

**WHO
MAKES THE
NEWS?**



Hungary

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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Hungarian Women's Lobby

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

- Monitoring the Hungarian news media from a gender perspective is important because it helps pinpoint several problems: partly the discrepancies between women's actual social roles and their under-representation and stereotypical portrayal in the media, and partly the still limited influence of women journalists in newsrooms. Hungary has ratified international conventions to further gender equality, and the Equal Treatment Act of 2003 forbids gender-based discrimination in labour and some civil law affairs. Still, inequalities between women and men in the public and the private sphere remain significant. It is important to realize that the media do not only reflect these gender inequalities but also influence them and even help maintain them.

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

- 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.
- Hungary's participation in GMMP for the second time after 2005 was coordinated by the Hungarian Women's Lobby, which is an umbrella organization of several women's rights NGOs, and which is itself a member of the European Women's Lobby. Having had the experience and the results of GMMP in 2005, which had been organized by the then still active IGEN Association, we felt it inevitable that Hungary would continue to take part in GMMP. The Hungarian findings of GMMP in 2005 were positively astounding: they revealed that only 12% of news subjects were women, 88% were men; the proportion of women reporters was 43%, whereas among TV announcers women – especially younger, attractive women – were in the majority with 82%. The question was whether any measurable changes had taken place in the news media since then, whether, for example, we would find more women among news subjects, less stereotypical representation of women and men, or more awareness of the gender aspects of the events in the news.

Executive Summary

- The findings of GMMP 2010 in Hungary show that women were exactly three times less likely to feature in the news than men: out of all news subjects only 25% were women, while 75% were men. Especially within the most prominent news topics, such as 'politics and government' and 'economy', the majority of the news subjects (83% and 75% respectively) were men. The news subjects with the most important and prestigious occupations (such as politicians, businessmen or celebrities) were predominantly men. Only in the categories of 'sportsperson, athlete' and 'child, young person' did women slightly outnumber men among news subjects. Men as news subjects were much more often presented in positions of authority – as spokespeople and experts – than women; women often appeared only as private persons or as representatives of popular opinion. Women news subjects were six times more often identified according to their family status, and appeared proportionally more often in photographs in printed news – both of which are journalistic practices that reinforce gender stereotypes. As far as the gender aspect of news presenting was concerned, the number of news items presented by women announcers and reporters was much less (38%) than that of news items presented by men (62%). It is an improvement that there were some news stories that addressed issues of gender equality and inequality problems, however, still 4 times more news stories were published on the monitoring day that reinforced gender stereotypes than stories that challenged them. All in all, these recent findings signify a slightly increasing gender awareness in the news media, while on the whole those elements of journalistic practice that are the most likely to reinforce gender stereotypes are still very much predominant in news reporting.

A DAY IN THE NEWS IN HUNGARY

- **10 November 2009.** The news agenda in Hungary on this day was fairly typical. Among international events, the main news was celebration of the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall. It was rather atypical within this news story that the German chancellor, who appeared in some of the photos accompanying the articles, is a woman, Angela Merkel. Further international stories were the spreading of the H1N1 epidemic in the neighbouring countries, a terrorist attack in Pakistan, Hungarian mountaineers missing in the Himalayas, the US President's decision to send more troops to Afghanistan, and a big lottery win in the UK.
- The national news concentrated on a few common topics: the H1N1 epidemic in Hungary, the general availability of the nationally produced vaccine and the demand of the opposition party to make the contract with the production firm publicly available; national phenomena in connection with the world financial crisis, e.g. in the area of mortgages, unemployment and the effects on people's daily lives; the controversy around the shutting down of two foreign-owned commercial radio stations; and the causes of the delay of an important tram project in the capital.
- In the different media, however, depending on whether they rather supported the then governing socialist party's views or those of the conservative opposition, there were very diverging news reports. *Népszabadság*, for instance, reported – in a rather supportive manner – on the appointment of a socialist politician as “Government Delegate on Budapest”. The rightist papers, at the same time, published various critical news items covering topics like the actual and alleged corruption and crime cases linked to the governing party, legislative delays, the main opposition party's critique of the government, and their plans of action if they start governing after the elections in 2010, which was quite likely to happen.
- It is also worth noting that the (rather extreme) rightist *Magyar Hírlap* featured articles and opinion pieces that day about Nobel laureate Imre Kertész, the author of the novel *Fateless* about a Jewish boy who survived the Holocaust. These articles were rather intolerant and anti-Semitic regarding their tone, which indicates an unsettling tendency within Hungarian public and media discourse.
- What was also typical and obvious from the findings of the research was that especially tabloid papers contained a large proportion of news reports containing a stereotypical portrayal of women and men. Such stories in the tabloids included e.g. the murder of a woman by her ex-boyfriend out of what the journalist termed as “fear of losing her love”, the story of a celebrity male musician looking for a wife in a television reality show, the similar outfits and hairdos that Angela Merkel and Hilary Clinton were wearing at the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall, or the photo of a half-naked woman on the first page – which is common practice in the case of this tabloid (!). At the same time, the tabloids included some stories that actually rather challenged stereotypes about women, e.g. a story about the struggle of a woman with her ex-husband who had sexually abused their daughter, or the story of a waitress who saved two people from a burning car wreck. In this context of the prevalence of stereotypical gender portrayal in tabloids, the occasional stories that do challenge gender stereotypes are likely to be seen as less authentic and less empowering, as they rather seem to be included for their curiosity factor only.

THE CONTEXT

- **Country background:** The Hungarian national quality/political dailies are characterized by a clear party or political preference, and this, especially in the case of right-wing media, tends to overwrite other factors, often even that of thorough reporting, a fair, balanced representation of views and people, or political correctness. The circulation of political newspapers has decreased due to several factors: an increase of the consumption of tabloid

papers, a preference for reading local newspapers, and the increase of online media consumption.

