

**WHO
MAKES THE
NEWS?**



Cyprus

Global Media Monitoring Project 2010 National Report



Acknowledgements



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GMMP 2010 is co-ordinated by the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), an international NGO which promotes communication for social change, in collaboration with data analyst, Media Monitoring Africa (MMA), South Africa.

The data for GMMP 2010 was collected through the collective voluntary effort of hundreds of organizations including gender and media activists, grassroots communication groups, academics and students of communication, media professionals, journalists associations, alternative media networks and church groups.



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Preface

Global Context

- 10 November 2009 was an ordinary day at work for newsroom staff around the world. It was however a special day for groups in over 100 countries who gathered to monitor their news media. After months of planning, preparations and training, they brought the Fourth Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) to life.
- The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) is the world's longest-running and most extensive research on gender in the news media. It began in 1995 when volunteers in 71 countries around the world monitored women's presence in their national radio, television and print news. The research revealed that only 17% of news subjects – the people who are interviewed or whom the news is about – were women. It found that gender parity was 'a distant prospect in any region of the world. News [was] more often being presented by women but it [was] still rarely about women.'¹
- Seventy countries participated in the Second GMMP in 2000. This and all subsequent GMMPs were coordinated by the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC). The research found a relatively static picture: only 18% of news subject were women, a statistically insignificant change over the 5-year period.²
- The Third GMMP in 2005 attracted the participation of 76 countries. Some progress in women's presence in the news was evident. 21% of news subjects were female. This 3% increase in the preceding five years was statistically significant. However, the overwhelming finding was women's continued near invisibility in the news. Very little news – just under 10% of all stories – focussed specifically on women. Women were rarely central in stories that comprised the bulk of the news agenda. Women were outnumbered by men as newsmakers in every major news topic. Expert opinion was overwhelmingly male with women comprising only 17% of experts who appeared in news stories. As newsmakers, women were under-represented in professional categories. The third GMMP found that the sex of the journalist made a difference in whether or not women made the news: there were more female news subjects in stories reported by female journalists (25%) than in stories reported by male journalists (20%).
- The First GMMP, and as will be seen, the Fourth GMMP reveal that the world reported in the news is mostly male. Overall, news stories were twice as likely to reinforce gender stereotypes rather than challenging them. News stories on gender (in)equality were almost non-existent.

National context

- Fair treatment and representation of women in media coverage is crucial especially at this time when information and communication have assumed such an important role in influencing public opinion, forming attitudes and formulating policy.

Given the lack of available quantitative and qualitative data on media in Cyprus, the GMMP is an essential research tool that provides us with relevant data in order to assess the state of the media in Cyprus from a gender equality perspective, as well as to support relevant advocacy activities. Media monitoring allows us to document and highlight the role of the media in the promotion of gender equality at all levels.

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

² Spears, George and Kasia Seydegart, Erin Research. with additional analysis by Margaret Gallagher. *Who makes the news? Global Media Monitoring Project*. 2000

Media monitoring is especially important in the context of Cyprus given the very particular political situation and the so-called “national issue” or “Cyprus problem” that permeates all spheres of social and political life.³ The Cyprus problem continues to dominate the news, overshadowing other issues including gender [in]equality. However, what is often if not always ignored is how the Cyprus problem and gender issues are, in fact, interwoven. Women from all communities in Cyprus were affected by the conflict in very gender specific ways; however their voices and perspectives have been all but silenced in discussions relating to the Cyprus problem.

- News media remain the major and most influential source of information, ideas and opinion for most people around the world. It is a key element of the public and private space in which people, nations and societies live. A nation or society that does not fully know itself cannot respond to its citizens’ aspirations. Who and what appears in the news and how people and events are portrayed matters. Who is left out and what is not covered are equally important. Across the world, the cultural underpinnings of gender inequality and discrimination against women are reinforced through the media.
- Given our experience working on issues of gender and media, and our recognition of the importance of the media in promoting diversity and gender equality, the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) is honoured to be part of the global effort that is GMMP. The results the GMMP are an indispensable tool in our work on awareness raising, gender training for media professionals, as well as our advocacy work for a more gender sensitive media more generally. It is our hope that our participation in the GMMP will strengthen our voice in demanding gender parity in the media, as in all spheres of social and political life.

