the case of full gender equality) scores Serbia at -40.615 for 2025, placing it 30th out of the 87 countries included in the analysis.¹³

Growing awareness of sensationalized or trivialized reporting about gender-based violence has led to initiatives such as "Journalists Against Violence Against Women", which monitors media reporting and provides guidelines for professional and responsible journalism.¹⁴ These efforts aim to challenge the normalization of gender-based violence and reduce the prevalence of sensationalism in reporting.

Even though journalism in Serbia is a female-dominated profession, with women making up

⁶ <https://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2024/Pdf/G20246004.pdf>

⁷ <https://ravnopravnost.gov.rs/izvestaji/> - Izveštaj za 2024. godinu

⁸ <https://www.womenngo.org.rs/femicid-memorial>, visited 8.6.2025.

⁹ https://www.udruzenjesz.rs/images/PDF/12_Izvestaj_primena_Zakona_o_sprecavanju_nasilja_u_porodici_2023.pdf

¹⁰ <https://osnazzene.org.rs/blog/telegram-iza-senke-incest-decija-i-osvetnicka-pornografija/>

¹¹ <https://www.cins.rs/price-iz-porodilista-zene-koje-su-prekinule-zavet-cutanja-st/>, visited 09.06.2025.

¹² <https://vreme.com/drustvo/mala-pobeda-zabranjeno-rutinsko-secenje-na-porodjaju-i-sedanje-na-stomak/>, visited 9.6.2025.

¹³ The index is created as a part of GMMP project and includes the following indicators: all news subjects or sources, reporters, news subjects or sources in economy and business news, news subjects or sources in news about politics and government, spokespersons and experts.

¹⁴ <https://novinarkeprotivnasilja.org/>

over 60% of journalists, gender hierarchies persist, and only 18% of editors-in-chief are women.¹⁵ Additionally, female journalists face numerous problems. They often experience gender-based discrimination, pressures, and harassment, both within newsrooms and in public spaces. Therefore, it is not surprising that one-third of female journalists consider leaving the profession.¹⁶ Female journalists are also more frequently targeted in both physical and digital environments. According to data from the Permanent Working Group for the Safety of Journalists, there were 62 attacks on journalists in 2024, and female journalists were the victims in 55% of the cases. When it comes to attacks in digital environments, female journalists were also more often targeted - of the 28 such attacks in 2024, women were the victims in 68% of cases.¹⁷

The safety of journalists in Serbia has been further undermined during the ongoing political crisis. In the first eight months of 2025, 180 cases of physical attacks and threats against journalists were reported.¹⁸ While gender-disaggregated data on these incidents is not available, media reports clearly indicate that female journalists are frequently targeted. In addition, smear campaigns, often originating from regime-controlled media, have disproportionately targeted female television journalists.

Research team and context

The team from the University of Belgrade – Faculty of Political Science participated in the Global Media Monitoring Project for the third time this year. As a result, a comparison of the findings and a reflection on whether any changes have occurred over the past decade will be presented in the following chapters, alongside the 2025 data.

To fully understand this year's results, it is important to consider that the political situation in the country was far from ordinary.

During the first half of 2025, the political climate was dominated by student-led anti-corruption protests, which erupted after a tragic accident at the Novi Sad railway station in November 2024, when a recently renovated concrete canopy collapsed, killing 16 people. The tragedy quickly triggered widespread public outrage, manifested through student-led blockades of all major universities, the suspension of classes in some high and elementary schools, and numerous civic protests, few of them being among the largest demonstrations in the country's history.¹⁹

President Aleksandar Vučić, and the ruling Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), in power since 2012, avoided facing responsibility and labeled the protests "coloured revolution". They also used the media under their influence to delegitimize the protests and to portray Serbia as stable and reform-oriented country, particularly in communications with foreign partners and investors.

This atmosphere of intense political polarization and civil unrest significantly influenced media coverage on the Monitoring day.

¹⁵ <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/c/b/491860.pdf>

¹⁶ <https://nuns.rs/media/2025/08/index-SRB-SRB-2025-2.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://safejournalists.net/sr/stalna-radna-grupa-za-bezbednost-novinara/>

¹⁸ <https://nuns.rs/srpska-policija-napada-novinare-koristi-brutalnost-i-seksualne-napade/>

¹⁹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cx2g8v32q30o>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

News agenda

The dominant topic in media coverage on the analyzed day was clearly politics. Four out of ten (43%) of all news stories focused on political issues. This is unsurprising given the context in which the research was conducted amid the huge student-led anti corruption protest.

The second most covered topic, though significantly less frequent, was social news with 21% of stories. Stories in this category were about protests, issues related to the functioning of the education system, religion (due to the Đurđevdan celebration), and accidents. News agenda varied depending on media type.

People in the news

In 2025, women accounted for 28% of all individuals heard, seen, or read about in newspapers, television, radio, and digital news. This reflects a gradual increase in women's visibility over the past decade, from 22% in 2015 and 20% in 2020, indicating some progress, though the gap remains significant.

There are notable disparities between media types. In traditional media (print, television, and radio), only 24% of news subjects were women, while online media showed higher female representation at 36%.

Among the various media formats, print media had the lowest proportion of female subjects, with women comprising just 14% of individuals featured. By comparison, women made up 30% of subjects in television news, 34% in radio, and 36% in digital news.

In only three major news topics women were the majority of subjects: celebrity, arts, and media (in traditional media), gender-based violence (in online media), and science and health (in traditional media), although in the last case, only three individuals were featured—two of whom were women.

In political news, women remain significantly underrepresented, constituting just 17% of subjects in traditional media and 24% in online news.

There is ongoing media construction of certain professions as either masculine or feminine. News continues to portray sports, religion, and police/military fields as overwhelmingly male-dominated. Across all analyzed content, no women were featured in these professions. Men continue to dominate coverage of high-status, socially valued occupations such as politicians, lawyers, doctors, businessmen, and activists in which women represented only 10–20% of individuals. In contrast, women outnumbered men in roles such as homemakers/parents, celebrities, children, and students/pupils.

The underrepresentation of female experts remains stark: only 12% of all expert sources cited in the news were women.

Gendered framing is also evident in the media decisions if and when family roles are relevant for reporting. Across all media types, a family role was mentioned in relation to 22% of women, compared to just 4% of men. While this gap is narrower in traditional media (11% of women vs. 6% of men), it widens significantly in online news, where 37% of women were identified by a family role, compared to just 2% of men.

Journalist, reporters, and presenters

Women make up 56% of all visible journalists, announcers, and presenters across all media types. While the representation among presenters and announcers is relatively balanced, the production side of journalism is increasingly female-led.

Among visible journalists, women constitute a clear majority, 72% overall, and dominate across all platforms - 61% in print media, 71% in radio, 73% in television, and 76% in online media.

This trend reflects the ongoing feminization of news production, particularly in reporting roles, even as women remain underrepresented in decision-making positions, such as editors-in-chiefs.

DAY IN THE NEWS IN SERBIA

The Monitoring day fell within a period of intense political crisis. Student-led protests had been ongoing for five months, attracting extensive public support while the Government has ignored their demands. During the first phase of the protest, the students did not have explicitly political demands, they insisted on the publication of documents related to the reconstruction of a canopy and demanded that institutions perform their duties responsibly. However, a shift occurred the night before the analyzed day.

On May 5th, after months of deliberately avoiding direct political confrontation, the student movement issued its most explicit demand: the calling of snap parliamentary elections. This marked a significant change in tone, from focusing on institutional accountability and transparency to openly challenging the legitimacy of the ruling government.

Since the analyzed day was May 6th, this event significantly influenced the media agenda.

The demand sparked a wave of public debate further polarizing already divided society. The majority of the population, with opposition parties and critical media supported the idea of election as a peaceful way out of political crisis. Government officials further mobilized mainstream media under their control to dismiss it as an overreach by a “manipulated” and power-seeking movement.

By then not only universities, but the entire education system, including significant number of high and elementary schools, were in protest. Some were under complete blockade, while others shortened their class schedules. As a result, the question of how to continue and complete the school year became a major news topic.

May 6th is also Đurđevdan, a family patron saint’s day (slava), a holiday which is widely celebrated in Serbia, particularly among the Roma population. Consequently, media visibility of the Roma community increased, as several news stories covered the celebration.

International events were also prominent in the media including the election of Friedrich Merz as Chancellor of Germany, as well as the ongoing wars in Ukraine and Gaza. Serbia’s international position also featured in the news, since President Aleksandar Vučić had just returned from visit to the United States, and was preparing to travel to Moscow for the Victory Day celebration.

Additionally, it is worth mentioning that the agenda of traditional media differed from those of online media. Online platforms more frequently prioritized “clickable” stories, often highlighting content involving violence, whether general, criminal, or gender-based, as their top articles.

