

**WHO  
MAKES THE  
NEWS?**



**Malta**

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**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.



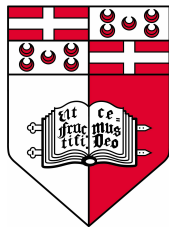
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University of Malta



Malta Broadcasting Authority

## 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.'<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

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

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

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

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

The media is a powerful reflection of ‘the democratic process’. This barometer indicates the democratic health of a nation. However, for the process itself to be healthy, it must represent the voice of all, and it must portray women and men honestly. Over the last 15 years the GMMP has demonstrated that around the world, the media has persistently failed to represent and give voice to women and men equally, and it has failed to portray them honestly.

Stuart Hall reminds us that *“it matters profoundly what and who gets represented, what and who regularly and routinely gets left out; and how things, people, events and relationships are represented. What we know of society depends on how things are represented to us and that knowledge in turn informs what we do and what policies we are prepared to accept”* (1986:9).

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.

Malta took part in the GMMP in 2000, 2005 and in 2010, and it has been a powerful strategy for helping raise awareness amongst media practitioners, policy makers, educators and the public. There is limited focus on ‘gender issues’ in the media in Malta and despite great efforts by a small number of experts, there is a constant challenge to keep the issues on the agenda and in the media. Media Students at the University of Malta, alongside members at the Malta Broadcasting Authority have worked together, in 2000, 2005 and again in 2010, to ensure that Malta’s involvement in the GMMP project continues.

Involvement in the GMMP is crucial, as there are few opportunities to a) gather local data and b) ensure that local data is rooted in a broader context. Participation makes it possible to carry out invaluable evaluation within a global context and ensures that we have access to reliable contemporary National data.

## Executive Summary

In November 2009, a global snapshot of news journalism was taken, on behalf of the GMMP for Fourth Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP 2010). This Monitoring Project takes place every five years and it was the third time Malta took part in this longitudinal study. Twenty-five volunteers, from the Broadcasting Authority and the University of Malta, monitored thirteen media producers comprising TV news (4), radio news (5) and newspapers (4). In summary, the analysis of the 2010 data for Malta shows:

- Men appear five times more often than women in the media, in relation to the news genre 1:5. These statistics have remained unchanged since GMMP's 2005 findings. As news subjects, men are more likely to appear: in print 77%, in radio 90%, and in TV 83%. When women are news subjects – they are limited to a narrow range of story topics such as 'women electoral candidates', gender based violence, and development issues such as sustainability and community development.
- When men and women, as news subjects, are identified in the story according to their occupation, male news subjects are more likely to be Government officials, politicians, political leaders or spokespersons. Female news subjects are more likely to be in the caring professions, in education, in administration or the service industry, homemakers or unspecified.
- When women and men are reported as victims, women are more likely to be portrayed as victims of domestic violence etc., and men are more likely to be portrayed as victims of accidents and natural disasters, and victims of discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, ability etc.
- Women are more likely to be identified according to their family status, and male reporters mostly carry out this type of reporting.
- As reporters, journalists, presenters and announcers there were gender disparities among the makers and presenters of the news. Female announcers hold a strong presence when *announcing* the news, appearing in radio 61%, and in TV 83%. However figures for *reporting* the news are reversed and men are almost twice as likely to be reporting the news as women.
- The type of story topics reported by female and male reporters (across all media,) shows that male reporters are more likely to report on all topics - dominating especially 'hard news' such as 'Politics and Government' 'Social and Legal' and 'Crime and Violence'.
- When seeking out sources for the news, reporters appear to be equally balanced across genders and both male and female reporters are likely to source equally from both genders.
- Whilst these findings suggest that there are some improvements in terms of women's contribution to and involvement in news discourse, given that women comprise more than 50% of the population, it continues to be disappointing that their participation in *reporting*, and their portrayal and visibility is still poor.

## A DAY IN THE NEWS IN MALTA

**10 November 2009.** On this day, all the Maltese news formats were dominated with information about the annual, national, financial Budget. News coverage was primarily dedicated to discussion, debates and comments on the topic.

## THE CONTEXT

### **Country background:**

Malta is a media rich island, beyond the proportions of its size and population. The selected media, across all formats, broadcast and publish in either English or Maltese. They are selected according to sampling criteria determined by the GMMP framework and reflect the largest 4 -5 entities in each format.

### **Media monitored:**

Newspapers: The Times, The Independent, In-Nazzjon, and L-Orizzont.

Television: TVM, One TV, Net TV and Favourite TV.