Executive Summary

This is the first time that Cyprus is participating in the Global Media Monitoring Project. On the 10 November 2009 MIGS monitored 157 news stories in the television, radio and print media. The survey included four television stations, five radio channels and three newspapers.

The GMMP survey in Cyprus demonstrated that women are severely underrepresented in the media. Although women have an overall presence, as news subjects, reporters and presenters, this presence only reaches 15% as compared to 85% men. This vast gender gap clearly demonstrates women’s near invisibility in the media in Cyprus.

Women and men as news subjects:

Men represented the majority of news subjects in all the mediums that were studied (88% on television, 85% on radio, 75% in newspapers).

In terms of the occupation/position of women and men who appeared in the news as news subjects, men were portrayed as having key positions that enjoy a high level of social status and public respect such as doctors, lawyers and politicians. Women news subjects were less likely to be described in terms of their occupation or position. Only their identity and family status were mentioned and, interestingly, this was the case only in those news stories reported by women.

In relation to the function of women and men as news subjects, the survey demonstrated that again men dominate: Men are more likely to be portrayed as experts (87%), spokespersons (95%), as main subjects of the story (81%), as sharing their experience (85%), and as giving their opinion (85%).

Women and men as presenters, announcers and reporters:

The gender profile of presenters, announcers, and reporters across the range of media shows that no equitable profile exists across gender. The survey revealed that the majority of

³ The Cyprus problem is the de facto partition of Cyprus due to the Turkish invasion of the island in the 1974 and the military occupation of 37% of the island’s territory, following conflicts between the two main communities, the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.

presenters in all the mediums monitored are men (60%). Although women constitute 73% of radio announcers, they are less represented on television with a presence of only 36%.

Men are more likely to report domestic news stories (70%) – considered most important in Cyprus as these relate to the Cyprus problem – and news stories that have both domestic and international scope (65%), whereas women are more likely to report international news (61%).

It is worth mentioning that 83% of the news stories with women as the central focus were reported by women demonstrating that the sex of the journalist made a difference in whether or not women made the news.

A DAY IN THE NEWS IN CYPRUS

10 November 2009. It was a typical news day. The discussions on the Cyprus problem dominated the news as usual, in addition to two other major news items. The first item concerned the opening of the new international airport in Cyprus that was featured in all the newscasts and newspapers included in the survey. The second major news item concerned the celebrations commemorating the fall of the Berlin Wall, which in many news bulletins was linked to the Cyprus problem.

A story featured in one of the newspapers monitored provides a striking example of the relative invisibility of women in the news in contrast to men. This story reports on the Cyprus Employers and Industrialist Federation attempts to inform its members about the package of measures adopted by the Cyprus Human Recourse Development Authority (HRDA) aiming to support the unemployed in light of the current financial crisis.

In typical fashion, the story fails to take into account the gender dimension of the problem of unemployment in Cyprus and the financial crisis in general. It approaches both unemployed and employees as a homogeneous group, ignoring women's marginal position in the labour market. The article chooses to ignore the gender dimension of unemployment, despite the HRDA's adoption of specific measures targeting unemployed women.