- In Hungary, similarly to other countries, online media have had a growing significance, especially online news media. Although, according to recent surveys, the main source of news in Hungary is still television news programs, there is a growing number of people who do not watch television at all but receive information about the news mainly from online and other sources. Exclusively online media are not characterized by a strong preference for certain political parties or movements, however, the most popular ones have “tabloid-like” elements. With regard to the representation of women, this tabloid style implies that the preferred representation of women in the most popular online news sources is very stereotypical. For instance, in the women’s section of these media some reports on gender-based violence and sexual exploitation have been highly problematic, sometimes outright misogynous.
- In general, the topics of gender equality and a fairer media representation of women have not become mainstream in the recent years. Some topics that make it into the mainstream media, and are reported from a gender perspective, tend to be less controversial, more general or to serve such purposes as bolstering the debate on how to best increase the number of children to be born. It is highly alarming that in connection with the topic of violence against women (and against children), there has been no major breakthrough towards naming the real causes and effects of gender-based violence; the majority of these reports still sustain victim-blaming views about gender violence and the myth that it cannot be prevented by appropriate social and legal measures.
- **Media monitored:** The following media were chosen to be monitored on 10 November 2010.

Television channels: the four channels, two state-owned and two privately owned ones, which are accessible for the most viewers in the country.

MTV1: This is the main Hungarian national television station. As it is state-owned, it is supposed to be a public service information source, therefore its newscasts aim to provide information on the most important events on the national and the international scene. However, as it is state-owned, it is undoubtedly a medium in which the opinions of the governing party come to the fore. (The main evening newscast at 7.30 p.m. was monitored.)

Duna TV: It is a national, state-owned television channel that is also broadcast through satellite internationally, and that is aimed to provide information on and to Hungarian nationals in the country and abroad, mainly in the neighbouring countries. Its tone of reporting is often more traditional, national values are at its forefront. (The main evening newscast at 6 p.m. was monitored.)

RTL Klub: It is one of the most popular privately owned, commercial TV stations. Although its newscasts report on the most important political and social events that have happened in Budapest, in Hungary and abroad, they often have a sensationalist tone. Murders, disasters, news on celebrities are regularly reported here. (The main evening newscast at 6.30 p.m. was monitored.)

TV2: This is the other main commercial TV station. Its newscasts are generally very similar to that of the previous commercial channel in content and in style. (The main evening newscast at 6.30 p.m. was monitored.)

Radio stations: A state-owned and another rather rightist channel were chosen.

MR1 Kossuth Rádió: State-owned public service radio station available nationally. Newscasts have an important role at this station, as it attempts to inform people on a wide variety of subjects. (1 newscast at 3.30 p.m. was monitored.)

Info Rádió: Right-wing privately owned radio station focused on delivering news. It also has several thematic programmes with a rightist agenda. (2 newscasts, at 1 p.m. and 10 p.m. were monitored.)

Print media:

Népszabadság: The most popular quality/political national daily newspaper. In its agenda it is rather leftist. It is considered to cover the widest range and variety of news among quality papers.

Magyar Hírlap: This newspaper used to have a liberal agenda; however, since a change at the head of the editorial board, it has turned into a rightist newspaper. Although it is still partly considered as a quality paper, its often intolerant, anti-Semitic views make such a description rather doubtful.

Magyar Nemzet: Another national quality/political daily newspaper, with the longest rightist tradition.

Blikk: This is the most widely circulated daily newspaper. It is a tabloid paper covering every news item in a sensationalist style.

Bors: This is another widely circulated tabloid paper. It covers mainly scandals and crimes in which well-known persons or everyday people are involved.

Metropol: It is a widely circulated free quality daily paper that is available in most big cities of the country and whose editions in the different regions are slightly different. It covers a wide range of stories in a short format.

- **The monitors:** The monitors, similarly to 2005, were mainly women's rights activists, some of whom are affiliated with NGOs which are all member organizations of the Hungarian Women's Lobby (e.g. FIONA Young Women's Association, LABRISZ Lesbian Women's Association, MONA Foundation for the Women of Hungary and PATENT Association against Patriarchy) Others were university students and PhD candidates in gender studies and related fields.
- **Summary:** Altogether nine people (8 women and 1 man) took part in the media monitoring, spending an estimated time of 32 hours on monitoring in total. They monitored 163 news items, and they identified 441 people as subjects of the news.