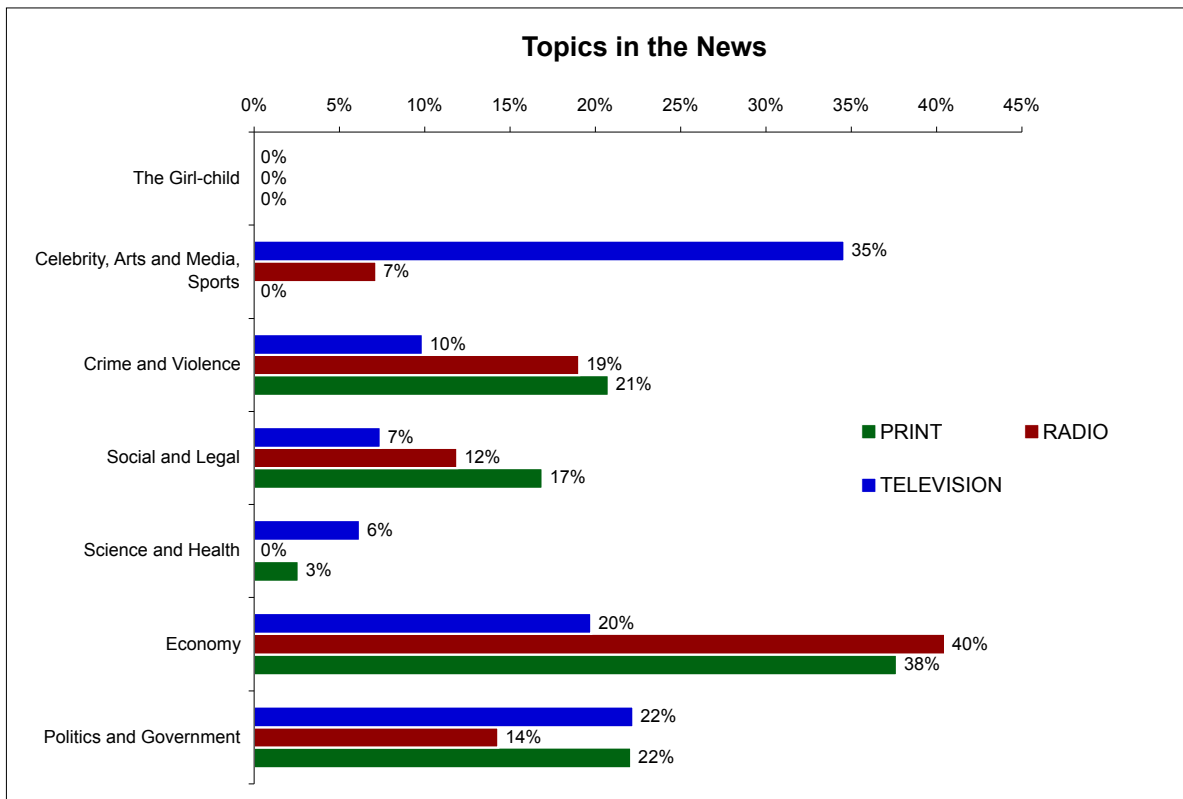
Radio: Bay Radio, RTK, Super 1, Radio 101, Radju Malta.

### **The monitors:**

A total of 25 monitors took part in the study, comprising of staff at the Malta Broadcasting Authority and undergraduate Media and Communications Studies Students, reading for Bachelor in Communications at the University of Malta.

# TOPICS IN THE NEWS

## Topics in the news



**Figure 1:** topics in the news x medium.

Figure 1 shows that for radio and print media, the ‘economy’ topic was the most popular, whereas in television, it was the soft news of ‘celebrity, arts and media, sports’ that achieved the top rating, with ‘science and health’ as a topic that received least attention by all media.

When we look at the stand-alone data around the gender of the reporter in the newspaper sample (below Table 1), we note an interesting shift in the local print media industry. With the exception of ‘celebrity, arts & media, sports’, all topics are more likely to be covered by women, including ‘hard news’ topics such as ‘Economy’, ‘Politics and Government’, ‘Crime and Violence’, ‘Science and Health’ and ‘Social and Legal’.

TOPIC	%	
	Female	% Male
Politics and Government	54%	46%
Economy	67%	33%
Science and Health	75%	25%
Social and Legal	78%	22%
Crime and Violence	63%	37%
Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports	44%	56%
Other	67%	33%

**Table 1:** topics in the News by gender of (newspaper) reporter

## THE NEWS

### Overall presence of women and men in the news in Malta as news subjects, reporters and presenters

For the GMMP, one of the most important aspects of the study is *where* women feature in the news. This section gives us a clear picture of where women and men appear as subjects in the news, and *what* stories they are reported in.