THE CONTEXT

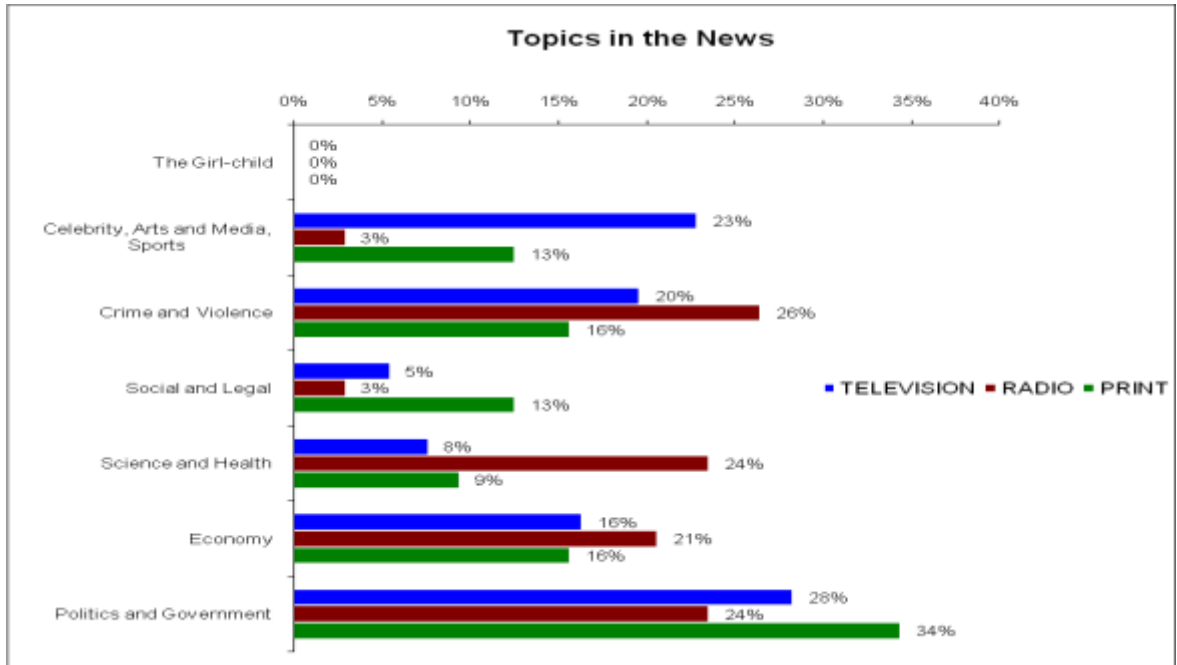
- **Country background:** All media in Cyprus are privately owned with the exception of the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (CyBC). Among the media that were studied none are politically aligned (officially at least), with the exception of ASTRA radio that openly supports the communist AKEL party which is currently in power.
- **Media monitored:**
The following table includes the media that were selected for analysis for the GMMP in Cyprus and a brief explanation of why they were selected for monitoring.

MEDIA	EXPLANATION
Ant1 TV	Newscast has among the largest audiences.(According to AGB Nielsen Media Research)
CYBC1 TV	Newscast has among the largest audiences.(According to AGB Nielsen Media Research)
SIGMA TV	Newscast has among the largest audiences.(According to AGB Nielsen Media Research)
CYBC3 Radio	Has a very good reputation for news. Has a relatively large audience.
Radio Proto	Has a very good reputation for news. Has large audience.
Sfera Radio	The number one music channel in Cyprus with a very large audience.
Astra Radio	Channel that supports Government's party.
Kanali 6 Radio	Has large audience.
Phileleftheros Newspaper	Leading newspaper in Cyprus with the largest circulation and the widest readership (according to research carried out by RAI Consultants Public Ltd.). Has strong reputation for news.
Politis Newspaper	A leading newspaper with large circulation, wide readership and strong reputation for news.
CY Mail	Newspaper in English.

- **The monitors:** Two people took part in the monitoring in Cyprus. 157 news stories were monitored and 425 people were identified as subjects of the news.

TOPICS IN THE NEWS

- **Topics in the news:** The main topic that made the news on monitoring day in Cyprus, regardless of news medium, concerned Politics and Government. Other topics followed as shown by the chart below.