TOPICS IN THE NEWS

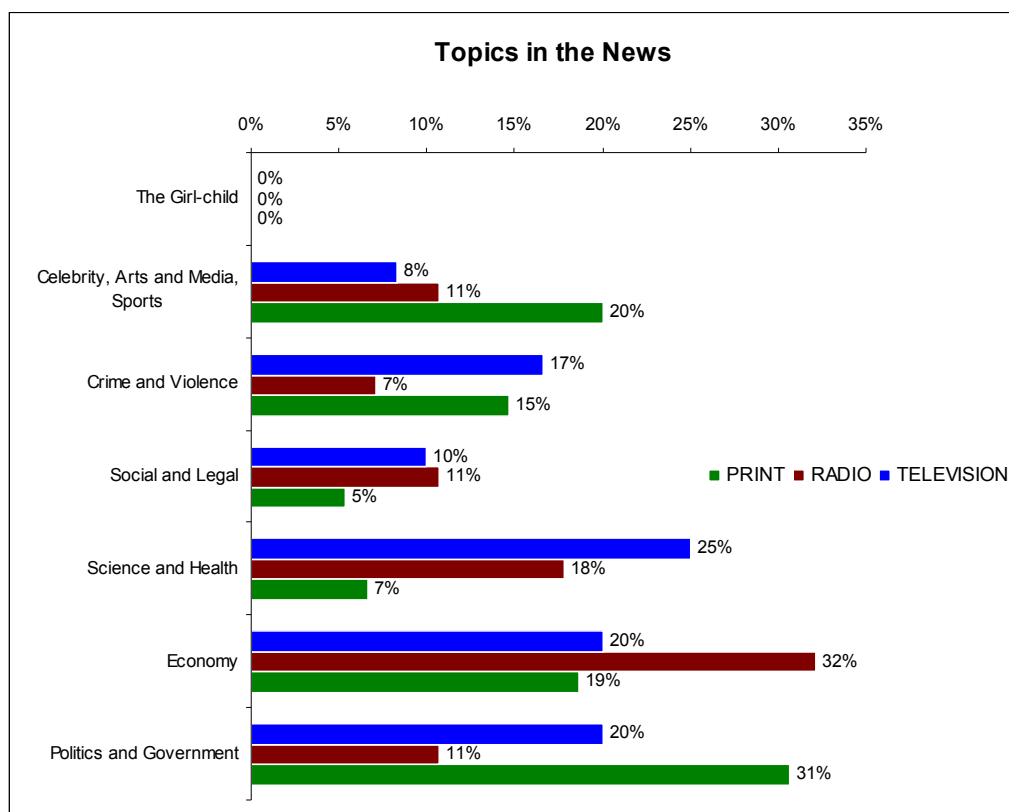


Fig. 1: Topics in the news in all monitored media

- Topics in the news:** As the findings show, the different types of media – television, radio and print media – reported the most extensively on the same few topics: ‘politics and government’ (38 news items), ‘economy’ (35), ‘science and health’ (25), ‘crime and violence’ and ‘celebrity, arts and media, sports’ (23-23). According to the above chart, while in the print media the most popular topic was ‘politics and government’, ‘science and health’ news featured the most prominently on television, mainly with information on the H1N1 flu epidemic. On the radio, at the same time, news about the economy was the most common.

TOPIC	% Female	N-F	% Male	N-M
Politics and Government	36%	15	64%	24
Economy	30%	14	70%	31
Science and Health	39%	16	61%	24
Social and Legal	46%	7	54%	8
Crime and Violence	31%	7	69%	16
Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports	66%	10	34%	5
The Girl-child	0%	0	0%	0
Other	25%	1	75%	3
Total		70		111

Table 1: Topics in the news by sex of Reporter

The data on the connection between the sex of the reporters (when this was identifiable) and the news topics show a clear gender bias regarding the distribution of reporting tasks. The most prominent topics, e.g. ‘politics and government’ and ‘economy’, were mainly reported on by men, and it was only the less serious topic ‘celebrity, arts and media, sports’ where female reporters outnumbered male ones at 66%. In the ‘social and legal’ topic the distribution was almost equal, but one should consider that women are usually assumed to be more sensitive to social problems.

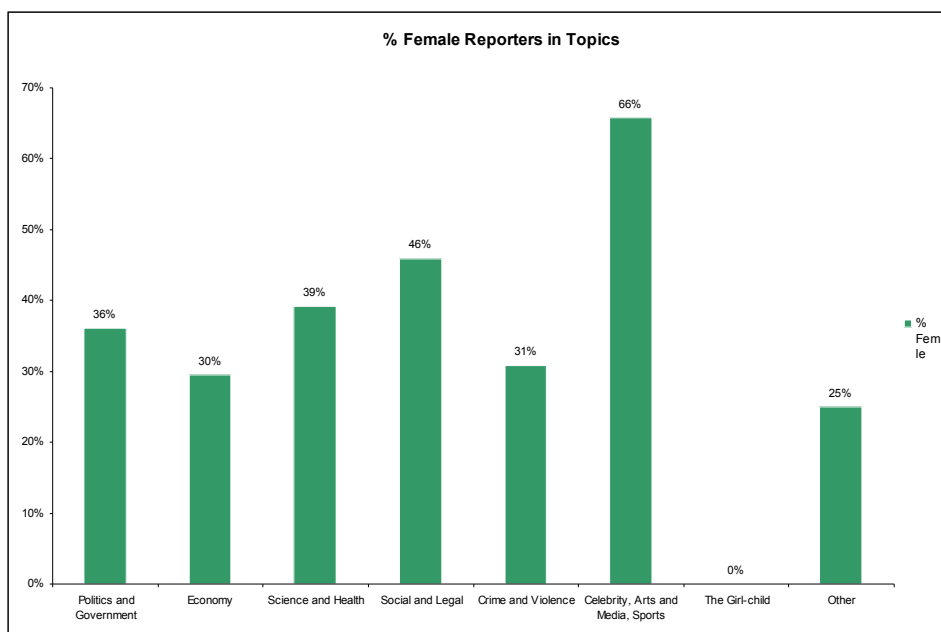


Fig. 2: Percentage of female reporters in news topics

THE NEWS

- Overall presence of women and men in the news in Hungary as news subjects:**
 Women were exactly three times less likely to feature in the news than men: out of all news subjects only 25% were women, while 75% were men. Although this means an improvement from 2005, when the distribution was 12% women and 88% men, it is still not close to women’s and men’s equal proportion in the population, and it still does not reflect the significance of women’s actual roles within society.

When we further examine the proportion of women and men within the different news topics (see chart below), we find that in the most important topics, such as ‘politics and government’ and ‘economy’, the majority of the news subjects were men with 83% and 75% respectively. In the ‘social and legal’ and the ‘celebrity, arts and media, sport’ categories men also featured much more heavily than women. News on the topic ‘science and health’ featured a slightly higher number of women: 40% of all the news subjects in this category were women.