Women appear as news subjects 17% of the time, in sharp contrast with men who appear as sources 83% of the time. The number of female and male news subjects quoted as sources of information in stories about local, national, and international affairs in newspapers in Malta is detailed in Table 2 below. These figures will contextualise the other data that follows.

	Female%	Male %
Scope	2010	2010
Local	3%	97%
National	13%	87%
National and other	35%	65%
International	14%	86%
Total	17%	83%

**Table 2:** gender of news subjects by local, national and international stories

Male subjects show to be in overwhelming majority for all stories in newspapers in Malta with females appearing only 3% of the time, in Local news, and 13% of the time in National news.

**Women as Subjects:** Presence of female and male news subjects in Malta by medium – radio, TV and newspapers

	Female%	Male %
<b>Topic</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2010</b>
Politics and Government	24%	76%
Economy	5%	95%
Science and Health	0%	100%
Social and Legal	18%	82%
Crime and Violence	24%	76%
Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports	15%	85%
The Girl-child	0%	0%
Other	25%	75%
Total	17%	83%

**Table 3:** story topic by gender of subject.

Overall, men are more than five times as likely to appear as a news subject in any news story than women – present, as a subject, across all media 83%, in sharp contrast with women who appeared 17%.

In *hard* news topics such as ‘economy’ 95% of the time, the subject in the story is male and the female 5%. When women do appear as subjects, which is, at best, only a quarter of the



time, they appear in ‘politics and government’ 24%, ‘crime and violence’ 24%, and ‘other’ 25%.

If we compare the three different media monitored, Table 4, below, shows that women are more likely to appear as subjects, in print 23%, followed by television 17% and in radio women only appear as subjects 10% of the time.

	PRINT	RADIO	TV
Sex	2010	2010	2010
Female	23%	10%	17%
Male	77%	90%	83%

**Table 4:** medium by gender of subject

Questions arising from this data would include ‘what kinds of stories are more likely to include women as subjects or sources?’ and ‘when women do appear and speak, as subjects, what is their occupation and status?’

#### **The presence of female and male news subjects in Malta by story topic.**

Story Topics	%F	%M
Other domestic politics/government (local, regional, national), elections, speeches, the political process ...	20%	80%
Global partnerships (international trade and finance systems, e.g. WTO, IMF, World Bank, debt) ...	0%	100%
Economic policies, strategies, models (national, international) ...	5%	95%
Economic indicators, statistics, business, trade, stock markets ...	0%	100%
Birth control, fertility, sterilisation, amniocentesis, termination of pregnancy ...	0%	100%
Development issues, sustainability, community development ...	60%	40%
Human rights, women's rights, children's rights, gay & lesbian rights, rights of minorities ..	19%	81%
Legal system, judicial system, legislation (apart from family, property & inheritance law) ...	50%	50%
Violent crime, murder, abduction, kidnapping, assault, drug-related	50%	50%

violence ...		
Gender-based violence, femicide, harassment, domestic violence, rape, trafficking, genital mutilation ...	100%	0%
Child abuse, sexual violence against children, trafficking, neglect.	0%	100%
Arts, entertainment, leisure, cinema, theatre, books, dance ...	0%	100%
Beauty contests, models, fashion, beauty aids, cosmetic surgery ...	19%	81%
Sports, events, players, facilities, training, policies, funding ...	17%	83%

**Table 5:** the presence of female and male news subjects in Malta by story topic

Women are more likely to appear in stories about Gender-based violence, whereas men are more likely to be present as a news subject in stories dealing with economic policies and strategies.

### **Who are the newsmakers?**

With regard to the position/occupation of female and male news subjects in Malta, Male news subjects are more likely to appear: as government officials, politicians, political leaders, as police, as a specialist in science/technology, and as business men. In contrast, female news subjects, when they do appear, are more likely to be in the caring professions, in education, in administration or the service industry, or homemakers.

### **Constructing ‘victims’ in the news**

One category that the GMMP has highlighted in previous years and continues to scrutinise, is the way women are portrayed as victims. In the 2010 data collection, this category has been examined further and ‘victim type’ has been included in the analysis. This data shows that when portrayed as victims, women and men are almost balanced. Differences emerge in ‘type’ - where women are more likely to be portrayed as victims of domestic violence etc, and men are more likely to be portrayed as victims of accidents and natural disasters, and victims of discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, ability etc..