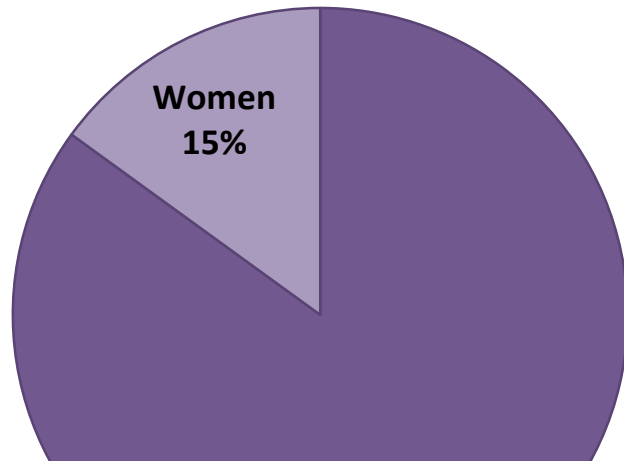


- Men report more often on almost all the topics that are covered in the news. As the survey showed, men report more frequently on the topics of Politics and Government (57%), Economy (58%), Social and Legal (58%) Crime and Violence (58%), Celebrity, Arts, Media, Sports (79%). Only on the topics of Health and Science do women report more often (59%).

THE NEWS

- **Overall presence of women and men in the news in Cyprus as news subjects, reporters and presenters:** The survey clearly demonstrated that women are severely underrepresented in the media in Cyprus. The pie chart below shows the tremendous gap in the presence of women and men as news subjects, reporters and presenters in all media