THE CONTEXT

The Serbian media market is oversaturated, with over 2,100 registered outlets and significant political influence over media landscape. As a result, the most profitable media companies are typically those aligned with the ruling structures.²⁰ Many outlets rely on public funding and state advertising, which creates potential biases in reporting and presents serious challenges for independent journalism. Through political control and selective allocation of various subsidies to media supportive of its policies, the regime is fostering a clientelist media system. Furthermore, amendments to media laws in 2023 enabled indirect state ownership through the state-owned telecommunications company Telekom Serbia, whose aggressive expansion strategies have raised concerns about media pluralism and media freedom in general.

The United Media Group which owns outlets critical of the ruling regime, including the news channel TV N1, Nova S, and the daily newspaper Danas, has come under strong pressure both at the level of business decisions and editorial independence.

The state public broadcasters, RTS (Radio Television of Serbia) and RTV (Radio Television of Vojvodina), are frequently criticized for their pro-government bias. Due to its national reach and influence RTS particularly has become a major target of public discontent. In April 2025, students blocked its headquarters for two weeks, accusing the RTS of spreading propaganda and misrepresenting the protests.

Reporters Without Borders' 2025 World Press Freedom Index ranked Serbia 96th out of 180 countries, continuing a negative trend. Over the past five years, Serbia has dropped three positions (from 93rd to 96th) and lost 15 points (from 68.38 to 53.55).²¹

Between 2020 and 2025, Serbia launched a comprehensive media reform initiative aimed at enhancing media freedom, transparency, and alignment with European Union standards. These efforts were outlined in the *Strategy for the Development of the Public Information System in the Republic of Serbia 2020-2025*. However, implementation has faced numerous obstacles, including a lack of political will, incomplete legal reforms, and ongoing state influence through funding and ownership mechanisms. The most recent changes to media laws, adopted in June 2025, brought only minor legal modifications but the process was widely criticized for the lack of transparency.

The Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media (REM) has been non-functional since November 2024, when the mandates of its Council members expired. Even while operational, REM faced widespread criticism for lacking true independence, favoring pro-government media, and failing to carry out its responsibilities, particularly in overseeing the conduct of media service providers. The selection process for new Council members has been marred by procedural irregularities and political pressure and is currently on hold. This situation points to the continued political instrumentalization of a key regulatory body.

Internet penetration in Serbia stands at 85%, with pronounced generational differences in news consumption. Younger audiences primarily consume news through digital platforms and social media. Trust in the media is very low, with only 27% of online news users expressing general trust in news.²²

Media coverage of the ongoing political crisis confirms strong ideological division. Majority of

²⁰ <https://serbia.mom-gmr.org/sr/>

²¹ <https://rsf.org/en/index>

²² https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2025-06/Digital_News-Report_2025.pdf

mainstream media, aligned with the regime, have largely portrayed the government and especially President Aleksandar Vučić in a favorable light, often acting as unofficial mouthpieces for the authorities and openly waging smear campaigns against protest movement, political opponents and critical media. In contrast, few independent media, and particularly social media have focused on the student movement, highlighting the protests as a key event and amplifying demands for justice, institutional accountability, and transparency.

Sample

Taking all of the above into account, the national team selected a diverse sample that reflects the complexity of Serbia’s media landscape. The sample includes newspapers, television and radio stations, and online news portals that together represent the breadth of the media spectrum.

The selection of media outlets was based on the following criteria: (1) audience size (we included the most read/watched media), (2) reputation (we included those considered to be credible, even though they have a smaller audience), (3) media ownership (public service broadcasters and commercial TV channels), (3) type of media (we included broadsheet newspapers and tabloids; sites that have an offline presence, and digital-only media), (4) political leaning (both critical and pro-government oriented media). To avoid duplication, if a legacy media outlet was included in its original form (print or broadcast), its online version was not in the sample.

In total, we analyzed 17 different media outlets: five newspapers, four television channels, one radio station, and seven online news portals.

The print media selection reflects a diversity of editorial styles and orientations, including:

Politika (the oldest broadsheet newspaper), Danas (reputable political daily), Večernje novosti (semi-tabloid), Informer and Alo (tabloids).

In addition to the national public broadcaster RTS, two national commercial TV stations (Pink and Prva) and the highly influential cable news channel N1 were included in the analysis.

The selection of online news portals includes multiplatform brands that also publish newspapers or operate TV channels (Blic, Kurir, B92, Nova S, Republika) and digital-only sites (Mondo, Srbija Danas).

Media type	Outlet
Print (5)	Alo
	Danas
	Informer
	Večernje novosti
	Politika
Television (4)	RTS (Public TV)
	N1
	Prva
	Pink
Radio (1)	Radio Beograd (Public radio)
Internet (7)	Mondo
	Republika
	Srbija danas
	Blic
	Kurir
	B92
	NovaS

Table no. 1. The sample of the media included in analysis

Altogether national team analyzed 268 news stories reporting about 625 people.

Number of analysed news and sources

Media types	Number of news items	Number of sources
Print	67	176
Television	94	219
Radio	18	32
Internet	89	198
TOTAL	268	625

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Table no.2. Number of analyzed news stories by media type and people the news report about.

TOPICS IN THE NEWS

The dominant topic in media coverage on the Monitoring day was clearly *politics*. Four out of ten (43%) of all news stories focused on political issues. This is unsurprising given the context in which the research was conducted.

Domestic political issues (N=57) were more prevalent than foreign political topics (N=49).

Politics was prominent across all media types, although its representation varied: print media had the highest political focus, while the share of political news was the smallest in TV and internet (see Chart 1).

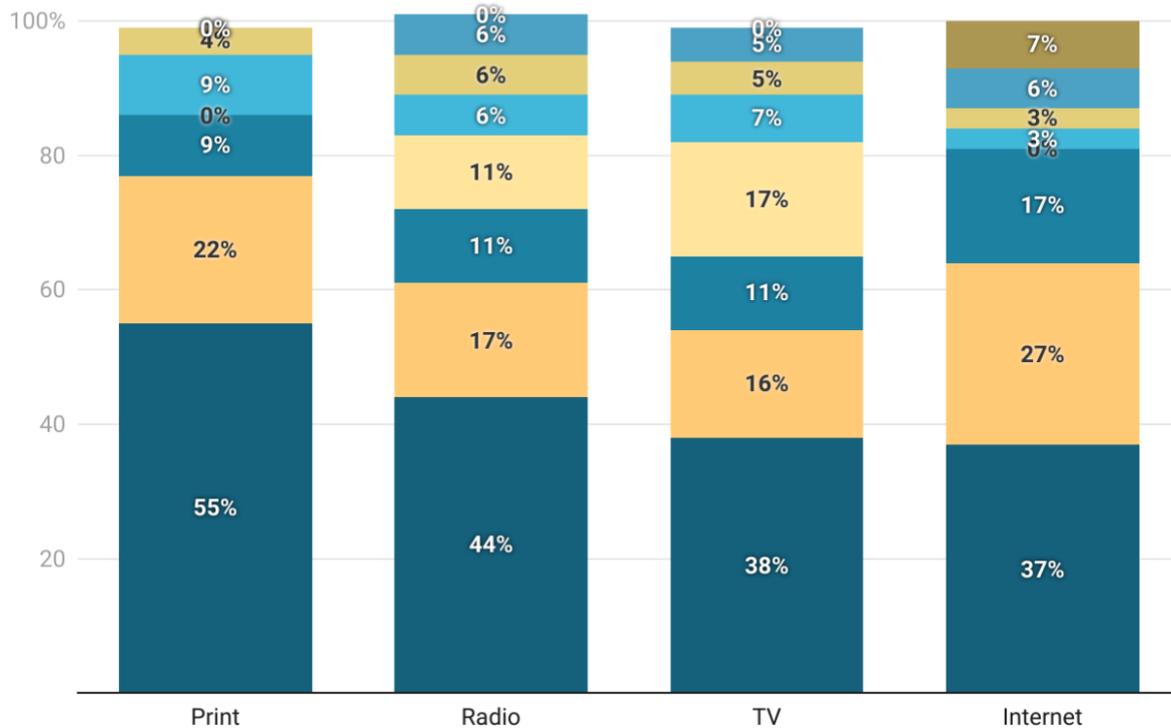
The second most covered topic, though significantly less frequent, was *social news* (21% in all media combined). Journalists reported on protests, issues related to the functioning of the education system, religion (due to the Đurđevdan celebration), and accidents, the topic most commonly featured on online portals with a tabloid orientation.

Crime and violence emerged as the third most covered topic, while *sports* had notable visibility on television and radio.

The analysis included national media and, as a result, the majority of the news was national in scope, meaning 60% of the stories focused on issues of national relevance. International news also had a significant presence, accounting for approximately one-third (32%) of the stories. In contrast, local and sub-regional news were nearly absent, each comprising only 3% of the total coverage.