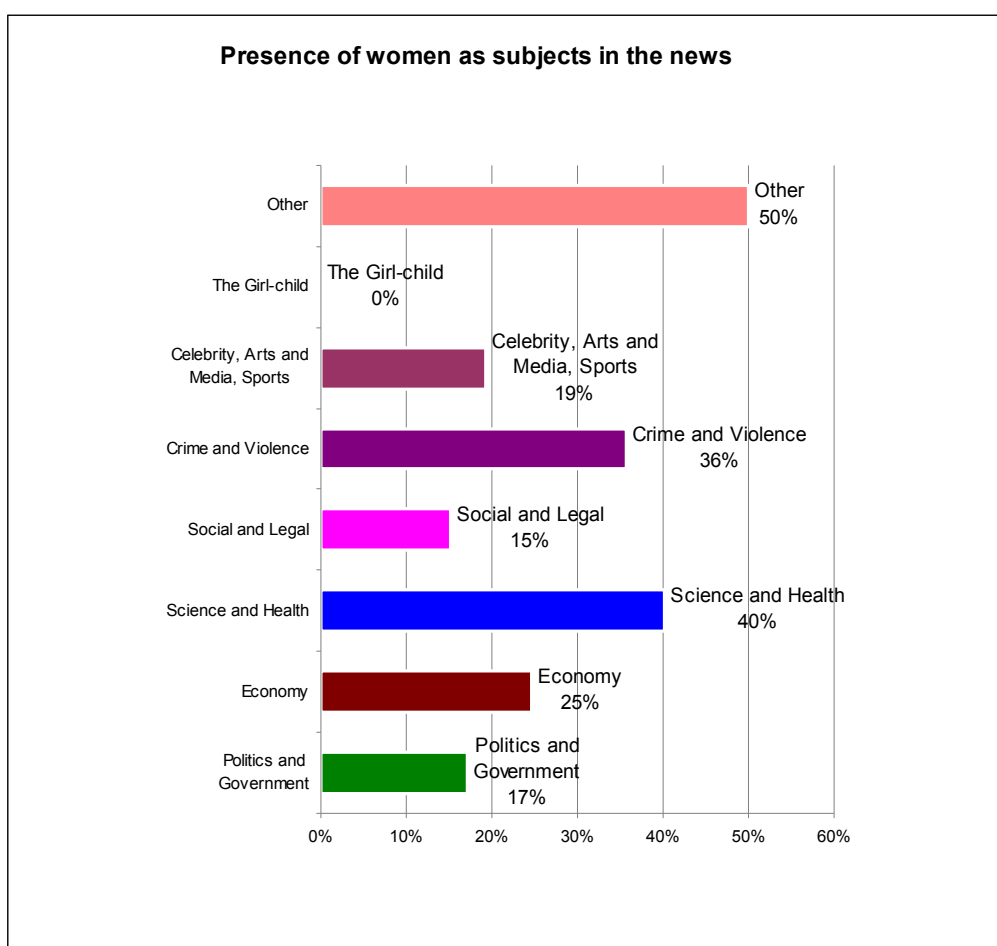


Fig. 3: Proportion of women as news subjects in different topics

- **Presence of female and male news subjects in Hungary by medium – radio, TV and newspapers:** When comparing the different types of media, the print media feature, in line with the overall average, 23% women among all news subjects. At the same time, we are more likely to find women as news subjects in TV news (with 33%), and much less likely in radio news (18%).

	PRINT		RADIO		TELEVISION	
	2010	N	2010	N	2010	N
Female	23%	62	18%	6	33%	45
Male	77%	211	82%	27	67%	90

Table 2: Sex of news subjects in print, radio and TV news

- **News Sources:** One of the ways in which women's prominence in the news can be examined is by looking at their appearance as news subjects (sources) in news items with different scopes. According to the findings, women were the most likely to appear in news items on national and other affairs (35%), slightly less likely in news on local (32%) or on international (32%) affairs, and even less likely in news with only a national scope (19%).

Another, even more important question is in which particular news topics there were more women than men news subjects, and the other way round. Women were represented at the highest rate in those news items that had a particular gender aspect, such as 'women in

political power and decision-making’ (100%), ‘women’s participation in economic processes’ (100%), but, interestingly, not in the topic of ‘women electoral candidates’ (29%). Other topics that featured more women than men as news subjects were ‘consumer issues’ (79%), ‘disaster, accident, famine etc.’ (64%) and ‘economic crisis’ (59%). Only men appeared in the news items about most sub-topics related to politics and the economy, such as ‘peace, negotiations, treaties’ or ‘economic indicators, statistics, business’, and most of the sub-topics related to legal issues and crime. Some of the topics in which female news subjects are absent are the most prominent ones on the news, and they concern the central aspects of governing and financially managing life in our society.

- **Who are the newsmakers?**

Position or Occupation – Top 10	Female %F		Male %M	
Government politician, minister, spokesperson	15%	28	85%	158
Government employee, public servant	14%	3	86%	15
Police, military	33%	5	67%	12
Academic expert, teacher or university lecturer, nursery teacher	42%	11	58%	13
Health or social service professional, doctor, nurse	25%	6	75%	17
Business person	34%	11	66%	21
Celebrity, artist, actor, writer	16%	4	84%	20
Sportsperson, athlete	52%	9	48%	9
Child, young person	52%	6	48%	5
Criminal, suspect	14%	1	86%	7
.....				
Total	25%	106	75%	321

Table 3: Position or occupation of news subjects, by sex

Table 3 sheds a light on the distribution of female and male news subjects among the different occupations and positions – with different levels of status attached to them. The news subjects with the most important and prestigious occupations (such as politicians, businessmen or celebrities) are still predominantly men. Only in the categories of ‘sportsperson, athlete’ and ‘child, young person’ do women slightly outnumber men among news subjects.

- **Function of female and male news subjects:** The next table categorizes news subjects according to another factor, their function in the news. According to the findings, men were much more likely than women to feature in the news reports as ‘subjects’, ‘spokespeople’, ‘experts’ or ‘eye witnesses’, whereas women outnumbered men only in the category of ‘popular opinion’. These data clearly demonstrate that men are more often presented in positions of authority than women; women are more likely to appear as private persons, or as representatives of popular opinion, so altogether in much less prestigious positions.

