

Critical Challenges Facing Women and Girls in the Media: Commonwealth Stories, Global Solutions - *Malta and Beyond*

Women's Forum, Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting 2016

Brenda Murphy

Background:

What are the critical challenges facing women and girls in the media?

What we understand as 'the media' has undergone dramatic rethinking in recent years but the questions and answers remain the same. This question has been *asked* by media academics since the 1950's when, with increased access to TV in the home, there was a parallel increase in questioning in academia with regard to concerns around gender portrayal. The question has also been answered, many times, and in many ways across the various and varied spaces that are 'media' and the possible interpretations of what we mean by 'in' the media. There are two spaces demanding discussion and focus when we ask *What are the critical challenges facing women and girls in the media?* The first is how are women and girls portrayed in the media, and the second is how women are placed as practitioners working in the media industry itself.

Portrayed in the media? We know that the portrayal of women and girls in media, i.e. how they appear and how they are portrayed or represented is problematic. Regardless of the media format or genre, women continue to be framed around and within a particular set of categories. Women and girls are often absent from particular genres of programming; appear less often than men when they do; are less likely to be the main focus of the story; are likely to be stereotyped - in narrow social and occupational roles or hackneyed and damaging stereotypes; young girls are more often portrayed in 'passive' roles in contrast with boys 'active' ones; and women and girls are more likely to be sexualised and objectified (Gallagher, 1981, 1995, 2001; Gill 2012; GMMP 2000, 2005, 2010, 2015; Kilbourne 1999, 2002; Levine & Kilbourne 2009; Richardson & Wearing 2014). If we look specifically at the production of News – a media space that reflects women's role in the democratic process – across all formats (TV, Radio, Print) women appear as subjects in the News 24% of the time - meaning 3 out of 4 people appearing in the news are male (GMMP 2010).

Only 24% of people heard or read about in print, radio and television news are female. In contrast, 76% - more than 3 out of 4 – of the people in the news are male (GMMP 2010).

When women appear as persons interviewed or heard in the news, “they remain lodged in the ‘ordinary’ people categories, in contrast to men who continue to predominate in the ‘expert’ categories”, and 18% of female news subjects are portrayed as victims in comparison to 8% of male subjects” (*ibid.*).

Lack of change is substantiated in GMMP 2015 where we have found that:

in 2015, women continue to make up only 24% of the persons heard, read about or seen in newspaper, television and radio news, exactly as they did in 2010 (GMMP 2015).

Based on the evidence above, the media produces a worldview that is predominantly populated by men, where power resides with men in the form of decision-making, violence, action and control. This produces a perception of a world where women are seen less often, and when they are seen they are in secondary positions of power, and are more likely to be sexualised, objectified and reproduced in the role of victim.

Working in the media? Women working to produce media content and women working as decision makers in the media are documented via various sources.

For global figures providing evidence about women as practitioners in the media, we look to ‘Who Makes The News’, a Canadian based knowledge, information and resource portal on gender and the media. It hosts the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) which also provides global data showing where women work *in* the production of news.

Reporters & Presenters: In 2010 it was found that for stories reported on television, radio and newspapers, the percentage of those by female reporters is exactly similar to that registered in 2005, that is 37%.

- 52% of stories on television and 45% of those on radio are presented by women.

The average total number of stories on television and radio presented by women is 49%, less than half of the total number of stories on both mediums

combined, a 4 percentage point drop since 2005 and lower than in 1995 when the statistic was 51%.

- Since the year 2000 the percentage of stories reported by women compared to those reported by men has increased in all major topics except 'science/health'. Nonetheless, stories by male reporters continue to exceed those by female reporters in all topics.
- Stories by female reporters contain more female news subjects than stories by male reporters.

This trend has persisted over the past 10 years. In 2000, 24% of news subjects in stories by female reporters were female, in contrast to only 18% in stories by male reporters. Currently, the statistics stand at 28% and 22% respectively.