Presence of women and men in the news

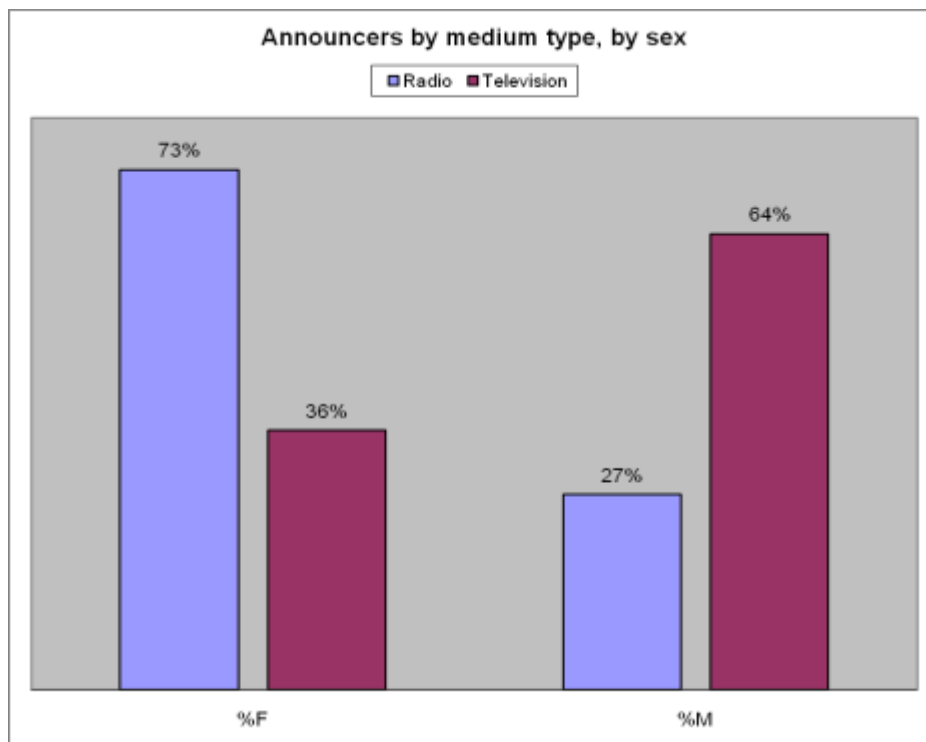


- **Presence of female and male news subjects in your country by medium – radio, TV and newspapers:** Men represent the vast majority of news subjects in all the media mediums that were monitored. More specifically, male news subjects reached 88% on TV, 85% on radio, and 75% in newspapers.
- **News Sources:** Women were quoted as sources of information only in stories covering local issues in Cypriot newspapers. In contrast, men were dominant in all stories related to national and international affairs.
- With regard to the presence of female and male news subjects in Cyprus by story topic, women were underrepresented in those topics that are considered to be most important such as the economy and politics. Specifically, in foreign/international politics (which was the number one topic in the news) women's presence only reached 13% as compared to 87% men. Similarly, women were almost invisible in the news stories concerning the economy with their presence reaching only the 13%. Within the context of the current economic recession, men dominated the stories related to the economic crisis with a percentage of 93%. Thus, women's voices, opinions and experiences on these issues were ignored.
- **Who are the newsmakers?**
In terms of the position/occupation of women and men news subjects, men appear in the news with positions/occupations that need some expertise and/or carry prestige and power in society, or in occupations that are stereotypically male fields such as medicine, law, sports, agriculture, the police, the military, and government/politics. The only stories where women dominated as news subjects were related to prostitution/trafficking and to education.
- **Function of female and male news subjects:** In relation to the function of women and men as news subjects, the survey demonstrated that again men dominate. The survey demonstrated that women as experts are ignored in the Cyprus news media with a presence of only 13%. Only 5% of spokespersons were women, and women were the main subjects of the news in only 19% of cases, as compared to 81% men. Similarly, women were portrayed as sharing their experience in only 25% of news stories.

- **Constructing 'victims' in the news:** The survey revealed that the media portrayed women as victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation (100%), and men as victims of crime, robbery, murder (88%), and as victims of accidents, natural disaster, poverty, disease or illness (78%). There was one story on men as victims of discrimination based on ethnicity (100%).
- **Identity and family status in the news:** 5% of the women who were news subjects were identified by family status in the news. Not a single man was identified by his family status but rather by their occupation and/or position.
- Only female reporters mentioned the identity and family status of female news subjects.
- **Images in the news:** The number of female news subjects appearing in newspaper photographs was much higher (59%) than the number of male news subjects (24%).

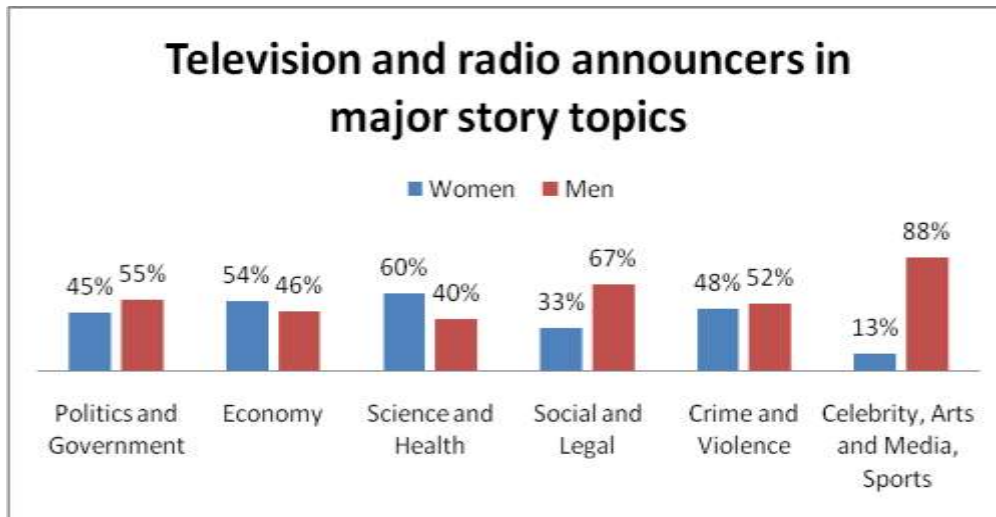
WHO DELIVERS THE NEWS?

- **Overall Presenters.** The percentage of news stories presented by women was 40% as compared to 60% men.
- **Age of presenters and reporters:** Young, female announcers and reporters featured more often than men with 73% among the age group 19-34. In the older age brackets female announcers and reporters feature much less frequently than their male colleagues: 35-49 (31%), 50-64 (31%), 65 years or more (33%).
- **Announcers:** Female announcers feature much more often on radio, whereas the opposite is true on television, as the chart below illustrates.



- The presence of female announcers on radio and television across stories is 73% in radio stories and 36% on television stories.
- The survey demonstrated that men announcers have a more dominant presence in relation to national stories (63%), which are considered more important due to the national issue. The presence of women as announcers is higher in those stories that have a national and other scope (61%), and is slightly higher in foreign stories (55%).