When discussing the absolute proportion of women in news reports and their numbers in the different roles, the question always surfaces: Shall we attribute the low proportion of women in the news to their lower number in different areas of public life – or do the media tend to represent society in a distorted way from a gender perspective? In our view, the media cannot directly influence social reality, such as the number of women top politicians or businesswomen; however, media workers and editors have the choice and responsibility of approaching topics from a gendered perspective and involving female as well as male experts in providing commentary on important issues etc. – which could then contribute to a rise in the number of women in the news, and to a heightened awareness about gender inequalities.

	Female %F		Male %M	
Function in News Story	2010	N	2010	N
Subject: the story is about this person	24%	59	76%	192
Spokesperson: the person represents, or speaks on behalf of another person, a group or an organisation	17%	9	83%	46
Expert or commentator: the person provides additional information, opinion or comment	24%	15	76%	46
Personal experience: the person provides opinion or comment, based on individual personal experience	50%	21	50%	22
Eye witness: the person gives testimony or comment	0%	0	100%	1
Popular opinion: the person's opinion is assumed to reflect that of the 'ordinary citizen'	68%	7	32%	3
Other.	13%	2	87%	12
NA	0%	0	0%	0
Total	25%	113	75%	322

Table 4: News subjects' function in news story, by sex

- **Constructing 'victims' in the news:** 19 women and 18 men, around 8% of all news subjects, appeared in the role of victim in the news. Women featured mainly as victims of domestic violence, of non-domestic sexual abuse and of gender-based discrimination. Men mostly appeared among the victims of war and terrorism, whereas both sexes were represented among the victims of natural disasters and violent crimes.
- **Identity and family status in the news:** According to the findings, the media still very often mention women's family status when they appear in the news. This practice of gender stereotyping is clearly visible from the fact that 19% of women were identified according to their family status, while only 3% of male news subjects were presented this way. When we take the sex of the journalist into account as well, it is observable that women journalists were more likely (14%) than men (4%) to mention the news subjects' family status, thus maintaining this non-egalitarian practice.
- **Images in the news:** Last but not least, it was also examined whether there was a connection between the sex of the news subjects and their appearance in photographs. The data showed a clearly gendered tendency in this: almost half, 45% of all female news subjects in newspapers appeared in photographs, whereas only 15% of men did. Considering that only a minority of female news subjects were famous people, and the majority were average citizens only appearing in the news to deliver eye witness testimony or popular opinion, photographing women mainly in such roles will clearly rather maintain gender stereotypes than help eliminate them.

WHO DELIVERS THE NEWS?

- Another major area of investigation within GMMP is the other aspect of the overall question 'Who makes the news?': the ratio of women among the reporters, presenters and announcers of the news. Other research in this area has shown that like in many other areas of work, women in journalism face job requirements, such as long working hours and 'flexible' conditions which are difficult to harmonize with their private or family life; ageism, i.e. the preference for younger presenters, especially on television; and the glass-ceiling

phenomenon, i.e. men occupying the most prestigious positions in the field, and the difficulties women face when aiming to reach such powerful positions.

- Overall Announcers and Presenters:** The GMMP takes account of the sex of the presenter (announcer as well as reporter) of each news item, and not the proportion of women and men in newsrooms. It was found that, on the whole, more news stories were presented by men than by women. On television, on the radio and in newspapers (where the sex of the journalist was identifiable), the news stories were delivered by 70 women (38%) and 111 men (62%). The proportion of women among the reporters and announcers was, however, different in the various media, proportionately more TV news (44%) than radio (38%) and print news (24%) were presented or reported by women.

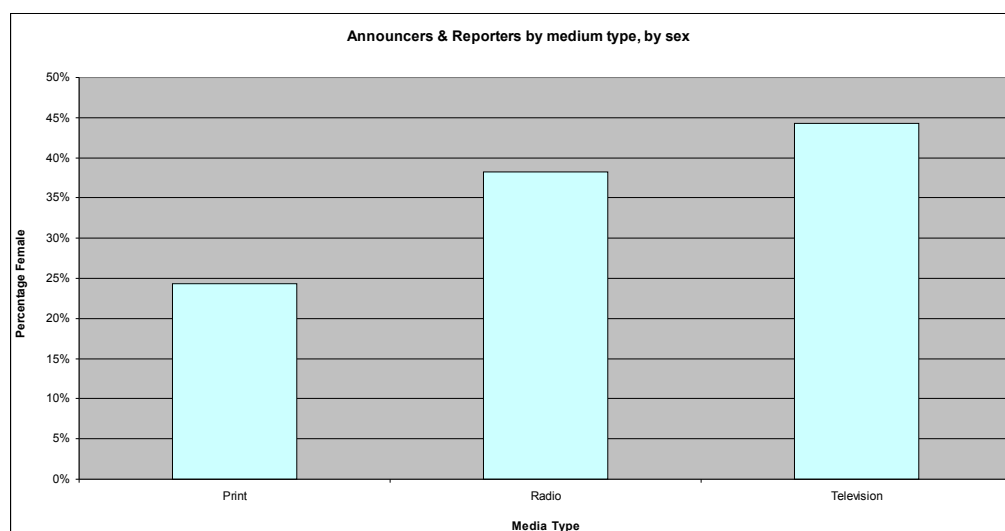


Fig. 4: Percentage of news items presented by women in different types of media

- Announcers:** All in all, more news items were presented by male than by female announcers both on television (58%) and on radio (69%). News items with a ‘national and other’ scope were the most likely to be presented by female announcers, while all the other types of news (‘local’, ‘national’, ‘foreign’) were twice as likely to be presented by men than by women.