Topics in the news by media type

■ Politics and Government
 ■ Social and Legal
 ■ Crime and Violence (excluding gender-based violence)
 ■ Sports
 ■ Economy
 ■ Celebrity, arts, media
 ■ Science and Health
 ■ Gender-based violence



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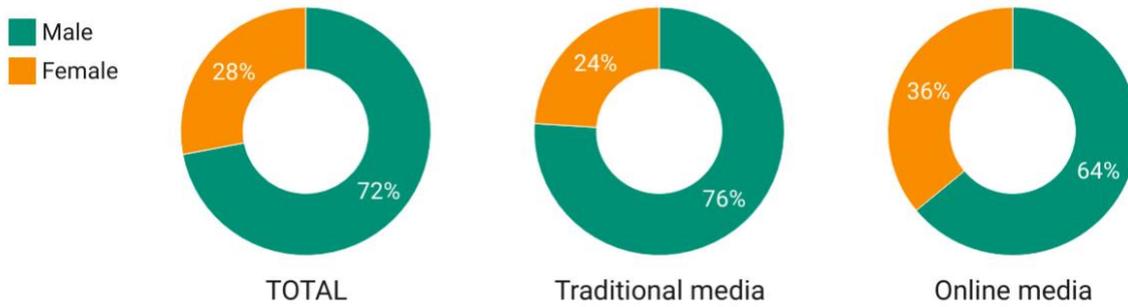
Chart no. 1 Topics in the news by media type

NEWS SUBJECTS AND SOURCES

The analyzed news referred to 625 people, of whom 28% were women. This points to an increase in the visibility of women over the last decade. Women were subjects in 22% of cases in 2015 and 20% in 2020, which broadly means that every fifth person in the media was female, while in 2025 it was every fourth.

However, there is a significant difference between traditional media (print, TV, and radio), where 24% of subjects were female, and online media, where women were more frequently represented, making up 36% of appearances (see Chart no. 2). In terms of traditional media, Serbia is slightly below the world average (26%), but in online news, it exceeds the average (29%).

News subjects and sources



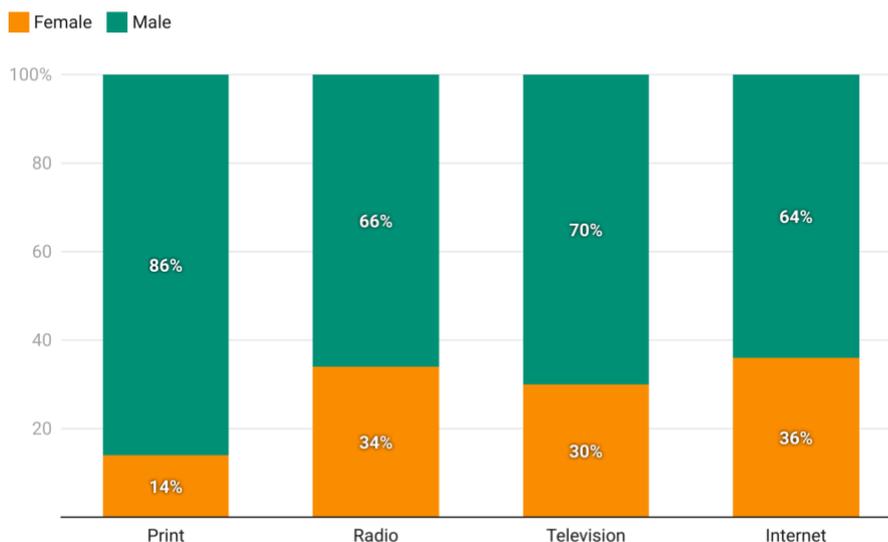
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Chart no. 2 News subjects and sources

There are notable differences across various media types (see Chart no. 3), which is partly a consequence of the methodology. Print media has the lowest share of women in the news (only 14%), showing that the cover and front pages in print remain strongly male-dominated. Internet portals, on the other hand, have the highest visibility of women due to their focus on soft news, which prioritizes celebrity and entertainment content, as well as crime and accident stories.

In general, it can be concluded that the more "serious" the media brand is, the more marginalized the presence of women becomes. For example, in our sample, the morning daily newspapers have single-digit percentages of female representation. If the editorial focus is on highly personalized and sensationalized content, as is the case with online tabloids, there is significantly more space for women's presence, often reaching or approaching parity.

Sources of news in different media



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Chart no.3 Sources of news in different media types, by gender

Having all of the above in mind, we can conclude that progress is happening, albeit very slowly. Additionally, it is important to be aware of the events that influence media coverage in ways that affect gender representation. For instance, the student protests included numerous women whose statements or activities were reported. Therefore, in the occupational group "students/pupils," female actors were the majority (55%).

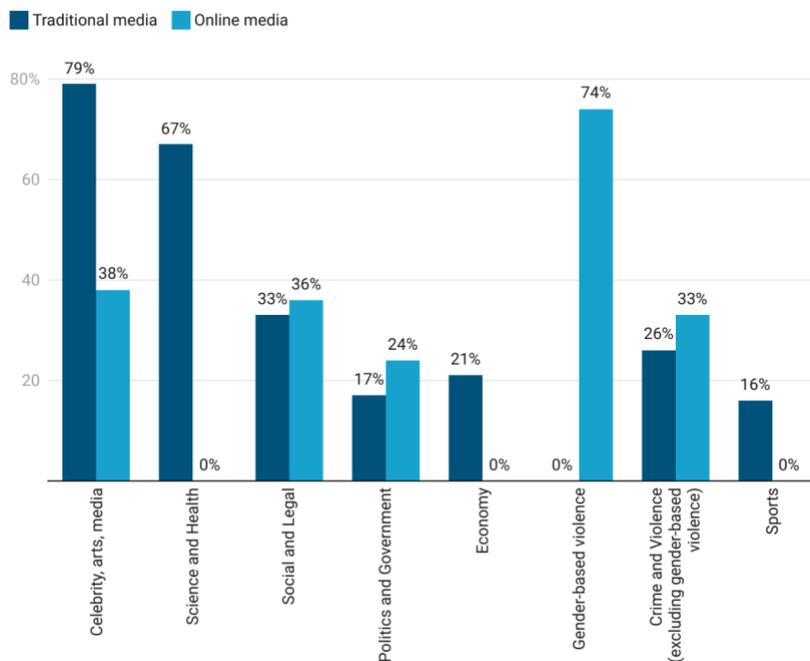
On the other hand, the growing trend of publishing personal stories (often taken from social media accounts) and stories about violence (including gender-based violence) is gaining momentum, and as an unintended consequence, this has increased the number of female news subjects.

There are only three major news topics where women were the majority of subjects across both traditional and online news: celebrity, arts & media (in traditional media), gender-based violence (in online news), and science and health (in traditional media) (see Chart 4). The prominence of women in the celebrity category is largely due to fashion-focused coverage of the Met Gala, particularly in TV news, where in one story all subjects, six of them, were female. The emphasis on women in stories about gender-based violence relates to a widespread reporting on a case of technology-facilitated abuse. News about science and health included three individuals overall, two of whom were women.

By contrast, sports is overwhelmingly portrayed as a male domain in the media. The only female subject appeared in a story about a children's competition, while all professional sports coverage focused exclusively on male athletes.

In political news, women remain significantly underrepresented accounting for just 17% of subjects in traditional media and 24% in online news. Within domestic political coverage, women make up 25% of the subjects. However, in stories about unrest and protests, female representation is somewhat higher, at 35%.

Female sources by news topics



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Chart no. 4 Female sources by news topics