- Women and men announcers in major news topics:



- On GMMP day, women and men featured equally as reporters in newspapers, whereas women have a larger presence as reporters on the radio (67%). Men dominated however as reporters on television with a presence of 65%.
- Men are more likely to report on domestic stories (70%) and stories that have both a domestic and foreign scope (65%), whereas women are more likely to report on foreign stories (61%).
- The survey analysed the major story topics covered by female and male reporters. Men dominate in reporting stories related to Politics and Government (61%), the Economy (76%), Social and Legal issues (51%), Crime and Violence (67%), Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports (62%). The only topic where women report more often than men is on Science and Health (59%).
- An interesting finding that is worth investigating further to evaluate whether this remains constant across time is that on GMMP day male reporters were more likely to use female news sources in their stories (60%).

GENDER AND THE NEWS

- **Sex of reporters in stories with women as a central focus:** 83% of stories with women as the central focus were reported by women.
- Stories with women as the central focus covered a range of topics but were concentrated, albeit with some exceptions, on topics traditionally associated with women, and reinforcing gender stereotypes. Topics included models, fashion, beauty aids, cosmetic surgery ... women electoral candidates (local, regional, national), beauty contests, changing gender relations, roles and relationships of women and men inside and outside the home ..., legal system, judicial system, legislation (apart from family, property & inheritance law) ..., celebrity news, births, marriages, deaths, obituaries, famous people, royalty ... and other domestic news such as politics/government (local, regional, national), elections, speeches, the political process...
- **Stories that highlight issues of gender equality or inequality issues:**
The news in Cyprus on GMMP day did not highlight any issues concerning gender [in]equality. Among the 157 stories that were monitored, only two were dealt with an issue that specifically affects women, that of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Despite this being an issue directly related to gender inequality, the two stories did not present the issue from a gender equality perspective or in way that would promote gender equality or empowerment, as will be seen further below.

- **Challenging or reinforcing stereotypes?** None of the stories coded in the survey challenged gender stereotypes.

GENDER AND JOURNALISTIC PRACTICE

Blatant Stereotyping:

An example that blatantly stereotyped women was a story featured on a television news bulletin in relation to trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

The story is about five immigrants who came to Cyprus and were forced to work as prostitutes by their male agent. The real intentions of their employer were unknown to them. The reporter states that “When they (women) were signing on to come to Cyprus they thought they would find paradise - instead they found hell”. They moved to Cyprus from an Arab country to work as singers, dancers and cleaners. Two women are interviewed for the story. One is a victim of trafficking and the other the head of the anti-trafficking unit of the Cyprus police. The story gives details concerning the way the women were cheated and forced to work as prostitutes, and informs the audience about how much money the agent was earning by sexually exploiting them.

Analysis: This story deals with a fact, that women were indeed victims of sexual exploitation. However, we consider this story to be blatantly stereotyped for two reasons: Firstly, through sensualisation this story reinforces the stereotype that women are used to satisfy male pleasure by being sexual objects. Secondly, it re-victimizes the victims by describing their ordeal in graphic detail for the consumption of the audience.

The first thing that strikes you when viewing this news item is that it is accompanied by sexually explicit scenes of almost naked dancing women from cabarets and nightclubs. The visual scenes of the story make it sensationalist, reinforcing the blatant stereotype that women are sex objects and in this way the story itself exploits the sexuality of women in order to “sell” itself. Thus, those scenes reinforce the stereotype of the sexual objectification of women. The story portrays women as prostitutes as well as “servants” of male pleasure. The fact that the story is accompanied by sexually explicit scenes deflects focus from the facts: that trafficking in women is a crime and a violation of women’s human rights.