	% Female		% Male	
Story Topic	2010	N	2010	N
Politics and Government	34%	5	66%	10
Economy	37%	9	63%	15
Science and Health	41%	9	59%	13
Social and Legal	40%	4	60%	6
Crime and Violence	28%	4	72%	10
Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports	68%	4	32%	2
The Girl-child	0%	0	0%	0
Total	38%	35	62%	56

Table 5: Television and radio announcers in major story topics, by sex

When looking at the presence of women and men as announcers in major news topics, it is observable that the most news stories presented by women were on the topic of ‘celebrity, arts and media, sports’ (68%), while in all the other major topic areas the news items were twice as likely to be presented by men than by women.

- **Reporters:** With regard to reporters in the news, however, the proportion of women and men was quite variable across the different types of media. The proportion of newspaper stories with female reporters was lower (24%) than of similar television (49%) and radio (60%) news stories. While the number of reporters on radio newscasts was low altogether, the proportions of news items reported by either sex on television and in newspapers are worth comparing. It seems to be a positive general tendency that on television, where women journalists can appear in person as professional reporters, the proportion of news items reported by women and men was equal. However, the same cannot be said about newspaper reports, where it was three times as more likely that news items would be reported by men than by women – at least in the cases where the reporter’s sex could be identified.

When observing the scope of these news items, only international ones were more likely to be reported by women (51%) than men, whereas local and national news stories were 2-3 times more likely to be reported by men. When we look at the major story topics by female and male reporters (see Figure 5), we find that most (between 63% and 79%) of the major news items on politics, the economy, science and health and crime were reported by men, and only the news topics ‘celebrity, arts and media, sports’ (52%) and ‘social and legal’ (55%) were slightly more likely to be reported by women.

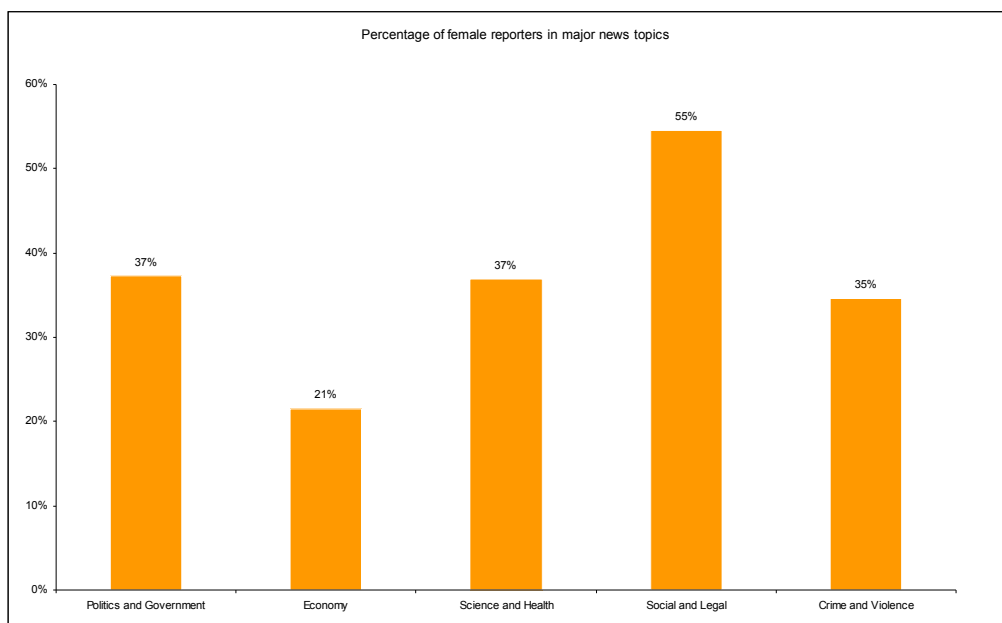


Fig. 5: Percentage of female reporters in major news topics

GENDER AND THE NEWS

- **Sex of reporters in stories with women as a central focus:** Only 2 out of 49 news stories by male reporters had women as a central focus. Female journalists presented such topics that focused on women only slightly more often: in 4 cases out of 30. The stories with women as a central focus covered partly the stereotypical topic of ‘beauty contests, models, fashion’; but it marks a positive trend that one article in each of the topics focused on women as well on the monitoring day: ‘women electoral candidates’, ‘changing gender relations and roles’ and ‘legal system, judicial system’.

- **Stories that highlight issues of gender equality or inequality issues:** It marks a slightly heightened awareness of the gender aspect in news stories that inequality issues appeared in several topics, such as ‘women’s participation in economic processes’, ‘child abuse, sexual violence against children’ and ‘violent crime’.
- **Challenging or reinforcing stereotypes?** This question was applied to each news item, in order to establish whether they used language, imagery, attributes etc. that rather reinforced or challenged gender stereotypes regarding the actual news subjects, and thus reflecting on the wider society as well. In terms of challenging stereotypes, we found that 13% of news stories reinforced gender stereotypes, 3% challenged stereotypes, and 84% neither reinforced nor challenged stereotypes. When associating these data with the sex of the reporters, the outcome was that the majority of the stereotypical news reports were actually presented by female journalists, and all the reports rather challenging gender stereotypes were presented by men. All in all, these findings testify that the media are still much more likely to reinforce than challenge gender stereotypes in news reporting, which is in the position of affecting people’s thinking and the public discourse about gender-related issues.

GENDER AND JOURNALISTIC PRACTICE

- The following few case studies are the result of the qualitative news analysis within the GMMP, and are intended to demonstrate the different positions – sensitive, gender-blind or stereotyping – journalists may take regarding the gender aspect of regular news stories or stories particularly focusing on women or on gender inequalities.
- **A story that is blatantly stereotyped:** “Szilvia was shot dead by her fellow prison warden. Love drama in Székesfehérvár, behind bars.” – article in the tabloid newspaper Blikk.

The headline of the article gives a sensationalist tone to the story; it talks about a “love drama” “behind bars”. It immediately gives a simplifying and stereotypical explanation of what happened, even though they are only allegations at the time. It mentions the female victim by name and the male perpetrator by his profession only. The language used in the article completely supports a one-sided, simplifying, stereotypical and sensationalist view of the event. Words such as “heart-wrenching tragedy” and “fear for his love” (instead of jealousy) are used.