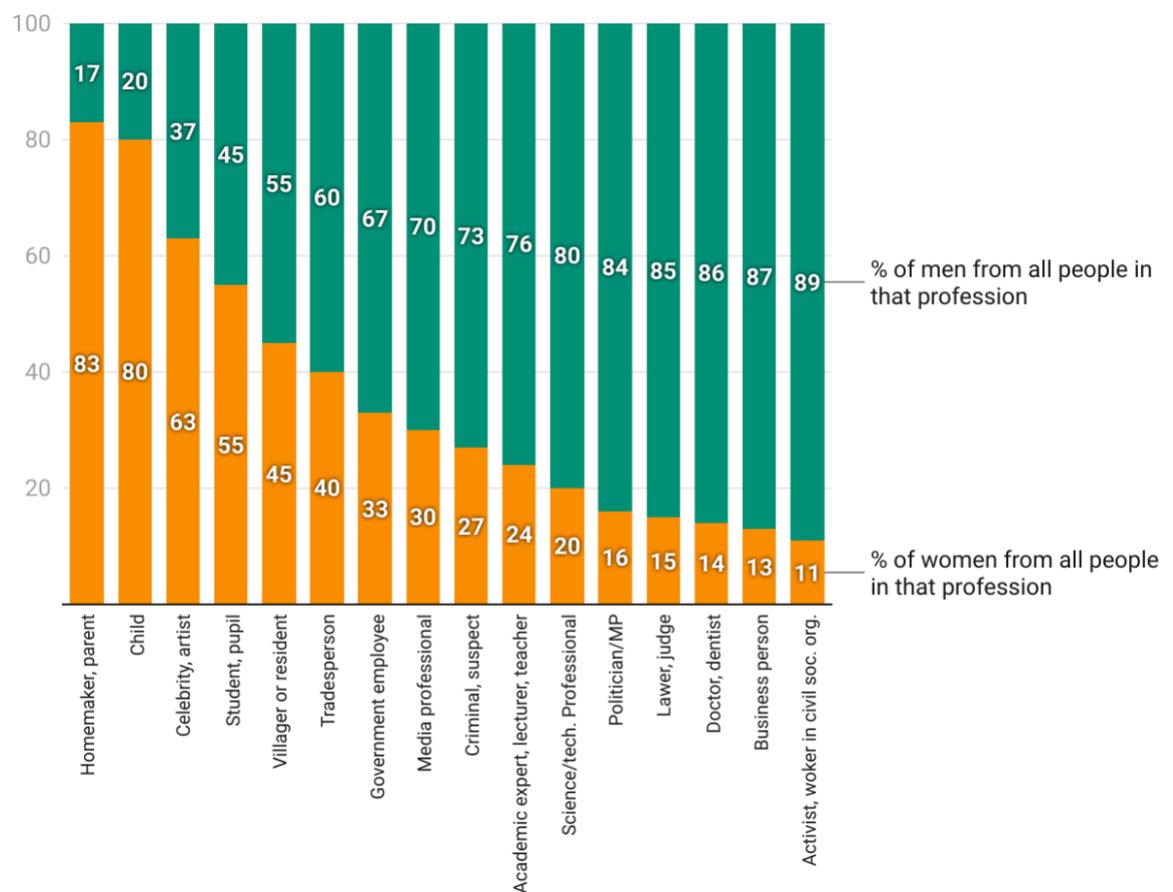
Occupation and position

The visibility of professions in media coverage reveals a significant gender disparity. Sports, religion, the police and military are portrayed as male-dominated fields, with not a single female representative featured in these professional areas across the analyzed news content.

Women's sports were entirely ignored in the news, resulting in no female athletes being visible. In contrast, 27 male athletes or coaches were included in various reports. A similar pattern was observed in the representation of religion, where all 11 featured figures were men, as well as in the police and military sectors, which showcased eight male representatives and no women.

Some occupations were represented by only one or two individuals. For example, only one male figure was shown in the context of royalty (King Charles), as well as one male office or service worker and one male agricultural worker. Among women, one was portrayed as a health worker, and another as a retired individual.

Occupation or position



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Chart no. 5 Occupation or position, by gender

These cases, where women were entirely absent or where only one person from a specific profession was featured, are excluded from the chart (no. 5), which presents the distribution of people by profession and gender across all analyzed sources.

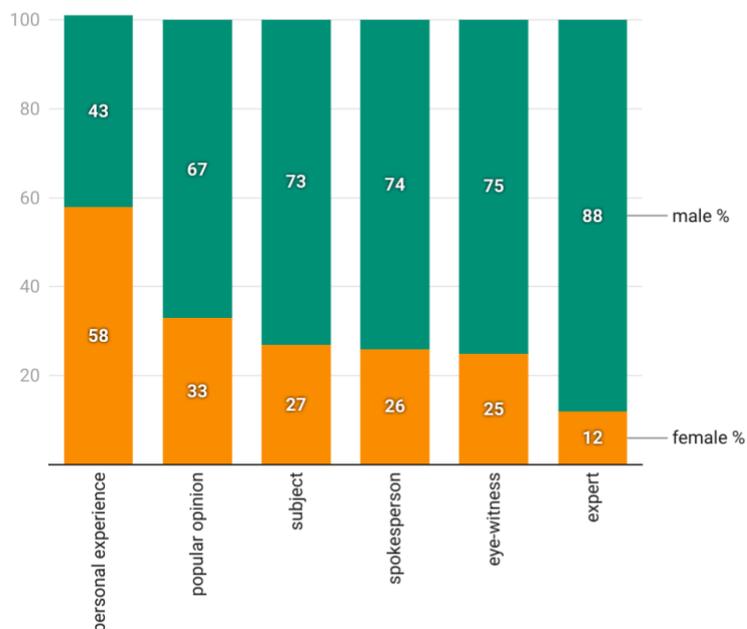
This distribution highlights how certain occupations are socially constructed as either masculine or feminine. Men significantly outnumbered women in the most socially valued or powerful professions featured in media stories. As shown in chart no. 5, women made up only one or two out of every ten visible individuals in these high-status occupations, such as politician, lawyer, doctor, businessperson, activist.

In contrast, women outnumbered men in the roles of homemakers/parents, children, celebrities, and students/pupils. Apart from students/pupils category, these roles are traditionally associated with femininity. Homemakers and parents are commonly seen as important female roles within the private sphere, while in the public domain, women are often depicted as entertainers. As previously mentioned, young women played a prominent role in the student-led protests, which is reflected in the gender ratio within this category.

Function in the story

Traditional gendered cultural patterns are further reflected in the roles people occupy within media content. Women are more frequently featured than men (58% compared to 43%) when they appear in the news due to personal experiences. However, when journalists report on public opinion, for every woman quoted, two men are presented. In roles such as subjects, spokespersons, and eyewitnesses, the gender distribution closely mirrors the overall ratio observed in this study. Most concerning, however, is the stark underrepresentation of female experts: only 12% of all expert voices were women's. The figure aligns with earlier results (7% in 2015 and 14% in 2020), suggesting that, overall, roughly one in ten experts cited in news is a woman. This is considerably below the global average of 23% reported for 2025.

Function in the story



Created with Datawrapper

Chart no. 6 Function in the story, by gender

Age of people in the news

Age-related analysis is limited to subjects appearing on TV and online, where age was either inferred based on knowledge (in the case of well-known figures) or estimated based on appearance (for lesser-known or anonymous individuals).

In the TV news, the most represented age groups are middle-aged individuals (N=60) and the young-old (N=53). Within these groups, men are significantly more visible than women.

Girls outnumber boys in the children and teenage categories. However, it is important to note that these categories combined include only 11 TV subjects out of 219. In all other age groups, men dominate, comprising about two-thirds of all subjects. This gender disparity is especially pronounced in the older adult category, where women account for only 4% of subjects.

News subjects by age groups - Television

	Female %	Male %	Total N
Do not know	29%	71%	35
Child (12 & under)	75%	25%	4
Teenager (13-19)	57%	43%	7
Young (20-30)	29%	71%	35
Middle age (31-50)	37%	63%	60
Young old (51-64)	28%	72%	53
Older adult (65-79)	4%	96%	23
Elderly (80+)	50%	50%	2

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Table no. 3 TV news subjects by age groups

The situation differs for online news, where visuals allowed age estimation for 100 subjects. This data suggest that women are more likely to be represented if they are under 50 years old, with teenage girls and young women being significantly more visible than their male counterparts. However, this trend reverses for women over 50 who represent only 15% of those aged 51–64 and a mere 6% in the 65–79 age group.

News subjects by age groups - Internet

	Female %	Male %	Total N
Do not know	30%	70%	96
Child (12 & under)	75%	25%	8
Teenager (13-19)	69%	31%	16
Young (20-30)	83%	17%	12
Middle age (31-50)	57%	43%	14
Young old (51-64)	15%	85%	33
Older adult (65-79)	6%	94%	17
Elderly (80+)	0%	0%	0

Created with Datawrapper

Table no. 4: Internet news subjects by age groups

Victims or survivors

Women are featured in three-quarters of appearances in the context of victims or survivors. Gender dimension of victim or survivor representation is mostly event driven. Of the 33 instances where women are shown as victims, 19 relate to gender-related cyber violence (the same story reported by multiple outlets), and 3 involve gender-based violence. Six individuals did not survive the violence and were portrayed solely as victims, five of them were women, and one was a man.

victim or survivor	female N	male N	total	female of all %
both	33	10	43	77%
victims	33	10	43	77%
survivors	28	9	37	76%

Table no. 5: Victims and survivors

Media reports include various types of victimization: domestic violence, accidents, robbery, war, discrimination, and gender-based cyber violence. The stories about discrimination involved incidents with Black male athletes and were the only ones addressing discrimination. Men were more frequently shown as victims of accidents, while in all other categories, women were more often portrayed as victims or survivors.

Family role

Across all media, a family role is mentioned for 22% of women (37 cases out of 172 women) and only 4% of men (21 out of 453). The gender gap is smaller in traditional media, where a family role is given for 11% of women and 6% of men, but it is significantly larger in online

news, where as many as 37% of women (26 out of 70) are identified by their family role, compared to just 2% of men.

This finding is yet another indicator that the visibility of women on popular news portals is tied to these media's tendency to publish stories about the private, mostly women's lives. Such editorial strategy has contradictory consequences: it makes women's lives more visible in the media, but do so in a way that links their value to family roles, and unlike men, does not treat them as individuals in their own right.

The gender of the journalist does not influence whether a family role is mentioned. Rather, such mentions are associated with a sensationalistic and highly personalized approach to journalism.