The second we observed is the angle of the story. The focus of the story is on the victimhood of women. By focusing on this aspect of the story it reinforces the stereotype that women are victims. Undoubtedly, the women in the story are victims. However, in order not to be victimized further, they need to be understood. The story does not contribute to the understanding of trafficking in women as an unacceptable violation of women’s human rights that needs to be urgently addressed. Rather than utilizing critical journalism that could help the audience understand trafficking, the story focuses almost completely as on women as victims and as sexual objects. Moreover, the story ignores the fact that trafficking in women is a complex phenomenon that has various angles: social, economic, political, women’s rights, human rights, legal, criminal etc. A media portrayal of women only victims even if they were in fact victims, harms them further by re-victimizing them. (See “Trafficking in Women: Manual for Journalists” (Astra 2009)).

Subtle Stereotyping:

An example of subtle stereotyping was found in a story from the radio.

The Story: “Divorced women have announced that they are even willing to set themselves on fire in order to protect their properties from the debts that their ex-husbands leave them with. Their representative has stated that this announcement is to be taken seriously.” (Translation from Greek).

Analysis: This story demonstrates a case of subtle stereotyping. The key phrase that strikes the audience is “women are willing to set themselves on fire”, and they are willing and ready to do so as a result of their ex-husbands leaving them with debts. The way this story presents the women’s reaction to the problem they are experiencing, mirrors the stereotypical portrayal of women as weak and irrational. That is, these women are in such a weak position, that they are threatening to kill themselves.

In addition, this portrayal of ‘desperate women’ promotes the subtle stereotype that women do not participate fully in the public sphere. This is obvious by the fact that women are not portrayed as active members of society with the ability to handle their problem through the legal system or other rational means. Instead, they are portrayed as isolated and unfamiliar with other ways of solving their issue other than taking extreme measures such as “setting themselves on fire”.

Lastly, the story portrays women merely as wives who are victims of their husband’s deceit, and men, given that they managed to accumulate debts, as active in economic life.

A Missed Opportunity

An example of a missed opportunity is from a story featured in a newspaper.

The story refers to the measures taken by Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) aiming to support the unemployed in light of the financial crisis.

The first part of the story highlights an announcement by the Cyprus Employers and Industrialist Federation to its members informing them about the financial incentives being offered by the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) to encourage the employment of unemployed persons in light of the financial crisis: “The financial incentives are to support business in light of the financial crisis and to support employment. The main objectives of the HRDA are the continuous training of employees and the recruitment of the unemployed. The HRDA’s plans have been approved by the government. The Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation has informed its members about the specific measures being taken by the HRDA.”

The second part of the story describes in detail the measures that the HRDA is taking to encourage businesses to employ unemployed people, which are mainly in the form of financial incentives: “The Cyprus Employers and Industrialist Federation’s announcement gives details about the programme and highlights the benefits that businesses can gain signing on to the programme such as, for example, increasing competitiveness.

Analysis: This story reports on the Cyprus Employers and Industrialist Federation attempts to inform its members about the several incentives being provided by the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) aiming to support the unemployed in light of the financial crisis.

However, the article is completely gender blind because it fails to look at the gender dimension of the problem of unemployment and the financial crisis in general. It approaches the unemployed and employees as a homogenous group ignoring the marginal position of women in the labour market in Cyprus. The article does not stress the fact women make up the majority of the inactive and the unemployed, despite the fact that this is recognized by the HRDA and the measures they have adopted include specific measures for unemployed and inactive women. The article chooses to ignore these measures and the specific incentives being provided by the HRDA for the employment of women.

By totally ignoring the HRDA’s incentives for the employment of women, the story makes the gender dimension of employment and the economic crisis invisible. The fact that the HRDA recognizes the

need for special incentives for the employment of women and that this was not mentioned in the article is clearly a missed opportunity to promote equality between men and women.

Unfortunately, there were no stories on GMMP day that challenged gender stereotypes.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the GMMP 2010 clearly demonstrate the tremendous gender gap in the representation of women and men in the Cyprus media with their overall presence as news subjects, reporters and presenters marginal, reaching only 15%. As a result, women's voices, opinions, experiences, and expertise are invisible in the media. The survey also demonstrated that the media, rather than promoting gender equality and diversity, perpetuates and reinforces gender stereotypes.