The article gives a fairly detailed presentation on what happened before the male prison warden shot dead his female colleague and then killed himself. For the explanatory part, it uses a variety of sources: a military spokesman, the forum participants on an internet site, a male ex-inmate and a male psychologist, so mainly men. Thus there is by no means any balance between men and women as sources: women’s voices are missing. No known feminist organizations working against gender-based violence have been interviewed. The psychologist’s opinion quoted in connection with the event is highly stereotypical, because he supposes that when the man realized that he had killed the woman, he killed himself as “he did not want to live without his love”. He mentions psychological tests that prison wardens have to pass. All in all, his words are used both to project a stereotypical view of the case and to set a psychologizing frame for it.

The lack of the viewpoint of women’s organizations who work with victims and survivors of gender violence means that only those stereotypes and myths are presented that claim that gender-based violence is an unavoidable tragedy happening in private between two people, which nobody from their environment could or should interfere with. Such a view serves to upkeep the silence about society’s responsibility for avoiding such crimes, and the male perpetrators’ impunity. This article is an example of the lack of positive tendencies in the media representation of gender-based violence, which is an area where the media, if they chose to represent the cases more fairly, truthfully and from the victims’ perspectives as well, and if they reflected on the social aspects too, could achieve crucial changes in people’s opinions, views and understanding of violence against women.

- **Another blatantly stereotyped story:** “Clara the Hacker. She threw the head of her victim into a ventilation shaft” – an article in the tabloid newspaper Bors.

The feature article is an excerpt from a book written by one of the newspaper’s female journalists. Above the article is a brief advertorial of the book titled “The Devils’ Advocates, Part 3, Women who Became Murderers”. The advertorial features the cover of the book and a photo of the journalist with one celebrity lawyer, an old man. According to this article, the author was touched that one of her interviewees, a woman who had killed her abusive father, came to the book launch. However, the introduction to the actual story makes it clear that this is only an advertising opportunity, aimed at enhancing sales of the book.

The story itself is a short account of how a woman, who was a drug user, was gangraped by her dealer and several of his male friends, and at a later time – still under the influence of drugs – she killed and mutilated the man. The story is presented from her perspective, it is short, describes only the two acts. The woman – who is currently serving her prison sentence for the act – concludes that she would do it again to anybody who rapes her, even without the influence of drugs. The accompanying photograph shows the woman’s face. Her name is stated in both the story headline and the caption accompanying the article. A cut out of a bloody knife is included alongside the photograph of the woman. This serves to heighten the effects of shock and horror.

Whilst the story challenges the stereotypes of women as nurturers not murderers, her culpability for the crime is mitigated by the fact that she was under the influence of drugs. The story presents the woman as an irrational creature who cannot curb her passions. Although it could be presented in a way that would throw light on the broader issue of sexual violence not limiting it to the individuals, this angle is completely ignored in preference for a focus on Clara.

The sensationalist presentation of this story leaves no room to consider the complexity of this phenomenon or to dispel gender stereotypes. Several projects highlighting the connections between women’s imprisonment for violent crimes and the violence they have suffered from their male partners have been undertaken by women’s associations in Hungary. Surveys, interviews and self-help group discussions have pointed to the complexity of the problem: men face virtually no punishment or restriction of access in the case of partner violence, while authorities and society still mostly turn a blind eye to the violence, and women receive no help from authorities. Those who kill their abusers receive harsh sentences, as the criminal justice system recognizes and punishes murder, but neither acknowledges nor seriously punishes sexual and other gender-based violence.

- **A story that conveys more subtle stereotypes:** “28 years of captivity in the shadow of the Berlin wall” – a group of articles in a right-wing political newspaper, Magyar Hírlap.

The title marks a collection of smaller articles in connection with the commemoration of the fall of the Berlin wall. It draws attention to the historical aspect, which is further detailed below it, on graphs and with illustrations and stories. The historical events, the description of the wall, the attempts to cross it are all presented in a matter-of-fact way, but also in a way to convey respect towards those who tried to get over it but failed. The language of the articles aims to concentrate on the heroic aspect of resistance to communism and of attempts to cross the wall, which were indeed very heroic, however, not just typical of men, but also of women who shared similar views. The images try to capture and, with explanatory notes, reflect the intricate controlling measures that the GDR used for along the Berlin wall.

Significantly, all the people mentioned in the article are men (4 men and families are mentioned who tried to get through the wall, 3 of them were killed), giving the impression that only men fought against and fell victim to communism. There is another source in the article, a Hungarian, right-wing male politician who was present at the events surrounding the fall of the wall. Although the figure for all the attempts is also given, the data are not gender-disaggregated, and women’s views are completely missing.

- **A story that is a missed opportunity or gender-blind:** “The money of Szászberek” – an article in the left-wing political newspaper Népszabadság.

This story is a missed opportunity. The one-page article is about a woman politician – the mayor of a Hungarian village. She became newsworthy because she decided not to collect her salary as a mayor in order to improve the financial status of the village – by saving her salary they could spend the money on other things.

The article gives a detailed coverage on her career first as a police officer, later as a mayor, and also some information on her personal life (children, divorce, and her struggles as a working single mother after she got divorced). The photo above the text is half a page, it shows the female mayor in the street of the village wearing an elegant suit and smiling confidently. It supports the portrayal of the mayor as more of a private person than a politician.

The article is a missed opportunity because, although it details the work and achievements of the mayor, it remains stuck in a stereotypical way of portraying her. Most importantly, by emphasizing her ‘sacrifice’ for the village and her pride in her children, the article downplays her professional achievements.

- **A story that is gender-aware:** “Young mothers do not find any work” – a news report on the commercial television channel RTL Klub.