Quoting and picturing of news subjects in print and online news

In print media, men and women have an equal chance of being directly quoted in news stories, with quotes appearing for 56% of both male and female subjects while female subjects have better chance to be photographed since 44% of female subject is photographed and 36% of male.

In online news, women are quoted more often than men (44% compared to 37%), but men are more frequently pictured than women (39% compared to 29%).

Intersectionality

There was a total of 40 appearances (6%) by individuals belonging to minority identities, most of them in television news.

The visibility of minorities was primarily driven by coverage of Đurđevdan (Roma minority), the Met Gala, an incident involving a Partizan basketball player (racial minorities), and Ana Brnabić, a prominent politician, President of National Assembly, also part of the LGBTQ+ community. Ana Brnabić appeared 13 times in the analysed sample, accounting for more than half of all mentions of women from minority groups (N=23).

Among women featured as news subjects, those who also belong to a minority group are more common, making up 13% of all women in the news, while only 4% of male subjects belong to a minority group.

Special questions

Since the GMMP 2025 data collection took place during a period of intense political polarization, the national team included special questions to assess how this polarization is reflected in media representation. Specifically, we examined whether a person in the news was publicly associated with, or was supportive of, the ruling party and its policies, or critical of it.

Our findings show that critics of the government are only half as present in the news as supporters of the regime. However, the gender breakdown reveals a notable difference: women made up only 15% of those portrayed as supporters of the regime but accounted for 31% of those shown as critical of it.

JOURNALISTS AND REPORTERS

Women make up 56% of all visible journalists, announcers, and presenters across all media types. Their lower presence in radio is primarily due to one methodological factor: a male radio news presenter was counted for each appearance (15 times) which significantly skewed the data.

Reporters, announcers and presenters by media type

	Female	Male	Total N
Print	61%	39%	18
Radio	21%	79%	24
TV	55%	45%	145
Internet	76%	24%	38

Created with Datawrapper

Table no. 6. Reporters, announcers and presenters by media type

When the roles of anchors and presenters are disaggregated from reporters, the picture changes. While presenting roles are equally distributed, production is female dominated.

In broadcast media, male anchors were observed in three cases (N1, Prva, and Radio Beograd), while female anchors were present twice (on RTS and Pink). Sports segments were exclusively presented by men across all outlets that included a sports section (TV N1 did not feature one). In contrast, weather forecasts were consistently delivered by women. Age is no longer a limiting factor for anchors and presenters of either gender. Both men and women appear across three age groups: young (20–30), middle-aged (31–50), and older adults (51–64).

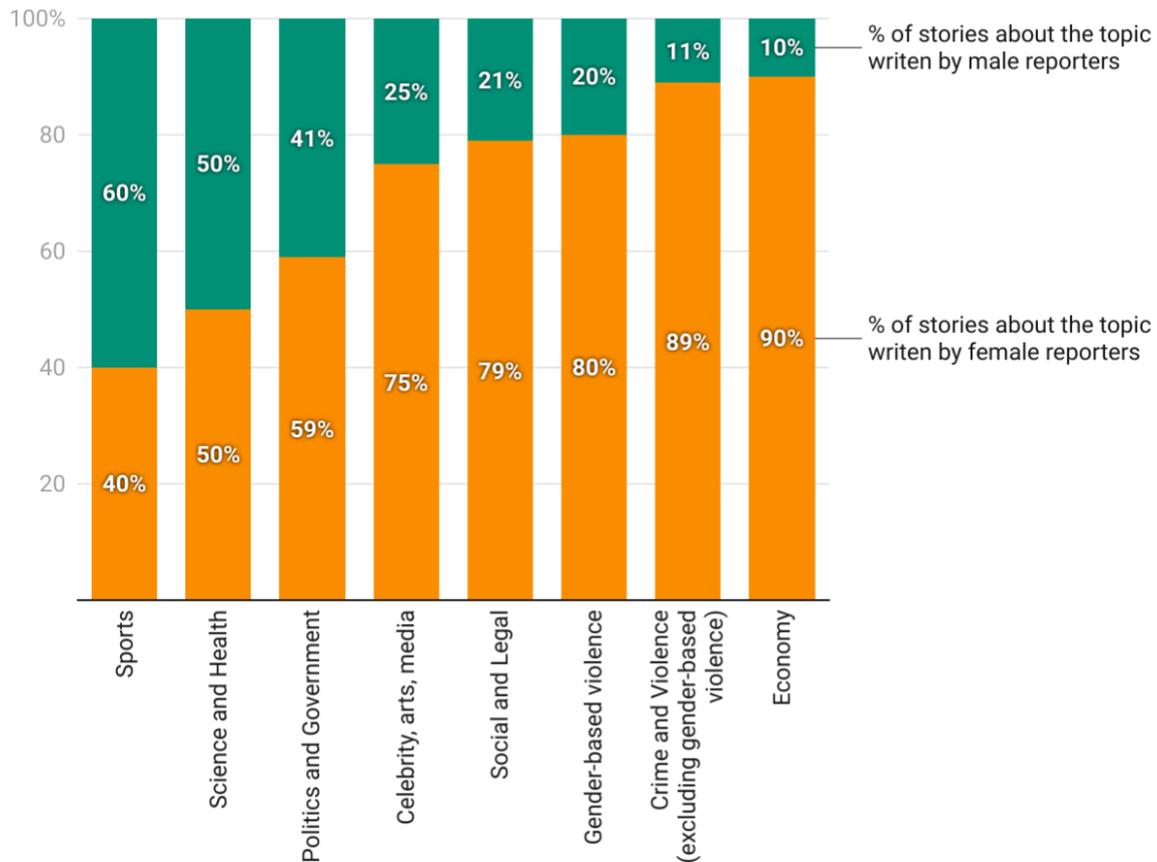
On the production side, journalism is predominantly female-led. Among visible journalists, 72% are women (81 out of 112), making up a significant majority across all media platforms - print (61%), radio (71%), television (73%), and internet (76%). Although there are variations in the data for Serbia in the 2015–2025 period, the main finding remains consistent across all waves of the project: women constitute the significant majority in the journalism field. When compared with the global and European averages (slightly above 40%), this indicator shows that Serbia is among the countries with a highly feminized journalistic profession. However, this high representation of women in the profession is not reflected in their presence in news stories.

Authorship in print and online media remains largely anonymous. In fact, 74% of print articles and 57% of online news items do not include a byline, making it impossible to determine the gender of the author in most cases. Even television reporters are becoming less visible, with many news items now delivered via voiceover of presenter. This is often due to the content being compilations of statements from social media or press releases.

Overall, the feminization of journalism continues to progress. However, it is paralleled by a concerning trend of job insecurity, work overload, and declining social status for media professionals.

Although women are clearly majority in journalistic profession, there are still sections which stay more "masculine" than others, such as sports - the only one in which male journalists are majority, or science and health (50:50) and politics (59% vs. 41% for female journalists).

Gender of reporters by topics



Created with Datawrapper

Chart no. 7 Gender of reporters by topics

The question that arises is whether the identity of the journalist, particularly their gender, matters when it comes to news reporting. The short answer, based on 2025 data, is yes.

Women journalists reported on or interviewed 239 news subjects overall. While the majority of those subjects were men (60%, or 144 individuals), women still represented a significant 40% (95 individuals) of the people they covered.

In contrast, male journalists reported on 196 news subjects, with a clear gender imbalance: 82% (87 individuals) were men, and only 18% (19 individuals) were women.

These findings suggest that female journalists are more likely than their male counterparts to include women as news subjects, thereby contributing to more balanced gender representation in the media.

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

In the analyzed material, not a single news item addressed the issue of women's rights, related legislation or policies promoting gender equity. Women are rarely the central focus of news stories: only one in ten stories featured a woman, a group of women, or addressed gender-related issues.

In total, 23 news stories (9% of the sample) placed women, either as individuals or groups, at the center. These stories covered the following topics: gender-based violence (N=6), crime (N=6), social issues (N=4), politics (N=3), celebrities (N=3), and the economy (N=1). Only one article directly addressed gender inequality, while two stories actively challenged gender stereotypes.

Stereotypes were questioned in just two stories. The one is focused on Angela Merkel, portraying her as a powerful woman openly expressing her stance on male politician Friedrich Merz, a dynamic rarely depicted in political reporting. The second highlighted successful Roma women discussing the obstacles, stereotypes, and prejudices they have overcome. This story is also the only one that explicitly addresses gender inequality. Although the format is somewhat unconventional (it is composed of quotes from a talk show set to be aired on cable TV of the same media house) it effectively brings attention to the issue of double marginalization faced by Roma women.

The situation in Serbian media has remained largely unchanged over the past decade. Women rarely appear as the central focus of news stories (only 8% in 2015, 11% in 2020, and 9% in 2025). News coverage doesn't problematize gender inequality, hardly ever challenges gender stereotypes, and almost never treats gender discrimination as a significant topic.