Women are portrayed as having less important positions and occupations, while men are represented as powerful with positions that enjoy social recognition and prestige. Thus, women are reduced to passive actors either having 'no status' or associated only with their family status.

The unfair and unbalanced representation of women in the media does not end with the portrayal of news subjects. The presence of women as presenters and reporters in the media is also very low. Men constitute the majority of presenters in all the mediums monitored (60%). In television media, women constitute only 36% of presenters. Importantly, we have also seen that as women get older, their presence diminishes further, while the opposite is true for men.

Finally, we have also seen a gender gap in terms of news subjects reported by men and women. Those news subjects considered most important in Cyprus are reported by men including domestic news stories (70%) and news stories that have both domestic and international scope (65%). Women are more likely to report international news (61%).

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

We believe that there are things to be done towards a fair representation and portrayal of women and men in the news in Cyprus.

- ✚ Media houses in collaboration with civil society organisations should provide training on a systematic basis to media professionals in order to increase gender awareness and sensitivity towards gender issues in all stages of the gathering and production of news. Gender awareness at all levels in media activities would ensure better media practices.
- ✚ The second area that has to be improved is related to media professionals. It is essential to increase the presence of women as reporters, presenters, and announcers in all media in order to ensure that women's reality and points of view are reflected in the media.
- ✚ Media have an obligation to ensure equal voices to women and men. Media houses should provide "spaces" for women - that is provide more media space for developments related to women and gender equality. This could be a special section in the TV and radio news or a column in the newspapers that will bring discussions on women issues and gender equality on a regular basis. It is also important for media professionals to explore the impact of issues related to government and politics, the economy, and others on women as well as men in their news stories.
- ✚ The media should adopt non-sexist representation of men and women as a publication/broadcast policy and as an ethical principle, revising its publications/broadcasts when necessary, and refuse to use materials that promote and perpetuate negative stereotyping of women and men.
- ✚ Research and media monitoring should be undertaken systematically in Cyprus and not sporadically as has been the case until now. Funds should be provided for research projects that will analyse and address the issue of gender and media in depth.

- ✚ Research should always be followed by lobbying and advocacy activities as well as awareness campaigns to promote gender equality in and through the media, and to sensitize relevant stakeholders as well as the public.
- ✚ Awareness-raising among the public on gender equality issues is also important. A sensitized and informed public can demand fairer representation of women and men in the news and can monitor the news they consume with a more critical eye.

Annex 1. Methodology

Each participating country was assigned a specific number of newspapers, and radio and television newscasts to monitor based on the national media density. This was done to ensure that global results would reliably reflect the distribution of the world's news media, while respecting the need to balance results from smaller countries with those of larger countries. The number and selection of media outlets monitored in each country reflects the density and diversity – audience, ownership, language – of media in each country.

Efforts were made to ensure a uniform understanding and application of the methodology across the world. Clear instructions on how to code were provided. Some regional and national coordinators benefited from face-to-face or virtual training while others and the broader global teams of volunteers developed skills in monitoring through online self-administered tutorials. In one region, national coordinators were trained by the regional coordinator via teleconference. In some countries, national coordinators provided advance training to volunteer monitoring groups.

In each country monitors coded the most important television and radio newscasts of the day in their entirety. For newspapers, 12 to 14 stories appearing on the main news pages – defined as the pages devoted to national, international and, in some cases, regional news – were coded. Internet news was included for the first time in the global monitoring on a pilot basis in a few countries selected on the basis of the importance of the Internet as a news source for local news consumers.

The quantitative research captured statistical data on news topics, women and men in the news, the types of news stories in which they appeared, and their function in the news. Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) in South Africa was responsible for the quantitative analysis.

An in-depth and more nuanced analysis of selected news stories examined the means, themes and patterns of gender in the news. This qualitative analysis took into account the role of story angle, language and visual representations in constructing and sustaining or challenging gender stereotypes.

A full discussion of the methodology, including considerations on reliability, accuracy and limitations, is contained in the global report *Who Makes the News? The Global Media Monitoring Project 2010*.

Annex 2. List of Monitors

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