### **Identity and family status in the news**

A familiar debate in news studies is located around how men and women are portrayed in relation to ‘family status’. Women are most often described in the context of their family status, irrespective of the logic of the information in relation to the story. This, some academics argue, is a strategy used to link women with family responsibilities and as a consequence functions to diminish females in their role as expert or politician, as well as reinforcing the image that family responsibility is a female domain. The GMMP data indicates that women are more likely to be identified by their family status than men, and that this style of reporting is more likely to be carried out by male reporters / announcers.

## WHO DELIVERS THE NEWS?

The GMMP is not only interested in how women and men feature in news content, it also examines the roles women and men play as news producers. As professionals in the world of journalism, the study examines how each gender is functioning in the roles of; reporters, journalists, presenters and announcers and there were gender disparities among the makers and presenters of the news.

Female **announcers** delivered the stories in radio 61%, and in TV 83%. Female announcers were more likely to deliver news in all sectors – local, national and foreign/international. 82%:18%. Within story topic, women as announcers were again more likely to present in ‘politics and government’ (77%), ‘economy’ (71%), ‘science and health’ (100%), ‘social and legal’ (99%), ‘crime and violence’ (85%) and ‘celebrity, arts/media, sports’ (90%).

While women hold a strong presence when **announcing** the news, figures for **reporting** the news is reversed and men are almost twice as likely to be reporting the news as women, 63% to 37%. This is broken down along media type and men dominate in Print (94%) and in TV (63%), with female reporters dominating the Radio sector (62%) (See below).

	Female	Male %
Media Type	<b>2010</b>	<b>2010</b>
Print	6%	94%
Radio	62%	38%
Television	37%	63%

**Table 6:** Presence of women and men as news **reporters** in Malta by medium – TV, radio and newspapers.

A close examination of the type of story topics reported by female and male reporters (across all media,) shows that male reporters are more likely to report on all topics (63%:37%). Male reporters dominated in most major topics: ‘Politics and Government’ 77%, ‘Social and Legal’ 53%, ‘Crime and Violence’ 64% and ‘Celebrity, Arts, Media and Sports’ 73%. The ‘Economy’ was one exception to this, with female reporters showing a majority 60:40. Some story topics, such as ‘Science and Health’, were reported equally, by both female and male reporters.

Reporters on major topics	Female	Male %
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2010</b>
Politics and Government	23%	77%
Economy	60%	40%
Science and Health	50%	50%
Social and Legal	47%	53%
Crime and Violence	36%	64%
Celebrity, Arts and Media, Sports	27%	73%
The Girl-child	0%	0%
Total	37%	63%

**Table 7:** Major story topics in Malta by female and male reporters.

### Reporters and news sources

When seeking out sources for the news, reporters appear to be equally balanced across genders and both male and female reporters are likely to source equally from both genders, with male journalists showing a slight preference for male sources over female ones.

Sex of Source	Female	Male %
	2010	2010
Female	50%	50%
Male	42%	58%
Other: transgender, transsexual	0%	0%
Do not know	52%	48%
Total	43%	57%

**Table 8:** Reporters and news sources.

## GENDER AND THE NEWS

Sex of reporters in stories with women as a central focus: Women are central in 50% of stories reported by women, and 50% of stories reported by men, suggesting no statistically significant disparities between female and male reporters in their practice.

None of the stories reviewed were found to significantly challenge or reinforce gender stereotypes

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Between 2005 and 2010, and across this time period, the visibility of women as sources, producers and as subjects has not shifted at all. In 2005 female news subjects, across all media formats was 17%, with male subjects featuring 83%. Five years later, these statistics have remained static.

- In 2010 female and male as news subjects were found to be unchanged -17%:83%. Men are still more than five times more likely to appear in the media, in relation to the news genre.
- In terms of specific media – as news subjects, men are more likely to appear: in print 77%, in radio 90%, in TV 83%. When women are news subjects – they are limited to a narrow range of story topics.
- In terms of news subjects ‘occupations’, male news subjects are more likely to be Government officials, politicians, political leaders or spokespersons. In contrast, female news subjects, when they do appear, are more likely to be in the caring professions, in education, in administration or the service industry, homemakers or unspecified.
- When women and men are reported as victims, women are more likely to be portrayed as victims of domestic violence etc., and men are more likely to be portrayed as victims of accidents and natural disasters, and victims of discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, ability etc.
- As news subjects, women are more likely to be identified according to their family status.
- Male reporters mostly carry out ‘this type of reporting’.