FOCUS ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Six news stories about gender-based violence was published in the analyzed sample, all by tabloid online portals. While this contributes to the visibility of an extremely important issue, the way it is reported is often entirely unethical and in direct conflict with professional guidelines for reporting on such sensitive topics.

In total, these stories featured 23 women, 8 men, and one person whose gender could not be determined. Women were the dominant subjects, making up 73% of the people mentioned. One woman was included as an expert or commentator, and in three instances, women shared their personal experiences.

One of the news stories related to gender-based violence is a case of femicide, where a father killed his daughter and injured another daughter and his wife. This story was published on the *Mondo* portal.

Another story, published across five different online portals (*Mondo*, *Srbija Danas*, *Blic*, *Kurir*, and *Nova*), involved a male student who placed the faces of female classmates and a teacher onto images of nude women's bodies. This case will be included in our qualitative analysis as a missed opportunity to address the issue of technology-facilitated gender-based violence in a meaningful and responsible way.

Apart from the cases included in the sample, some newspapers ran additional stories about gender-based violence on their back pages. The tabloid *Alo* ran three reports on incidents of violence, while *Novosti* published a story about another femicide case. A clear distinction exists between tabloid and non-tabloid media: all news stories related to gender-based violence were published by tabloid portals and newspapers, which use the topic to attract attention rather than reporting on it with the necessary care and responsibility.

CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1. A story that is blatantly stereotyped.

Title of article: "Asmin's need to talk about his ex-wife was killing me"

Sub-headline: "Troubles in Paradise Stanija Dobrojević spoke openly about her breakup with Durdžić"

Name of newspaper: Alo!

By: Ekipa Alo!

Photo: One third of the page is a picture of Stanija Dobrojević alone in red mini dress, also, there is picture of her and her ex-boyfriend hugging.

Photo caption: "At first, in a way, I was understanding about him dealing with Aneli's reality-show stories, but after two years, I ran out of strength; the showgirl states."

"Gave up on love; Stanija Dobrojević"

If the story is from a newspaper or internet news website, is it one of the stories you coded in the quantitative part of the study? **No**

Text: Stanija Dobrojević confirmed that things are not going well in her love life, that she has temporarily cut off contact with Asmin Durdžić, with whom she has been in a relationship for two years.

As she explained, disagreements led her to think about whether she wants to continue being with him in an emotional relationship. "Nothing has changed. The situation is the same as it was when I last spoke about my love life. I haven't seen Asmin for a while, I haven't gone to Switzerland. It all came down to some arguments. Time will show whether we will overcome them and what will happen further. We are not on a break, we have a serious problem, but we'll see how our relationship develops. I will keep the details that upset me private," said Dobrojević, refuting claims that she at least indirectly supported Durdžić in his public conflicts with his ex-partner Aneli Ahmić.

"I don't support Asmin's negative comments about Aneli. At one point, they all made peace with each other, and then everything suddenly changed, and things went bad again. After two years of being with Asmin, I'm sorry he still deals with his ex-partner and comments on her actions. I know what I said - I don't want to live in the past. I'm sorry that happened to me, but that's life, sometimes someone takes something from you, sometimes you lose something. I didn't even get married, and I didn't expect anything from him. He came to me as a free man. Well, not entirely free, because he has a child with another woman. When I saw the situation on the cameras with his daughter Anelina and her mother Aneli, it hurt me and I didn't like it. After that, everything between us worsened," said Stanija, who thinks that her relationship with Asmin could have grown into something serious if they had managed to overcome his return to the past.

"I was proud that he wasn't talking about the past anymore. I was proud that he was my only one. Unfortunately, he went back to his old ways, quarreling with Aneli, and that killed me. I don't need that, and I don't want that in my life. I wanted a peaceful, stable life, not one in which there's always some drama. At the beginning of our relationship, it was hard, but later I accepted it. I think it all got worse when I publicly supported him. I deleted all my posts, I don't want to be judged based on everything that was said publicly. I never spoke badly about Aneli, and I will not do so now. That's why I'm 100% calm. I stand behind everything I said at the start - she's the mother of his child, and she deserves every respect. He should respect her, too. I erased everything and withdrew, because I don't want anyone to drag me

into this story again. Our love could have gone in another direction, but he didn't manage to leave the past behind, and that's where the biggest problem lies," concluded Dobrojević for Pink.

Analysis:

The article about Stanija Dobrojević and her relationship with Asmin Durdžić illustrates how Serbian tabloid media frequently reproduces traditional gender stereotypes. Although the story appears to focus on a celebrity breakup, the framing of Stanija's words and the narrative itself highlight persistent patterns in how women and men are represented in media discourse. Women, usually, in an overly emotional and jealous position in the relationship where men stay unbothered and uninterested in the "female drama".

Stanija is positioned primarily in relation to her partner and his past. Her identity in the article is tied to her role as a girlfriend who must navigate Asmin's unresolved issues with his ex-wife. This reflects the stereotypical portrayal of women as emotionally defined by their relationships and partners rather than by their individual achievements or agency. The language used, such as her being "killed" by Asmin's talk about his ex or word "showgirl" underscores her vulnerability and emotional suffering, reinforcing the stereotype that women are fragile, overly sensitive, jealous, always at the mercy of male actions. Also, there is sexualization.

18 UTOURAK | 6. maj 2025. **Rijaliti**

» NEVOLJE U RAJU Stanija Dobrojević iskreno progovorila o raskidu sa Durdžićem

UBIJALA ME JE ASMINOVA POTREBA DA PRIČA O BIVŠOJ ŽENI!

PIŠE: EKIPA ALDI

Stanija Dobrojević potvrdila je da na njenom ljubavnom planu ne cvetaju ruže, te da je na neko vreme prekinula kontakt s Asminom Durdžićem s kojim je već dve godine u vezi.

Kako je objasnila, došlo je do nesuglasica koje su je navele da razmisli da li uopšte želi da ostane s njim u emotivnoj vezi. Ništa se nije promenilo. Situacija je ista kao što je bila kada se radi o mom ljubavnom planu. Nisam se videla s Asminom, a nismo ni razgovarali. Došlo je do nekih nesuglasica. Vreme će pokazati da li ćemo to prevazići i šta će se dalje dešavati. Nismo na pauzi. Imamo ozbiljan problem, a videćemo kako će se odvijati naš odnos. Zadržacu za sebe detalje koji su mi zasmetao li - istakla je Dobrojevićeva uz tvrdnje da ni najmanje ne podržava Durdžića u javnim sukobima sa bivšom partnerkom Aneli Ahmić.

Ne podržavam to što Asmin negativno komentariše Aneli. U jednom trenutku su se svi međusobno izmirmili, a onda se odjednom sve promenilo, te su opet loši.

Posle dve godine od ulaska u vezu s Asminom, meni je veoma žao što se on još uvek bavi bivšom partnerkom i komentariše njeno učešće. Jedino što mogu da kažem je da nikom ništa nisam uzela. Žao mi je što sam joj se desila u životu, da može da kaže da sam joj nešto uzela, jer nisam nešto uzimem. Nisam imala ni ideju da ta žena postoji. On je meni došao kao slobodan momak. Da tu nisam postojala ja, bila bi neka druga osoba. Kad sam videla Situ na kameri i malu cerkicu Anelinu i Asminovu, bilo mi je žao jer sam rekla neke stvari. Nakon svega, ne mešam se u sve to, svako nosi svoj krst - kazala je Stanija, koja smatra da je odnos s Asminom mogao da preraste u ozbiljan da su uspešno prevaziđu njegovo vraćanje na prošlost.

Bila sam ponosna jer je naš odnos bio priča za sebe. Bila sam ponosna na to što smo jedinke. Njemu sam na početku skretala pažnju na to da se ne svada s Aneli, Sitom i njihovom mamom Jasminom, ali sam videla da me ne sluša. Neke stvari su nepopravljive.

Digla sam ruke od toga. Verujem da bi se Aneli pomirila s njim na osnovu svega što je prošlim meseci govorila pred kamerama. Verujem da je 100% tako. Sigurna sam u to da su jedno drugo mnogo povredili. Ona je zbrisala u rijaliti, a on pobeo na drugu stranu. Nas dvoje smo mogli da sagradimo ozbiljan život, a on se bakće s tim drugim stvarima. Na početku sam na neki način imala razumevanja, ali posle dve godine mi je ponestalo. Smatram da je ovo bila sudbina i da je moralo da mi se desi. Nisam mogla ni da sanjam da će sve to da mi se desi, ali neka bude da je sve ovo lekcija iz koje sam nešto naučila - istakla je Dobrojevićeva za Pink.

Digla ruke od ljubavi STANIJA DOBROJEVIĆ

Na početku sam na neki način imala razumevanja što se bavi Anelinim rijaliti pričama, ali posle dve godine mi je ponestalo snage, navodi starleta

FOTO: AKA IMAGES

At the same time, Asmin is framed through the stereotype of masculine dominance, emotional unavailability and irresponsibility. He is portrayed as the central actor whose conflicts with his ex-wife dictate the state of his current relationship. His ongoing quarrels are treated as a defining trait of his masculinity, along with the stereotype that men are combative, driven by pride, and unable to manage emotional complexities without conflict.