The news story is about the result of a survey regarding the problems of women trying to get back on the labour market after maternity leave. The short report made by a young male journalist also includes a brief interview with a young mother who is searching for work and an interview with the female HR manager of a large company where half of the workforce is women and some good practices have been introduced to accommodate for the different conditions and needs of young mothers.

The news story presents the problem that 70 % of young mothers who want to go back to work after maternity leave cannot find work and are forced to stay at home, even though their previous employer is legally bound to receive them back. The problem is discussed mainly from the perspective of women, as a lack of proper legal conditions and of sufficiently flexible solutions on the side of employers. It is unusual because unemployment figures of young mothers are either not discussed in mainstream surveys separately, or they are rather presented as the choice of the women themselves and not as a result of unsuccessful attempts at finding work.

The problem is also approached, quite innovatively, from the side of employers, or a certain company that has done something positive and offered more flexibility to their workforce who happened to be mothers but were still valuable workforce for them. By offering such good examples, the problem is not just presented but also led to a positive solution.

The images of the reporting are mainly of women as mothers, childcare professionals, employees and employers – quite a wide range of professions and roles. However, the lack of men (within the family or at the office) also leaves a kind of hiatus, as they do have a connection to the problem – as fathers, as employers, as fellow employees – and, for its solution, their attention and cooperation would also be necessary.

- **Another story that is gender-aware:** “How much longer will I have to hide with my daughter? The mother will not give up the fight against the Irish father, who has molested Fiona” – an article in the tabloid newspaper Blikk.

The story is about the hardships of a Hungarian mother and her Irish-Hungarian daughter, who was sexually abused by her father. They are in hiding from French authorities, who had ignored the experts’ opinions on sexual abuse and granted child custody to the father. The woman has made their story public in order to seek a just settlement of the case. The article contains a photo of the woman and her daughter embracing each other, with their facial features blurred for anonymity.

The story is presented from the point of view of the mother, and supported by the description of the situation in legal terms by her male lawyer. By using this perspective, the reader can have a glimpse into the difficult situation of a woman and her child fighting against the repeated ignorance of authorities regarding the sexual abuse claims against the father, and against the resulting situation: while there is an international arrest warrant in force against the mother, the abusive father lives his life in peace. The woman has appealed against the decision of the court of first instance, and, as the lawyer says, it is “unheard of” that in a child molestation case, the court of second instance has not taken on the case more quickly. Also, they do not know why the court has rejected former experts’ opinions on the evidence of sexual abuse against the daughter.

The experience of women’s organizations about the courts’ treatment of cases of any kind of sexual abuse against children is very similar to this story. Two Hungarian women’s associations have published a study (“Closed into the System”) on their experiences on how the justice system treats violence against women and children in Hungary, and although this case involves other countries’ authorities as well, it is completely conceivable that they have made similar decisions to those common in Hungary. In general, as human rights lawyers claim, such cases where a claim exists against the father about sexual abuse, the involvement of forensic experts and psychologists is common, but they are usually not trained in a gender-sensitive approach to the problem, they are mostly rather biased and question the credibility of the victims – who often find it difficult to provide any further proof of the abuse than their own experience. Another common problem is – even if the expert’s opinion supports the sexual violence case – that judges often simply ignore such opinions and lack gender sensitivity: they in fact rule against the mother who has “taken the child away from the father, into another country”, as in this case.

It is, unfortunately, very rare that a positive decision is taken in such cases in Hungary from the point of view of the victim – resulting from the lack of gender-sensitive legislation and legal practice. Therefore, such articles can draw attention to the problems that women and children in similar situations have to face, and in this way can heighten gender sensitivity.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- All in all, the findings show that the coverage of women and men by the Hungarian news media has improved slightly, without, however, having reached a satisfactory level of awareness about women’s actual standing in society and about the gender aspects of news stories. Factors that mark an improvement since 2005 include a slight increase in the proportion of female news subjects from 12% to 25%, and the inclusion of some stories focusing on women and on gender inequality issues. Some phenomena that have not improved since 2005 are the still high proportion of stories that explicitly reinforce gender stereotypes, and the practice of presenting women in less prestigious positions and functions than men. Data on news production show that news stories presented by men still outnumber those presented by women, especially in newspapers (with 24% female and 76% male reporters in news stories), but less so on television and the radio. While we may be able to say that a slight improvement is observable in the gender aspects of media representation and production, it will be important to examine in the years ahead whether these are lasting trends.

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

- Our organization, the Hungarian Women’s Lobby, as an umbrella organization, unites several women’s rights NGOs, all of which promote a more equal society in gender terms – some explicitly through the media (e.g. the Women in the Media Association). As the national representative of the European Women’s Lobby, our organization can contribute our research findings to a European-level debate on the issue of fairer gender representation in the media, and also let those wider discussions inform our work at the national level. In the next five years the Hungarian Women’s Lobby will aim to promote the fair and balanced representation of women and men in the news in Hungary –in order to reach the desired transformation – by:

- raising awareness among the media-consuming public on the problems regarding the portrayal of gender in the media;
- initiating discussions with journalists and media editors on the significance of gender-sensitive reportage in terms of influencing public discourse on inequality issues;
- offering training – in cooperation with media professionals and advocacy groups – for journalists on gender-sensitive language use, and the possible gender aspects of news reporting;
- including in our advocacy work and campaigns specific suggestions on how the media could contribute to raising awareness on different gender inequality issues – especially on the most serious issues, such as violence against women;
- continuing to initiate public discussions – in conjunction with the European Women's Lobby – with the help of the media about current gender inequality problems.

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

1. Fanni Borbíró
2. Erika Kispéter
3. Boldizsár Péter
4. Dorottya Rédei
5. Réka Sáfrány (coordinator)
6. Ágnes Seregély
7. Borbála Varga
8. Vera Szabó
9. Júlia Vida

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