GMMP is not only interested in how women and men feature in news content, but also in the roles women and men play as news producers. As reporters, journalists, presenters and announcers there were gender disparities among the makers and presenters of the news.

- Female announcers delivered the stories in radio 61%, and in TV 83%. Female announcers were more likely to deliver news in all sectors – local, national and foreign/international.
- While women hold a strong presence when *announcing* the news, figures for *reporting* the news is reversed and men are almost twice as likely to be reporting the news as women, 63% to 37%. This is broken down along media type and men dominate in Print (94%) and in TV (63%), with female reporters dominating the Radio sector (62%).
- The type of story topics reported by female and male reporters (across all media,) shows that male reporters are more likely to report on all topics - 63%:37%. With male reporters dominating in: ‘Politics and Government’ 77%, ‘Social and Legal’ 53%, ‘Crime and Violence’ 64% and ‘Celebrity, Arts, Media and Sports’ 73%.
- When seeking out sources for the news, reporters appear to be equally balanced across genders and both male and female reporters are likely to source equally from both genders.

In terms of media production Malta has remained in stasis. No new training projects or equality policies have been implemented in the last five years that could have had a positive impact on media practices. A minimum amount of ‘Media and Gender’ training is in place at

the University of Malta and other educational institutions with an interest in training media practitioners. Production houses primary focus is profit.

For real change to occur, the key stakeholders: i.e. institutions that train journalists and media producers, media production houses, TV & Radio stations, newspapers, and government policy makers, need to: recognise the current situation, and the weakened democratic process that it is reflecting, and work towards addressing the weakness in the system.

## THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

What can be done in the next five years to promote the fair and balanced representation of women and men in the news in Malta?

- Media production organisations (TV / Radio stations, newspapers, private production companies etc.) need to counter or strive to eliminate gender-stereotypical reportage. This can be done by providing focused training in-house or across cooperating media houses.
- Institutions that train journalists / media producers and future media producers: such as Secondary Schools, MCAST, University of Malta – need to develop training on gender equality and media literacy. The two subjects work hand in hand, and can lead to a greater awareness of issues. Focused training then need to be provided and made available, which will translates into better practice, for graduating media practitioners.
- Citizens or media consumers need to encourage their local and national news media to produce gender-just reportage. That is, reportage that draws attention to issues that impact women and marginalized groups disproportionately, reportage that includes women views on all topics, reportage that draws attention to gender inequality, etc. This can be achieved by introducing media literacy training at all levels of school - Primary and Secondary - from kinder onwards. This would incubate and facilitate young thinkers, who learn would to understand and challenge media content. In turn, orbital adults, learning from the younger thinkers, would also learn good strategies for active citizenship and advocacy.

### Action Areas:

- Encourage mainstream news media to undertake gender-awareness training, which focuses on the bottom-line impact of improving diversity, not simply re-articulates an equity argument, which has failed to produce much in the way of concrete outcomes for women in the last 40 years.
- Encourage educators and policy-makers to implement long-standing plans to introduce media literacy to schools.
- Encourage educational institutions invested with a responsibility to train future media practitioners to develop focused training for those future graduates.
- Find ways to demonstrate that increasing the diversity of sources makes news both more interesting but also more accessible to a wider consuming public.

Dr Brenda Murphy  
National Coordinator

## 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

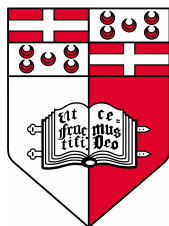
- TV News research group coordinated by Natalie Debono (Broadcasting Authority) Bachelor in Communications student volunteers: Emil Calleja Bayliss, Tamara Gauci, Diane Farrugia, Shazia Khan Darmanin, Katerina Milcevska, Yasmin Kuymizakis & Roberta Bellizzi.
- Newspapers research group coordinated by Ian Sammut, (Broadcasting Authority) Bachelor in Communications student volunteers: Ban Zhonghu, Martina Said, Emma Cassar, Taryn Mizzi, Danjela Camilleri, Rebecca Vella, Anthony Iacovov & Stephanie Ganado.
- Radio News research group coordinated by Laurence Buhagiar (Broadcasting Authority) Bachelor in Communications student volunteers: Keith Carabott, Cassian Camilleri, Mauro Busuttil, Ann Marie D'Amato & Miriam Dalli.
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Malta 2010



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