By emphasizing his outbursts, the media normalizes the idea of male aggression and verbal abuse as part of romantic narratives.

The article also plays into another common media trope; women are often in charge of maintaining peace, stability, and respect. Stanija repeatedly states that she wanted a “peaceful, stable life” and emphasizes respect toward Asmin’s ex-partner. In doing so, she is positioned as the caretaker and mediator; a role stereotypically assigned to women. Meanwhile, Asmin is not held to the same standard of emotional labor. This imbalance reinforces the idea that women must endure, forgive, and rise above male crash outs in order to preserve harmony. Finally, the article sensationalizes private conflict in a way that blurs the boundaries between personal life and public consumption when it comes to female celebrities. While Asmin’s behavior is framed as troublesome but almost expected, Stanija’s emotions and decisions are placed under a magnifying glass and public’s eye, reducing her public image to the role of a suffering, disappointed partner. This reflects a broader media trend in which women’s struggles in relationships are almost normalized and to be expected. Pictures chosen in this article navigate gender stereotypes in direction of sexualization of a female body; Stanija is in both of them dressed in short, revealing outfits with cleavage, fitting for *male gaze* driven media. Also, the article lacks other point of view on the breakup, Asmin’s side.

In conclusion, this article demonstrates how celebrity gossip reinforces gender stereotypes. Women are depicted as emotional, passive, and dependent, while men are portrayed as aggressive and conflict-driven. Such portrayals shape cultural expectations of gender, how men and women *should* behave in relationships.

CASE STUDY 2 - SUBTLE GENDER STEREOTYPE

TV: Pink

Journalist: Vukica Lazović from Voice of Western Serbia

About TV news: This television report focuses on the completion of a highway segment currently under construction in Western Serbia. Visually, it combines three types of footage: aerial shots depicting a stretch of highway not yet open to traffic and scenes of ongoing construction work such as asphalt laying; interview segments in which speakers share their views; and, finally, a stand-up segment by the reporter. The piece was introduced by the news anchor, who described this stage as the most demanding phase in the construction of the “Miloš Veliki” highway, noting that as much as 50 percent of the route consists of tunnels, bridges, and overpasses.

The report was produced on location. The reporter spoke with drivers waiting at a toll booth on the highway, asking for their opinions on whether the new route would relieve traffic congestion. She also interviewed residents of the villages through which the highway will pass, questioning how this development would alter their local environment, as well as a construction specialist—the chief engineer responsible for the tunnel works at Munjino Brdo.



The overall tone of the report is distinctly affirmative, underscoring that the completion of this segment represents the fulfillment of a decades-long aspiration and that the challenges posed by unpredictable natural conditions have been successfully overcome.

Analysis: In what ways does this story convey subtle stereotypes?

The report features six interviewees, all of whom are men. Three male drivers offer brief comments about how much the road network will be eased and how beneficial the highway will be for their travel. These are followed by more extensive statements from two male residents of the affected villages, who discuss the advantages the highway is expected to bring to life in their community. The final statement comes from a male civil engineer.

The fact that only male actors are included into report reinforces the stereotype that activities related to automobiles, transportation, and construction are domains of predominantly male interest and expertise. This is particularly striking given that the topic at hand concerns everyday experiences and lay opinions from people whose daily lives will be affected by the construction. This approach reflects an implicit, stereotypical assumption that men are more knowledgeable about matters relating to transport and construction.

The degree of gender blindness is particularly noteworthy given that the change addressed in the report will influence the everyday lives of the general population, yet women's perspectives are entirely absent. Moreover, the fact that the article was authored by a female journalist further underscores the limited awareness of gendered biases within news production practices.

CASE STUDY 3 - MISSED OPPORTUNITY

News Website: Blic

By: Slađa Tasić

Headline: "My daughter is in those pictures, she's devastated by the stress!" Boy in Vranje PHOTOSHOPPED GIRLS' AND TEACHER'S FACES onto nude bodies: Questioned by police – here's what he said („Moja ćerka je na tim slikama, ne može da dođe sebi od stresa!" Dečak u Vranju MONTIRAO LICA DEVOJČICA i nastavnica na naga tela: Saslušan u policiji, evo šta je rekao)

Picture: Illustration reading "Breaking News," with a red background and a globe icon

Picture caption: Breaking News

Analysis: In what ways is this story gender blind and therefore a missed opportunity?

The article reports on a case of digital violence with a gendered component, which can be classified as a form of gender-based violence. It describes how a final-year elementary school student misused photographs of his female classmates and teachers by editing their faces onto nude bodies, thereby violating their privacy and dignity.

Once the case was reported to the police, it became clear that this was not an isolated incident—similar offenses had been occurring in several other schools in the city. Because all the victims of this act of cyber-violence were

"Moja ćerka je na tim slikama, ne može da dođe sebi od stresa!" Dečak u Vranju MONTIRAO LICA DEVOJČICA i nastavnica na naga tela: Saslušan u policiji, evo šta je rekao

- Učenik u OŠ "Radoje Domanović" u Vranju montirao lica devojčica i nastavnica na nagim telima, izazivajući stres kod žrtava.
- Policija istražuje slučaj, a dečak je priznao montažu fotografija, ali ne njihovo javno objavljivanje na društvenim mrežama.

Slađa Tasić 6. maj 2025 • 13:19 Komentara 6

Slušaj vest 0:00 / 0:00

U OŠ „Radoje Domanović“ u Vranju dogodio se incident koji se može okarakterisati kao virtuelno ili sajber nasilje, zbog čega su žrtve, devojčice, ali i nastavnice pod velikim stresom. Naime, učenik završne godine iskoristio je fotografije objavljene u društvenim mrežama škole škole i lica svojih drugarica i nastavnice montirane na naga tela



female (students and teachers), the case carries a clear gender dimension: the act was aimed specifically at humiliating and harming women. The article notes that the boy used photos taken from the school's social-media posts covering competitions and removed a boy who appeared in one of the original images, targeting only the women in order to disgrace them.

By linking the gender of the victims to the nature of the cyber-violence, the coverage could have highlighted a broader underlying problem: gender inequality, misogyny, and patriarchal structures that enable and perpetuate such harm. With input from experts (e.g. sociologists, child psychologists, legal experts, Women's rights organisations), relevant statistics, references to applicable laws, and discussion of possible prevention strategies – the story could have served an educational purpose and illuminated the issue from multiple angles.

Although the case itself offered a strong opportunity to address gender-based online violence, this potential was largely missed. The article remained a straightforward extended news report, limited to the basic facts of the incident, the institutions that responded, a parent's comment, and a statement from the school condemning all forms of violence and expressing support for the affected students and teachers.

CASE STUDY 4 - GENDER AWARE

Sub type 4C: Gender Specific Stories

Newspaper: Politika

Headline: Eleven Local Projects for Empowering Women in 2025.

Picture: Photograph from conference showing women panelists

Picture caption: From yesterday's conference "Women for Women" initiative

Analysis: How does this story highlight equality/inequality between women and men?

This article discusses a conference organized by the Belgrade International Women's Club and the initiative "Women for Women," which aims to empower women and girls by financing 11 local projects in Belgrade, Novi Sad, and less developed regions of the country where women have fewer opportunities and limited support systems.

Једанаест локалних пројеката за оснаживање жена у 2025.

Међународни клуб жена из Београда организовао је јуче перформансу потписивања уговора за пројекте финансиране у оквиру иницијативе „Жене за жене“ за 2025. годину, чиме је почела реализација 11 локалних пројеката широм Србије, чији је циљ оснаживање жена и девојчица. Пројекти су одабрани међу 35 пријава и одражавају посећеност овог клуба јачању женских гласова из различитих, често и недовољно заступљених региона, укључујући Кикинд, Пећине, Нови Пазар, Краљево, али и веће градове као што су Београд и Нови Сад.

Пројекти обухватају, између осталог, програме подршке женама које су жртве сексуалног насиља, подршку samozащитним мајкама, женама оболелим од рака дојке, програме подршке мајкама и бебама и друге. Такође, пројектима ће се помоћи жене са инвалидитетом на тржишту рада, центри за психолошку подршку женама, осposобавање жена да раде на машинама за шивење, пројекти правне помоћи жртвама родно заснованог насиља, као и програм очувања старих заната.

Председница ове иницијативе и супрута амбасадора Словачке у Србији Андрија Паукова изјавила је на отварању да је донацијска на београдском базару у децембру прикупљено више од четири и по милиона динара за пројекте оснаживања.

Чланица добротворног комитета клуба Кристина Цета навела је да је циљ пројекта да се подрже жене из разних аспеката друштвеног живота. Једна од корисних програма је и Савета Беговић из новопазарске организације „Женски академски центар“, која је навела да ће новац из пројекта искористити за подршку женама које планирају да оснују своје фирме.

„Подршка ће се односити пре свега на дигитални маркетинг, да жене науче како да пласирају свој производ и да га понуде публици“, рекла је Беговићева за Тајтл.

Оценила је да овај пројекат пуно значи за Нови Пазар, наводећи да у том граду има много предузимљивих и способних жена, којима је потребна едукативна подршка како би пласирале свој бренд.

Душица Јелеч из београдског Центра за унапређење друштва истакла је да су тој организацији средства потребна, јер су прошле године започели програм подршке samozащитним родитељима. „Имамо 200 породица којима је потребна помоћ у разним видловима друштвеног живота. И кроз овај пројекат ћемо изградити подршку тамо где смо видели да су потребе ургентне, а то је, између осталог, психолошка подршка и едукација – како одабрати правог партнера“, рекла је Јелеч за Тајтл.

Међународни клуб жена из Београда је невладин, непрофитна организација коју чине чланице из више од 40 земаља. Чланице клуба су жене из дипломатске и пословне заједнице које привремено бораве у Београду, као и локалне жене са искуством чланства у сличним клубовима из иностранства.



The text highlights projects such as support programs for women who are victims of sexual violence, single mothers and their babies, and women fighting breast cancer, as well as free legal and psychological assistance for victims of gender-based violence. Educational projects (e.g. digital marketing, brand development) focus on empowering women to enter entrepreneurship and learn how to promote and sell their products.

Further in the text, statements from the initiative's president, Andrea Pavukova - the spouse of the Slovak ambassador to Serbia - emphasize that funding for empowerment projects comes from donations. The article also includes brief personal experiences: two women supported by the program share what it means to them and present their projects, though this part is not given much space, as the focus remains primarily on the conference itself.

Some important issues are certainly mentioned, so the article can be considered gender-aware - if not through critical perspectives, then through its subject matter. Moreover, since the initiative was created by the International Women's Club, a non-profit organization funded through donations, and whose members are women from diplomatic and business communities (as mentioned at the end of the text), we can understand why the initiative may be perceived as promoting women's solidarity - more "privileged" women using their voices and influence to support initiatives for less fortunate women. However, the text seems to fail to highlight this important aspect of the story. At this level, the text conveys only the basic information about the event and does not elaborate on any aspects relevant to a deeper understanding of gender-related issues, such as women's solidarity, class differences, women's entrepreneurship, or broader empowerment processes. Despite these limitations, the article nonetheless contributes to raising awareness of women's empowerment initiatives in Serbia.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Although there is an improvement regarding visibility of women over the last decade, they continue to be underrepresented across all forms of media. This is evident on three levels: they are less visible in the news, they appear less frequently in prominent or hard news topics, and they are less likely to be represented in media as members of powerful or influential profession.

This years' data suggests that female representation is significantly higher in online news compared to traditional formats. However, this increase is largely driven by the rise of commercial, entertainment-oriented, and "soft news" content. The dominance of celebrity culture and lifestyle reporting tends to feature more female sources, a trend tied to the growing emphasis on affective, sensational news designed to drive engagement in the "clickable" economy.

While the journalism profession is continued to be increasingly feminized, particularly in production roles such as reporters, hierarchical male dominance still persists across all media types. Also, patterns of sectoral segregation remain in a way that in certain beats, such as sports, science and health and politics, male journalists are presented above average. Therefore, after all these years, gender imbalance in "hard news" persists and is, slightly modified, crossing over into digital media.

Gender inequality in how women are presented in the news is the most resistant to change. Although the number of women in professional roles has increased over the years, they still mostly contribute to news coverage in roles of laypersons, common sense and personal experience, as housemakers or parents, far more often than experts or professionals.

During the last decade all democracy and media freedom relevant scores in Serbia have significantly declined bringing new challenges to achieving gender equality and justice in and through the media.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN 2026-2030

Most of the recommendations from the GMMP 2020 report are still unfulfilled. Three decades since Beijing Conference is an opportunity to critically evaluate what has been achieved and what stands in the way of gender equality in the media. Significant move forward requires to first identify barriers to improvement and than to develop adequate measures for the next five years.

Strategic actions are needed to stimulate gender-balanced reporting and close the gender gap in media portrayal. They include systemic measures from ensuring gender balance in regulatory and governing boards of media institutions to public campaigns of raising sensitivity to gender imbalance in public discourse.

Initiatives for gender parity in the news should include a comprehensive policy framework and action plan applicable to both public and commercial media.

Effective policy instruments that support gender-equal content production, with particular attention to public service media, should be enforced.

Diversity in newsrooms should be actively promoted, encompassing inclusive professional training curricula, diverse news sources, and a broader range of news styles.

The safety and well-being of female journalists must be a permanent concern. The rising level of violence against women in media professions requires immediate and gender-sensitive measures.

In the digital media landscape new forms of misogyny, sexism, and privacy violations, particularly in the context of datafication, algorithmic news selection, generative AI and deep-fake production should be regularly monitored and met with effective policy and professional responses.

Annex 1. Methodology

Over a full 24-hour cycle, thousands of volunteers from the Pacific to the Caribbean monitored their news media, adding their countries' voices to this important pulse-check on gender representation in the news media. The seventh edition of the GMMP was marked by many firsts, highlighting the enhancements introduced to this study over the years. Marking a first for the GMMP, 2025 relied entirely on electronic data capture, with no handwritten forms used; coding sheets were submitted to the technical team either directly through the platform or using the spreadsheet version of the familiar coding template. This was also the first time that the majority of the online data capture was done by in-country teams, who were responsible for over 12,000 entries. Another first was the prominence of internet news items, which surpassed radio entries at the global level and in six of the eight regions, reflecting the ongoing shift toward digital news sources.

Despite these evolutions, the fundamental GMMP methodology has remained consistent over the decades, preserving the comparability of findings across survey rounds.

How the monitoring took place

The GMMP monitoring day brought together a vast global network of volunteers, all committed to answering the question, *how is gender portrayed on an ordinary news day?* The GMMP country networks, ranging from university research teams to media advocacy groups, brought with them deep expertise in local media ecosystems, ensuring that the data captured was contextually grounded, accurately capturing the nuances of news coverage across the world. In some regions, collaboration crossed borders; teams in Latin America and Asia supported neighbouring countries with data entry, ensuring that knowledge and effort were shared wherever needed.

In the lead-up to the monitoring day, the WACC team and regional coordinators ran a series of training sessions on the GMMP methodology. Country teams received refresher training on the sampling methodology and monitoring procedures, along with an introduction to the updated topic breakdowns. Teams had a choice of two monitoring options: full monitoring, which provided a detailed view of gender representation across news media, or short monitoring, which captured only the key GMMP indicators.

The training sessions also covered the use of the GMMP's custom data capture platform, which has been used since 2015. Available in English, French, and Spanish, the platform serves as the central system for consolidating responses from country teams after the monitoring day. On the monitoring day itself, teams carry out the initial data capture offline, as discussion and reflection are a key part of the monitoring process. These collaborative sessions allow teams to review findings, compare interpretations and ensure consistency. To maintain accuracy, radio and television bulletins were recorded, and copies of digital and print media were collected for reference.

The GMMP questions capture quantitative data on four key dimensions of each news item: i) About the story: the topic, story placement and scope; ii) About the people in the story - subjects and sources; iii) About the news personnel - announcers, presenters and reporters - in the story; and, iv) The quality of the story from a gender perspectives -gender stereotypes, women's centrality, rights- and gender equality angles. Country teams can also include up to three additional questions about the people in the story, to explore concerns of specific national interest. Additionally, teams provide qualitative context to aid interpretation, describing the news agenda on the monitoring day, their reasons for selecting particular media outlets, and key features of their national media system. Teams also conduct a structured qualitative analysis following the GMMP's standard framework, complementing the

quantitative data with insights that help explain patterns and trends in gender representation in the media.

While teams were not limited in the number of outlets they could monitor, guidance was provided on the recommended minimum through the GMMP media bands chart. The media bands system, first introduced in 2005, was designed to promote a more balanced distribution of data and to provide each country with guidance on the minimum number of media outlets to monitor. The bands were determined by the overall number of each type of media in each country. Over the years, desktop research has formed the basis for compiling these numbers, which were then validated with country teams. For this edition, many of the media research databases previously relied upon were outdated, prompting us to turn inward and draw on historical GMMP databases as a reference for nationally relevant outlets. This list was reviewed and confirmed by country and regional coordinators.

In several countries, the number of media outlets relevant to this study has declined since 2020, reflecting shifts in the media landscape. Subsequently, the number of media bands was reduced; for instance, broadcast media bands were scaled down from five to three. For internet news, countries were ranked according to internet usage rates published by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and grouped into corresponding media bands.

Conclusion

From classrooms and offices to shared virtual spaces, the GMMP network turned a single ordinary news day into a globally representative snapshot of gender in the media. This achievement would not have been possible without the dedication of thousands of volunteers, whose careful and diligent monitoring of media outlets worldwide sustains this important tradition of media monitoring.

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Annex 2. List of Monitors

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