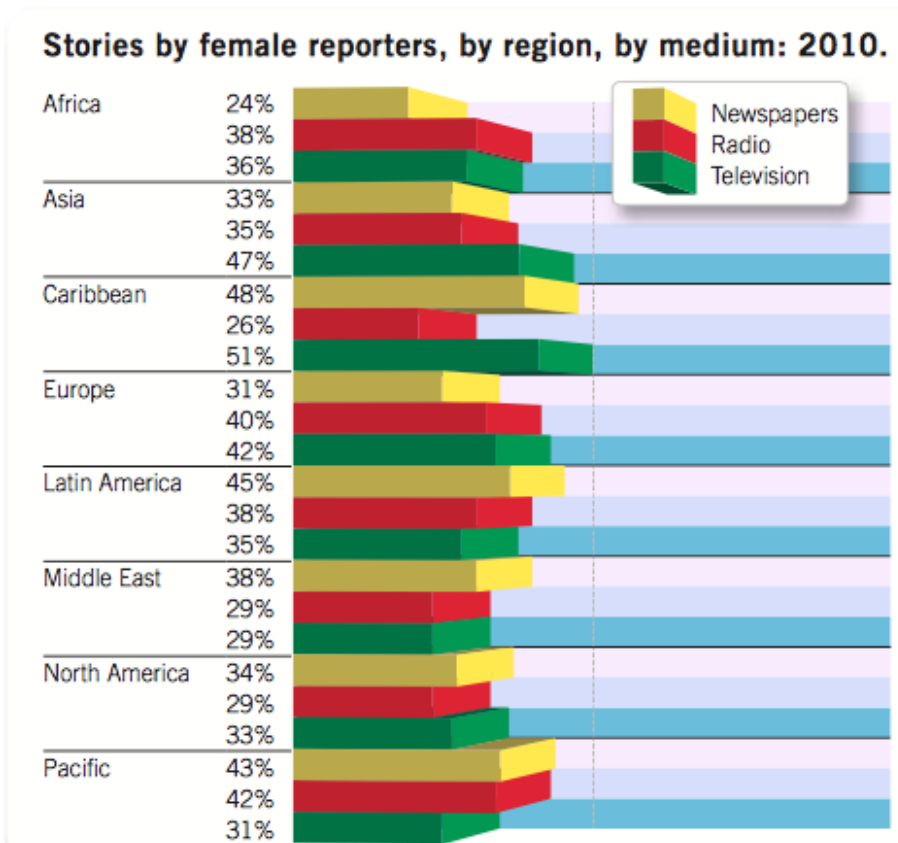


Figure 1. GMMP 2010 – Online

Moving away from programme production *per se* and asking 'where are women in decision-making in media organisations?' we can look to the 2013 European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) Report (*Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations*), which was serving as a review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Women and the Media. The

report explored the extent to which women occupy decision-making positions across a sample of media organisations (99 in total) in the 28 EU Member States and analysed the extent to which these media organisations have either developed internal gender equality policies and monitoring mechanisms, or implemented specific initiatives to support women’s career advancement within the sector.

It found that in total, women occupy only **16% of the highest level decision-making positions (level 1¹)** within selected media organisations (both public and private) in the EU. While comparing the proportion of women and men in top-level positions in public and private media organisations, the biggest differences were found at the highest levels of decision-making (level 1 and level 2). The findings show that the proportion of women at these levels is higher in public media organisations. **The representation of women in decision-making posts increases at the lower levels: 26% at level 2, 34% at level 3 and 36 % at level 4.** This tendency is common for both public and private service providers. It can also be noticed that women’s participation in decision-making reaches similar proportions at the top levels — level 1 (16%) and level 2 (21 %) and that this is far fewer compared to the lower levels of decision-making positions — level 3 (32 %) and level 4 (34 %) that are also close in values. The EU-27 (*Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations: Report. European Institute for Gender Equality, 2013:7*) shows that on average, women’s participation in decision-making, at all levels, is only 32 % in media organisations. According to the report, the small number of women in top level positions in media organisations has been a cause for concern for both women professionals working in

¹ **Level 1:** the highest decision-making level covering all strategic decisions related to the organisation. The titles that may be included in this level are: chief executive officer, chairperson, president, director, or similar positions. The person holding this position is likely to chair the most senior strategic or policy-making board or committee(s) of the organisation.

Level 2: the chief senior operational managerial position. He/she operates at the top decision-making level and has under his/her responsibility budgetary control, overseeing programmes and editorial policy. The titles that may be included in this level are: director-general, executive director, editor-in-chief, or similar positions. The person holding this position is likely to chair the most senior operational decision-making committee(s).

Level 3: the senior operational management positions. They operate as decision-makers and have oversight of specific programmes/media content and execution of budgets. The titles that may be included in this level are: heads of departments, acting directors, management team member, or similar positions. These positions are likely to be held by members of the operational decision-making committee(s).

Level 4: the managerial positions that entail responsibility for one of the main operational units of the organisation — for example, television, radio, sport, entertainment, news, or significant areas of responsibility, e.g. digital services, finance, HR. The titles that may be included in this level are: heads of divisions which are responsible sub-areas: head of news, head of sport, head of culture, head of HR, head of management unit, etc.

the media² and also, slowly but gradually, for the relative governmental bodies, both national and European. Professional bodies, such as the International (and European) Federation of Journalists and Women in Journalism, NGOs such as the European Women's Lobby, and the various working groups of the European Commission, have each undertaken a number of studies over the past few years to explore this issue and have suggested a range of practical measures to improve and enhance women's career opportunities within the media sector³.

Some Commonwealth Countries in focus

In the UK numerous studies have indicated concern about the representation of women in television and radio news and current affairs broadcasting in terms of employment, casting and participation. In January 2015 the House of Lords Select Committee on Communications published a report stating that "Despite initiatives run by broadcasters, there are still not enough women in news and current affairs broadcasting" (House of Lords Select Committee Online 2015).

Chairman of the Committee, Lord Best, said "through this inquiry, it has become clear that there are simply not enough women in news and current affairs broadcasting. Although on the surface it appears that women are well represented, the facts tell a different story. We heard, for example, that **men interviewed as experts outnumber women 4 to 1 on radio and TV**. Despite the fact that women make up just over half the population, they are underrepresented, both as staff and as experts, in news and current affairs broadcasting" (House of Lords Select Committee Online 2015). The Select Committee made several **recommendations** which are cited below in the relevant section.

In Malta – Malta mirrors the global statistics in general. It is the southern-most country in Europe and it harbours a prevailing patriarchal cultural. The efforts of academics, lobbyists and political activists, who work hard to bring about change are notable. Scholars engaging specifically with gender issues are few, but gender and the

² See Tuchman G., 'The symbolic annihilation of women by the mass media', in G. Tuchman, A. K. Daniels, & J. Benét (Eds.), *Hearth & home: Images of women in the mass media*, Oxford University Press, New York, pp. 3–38, 1978; Gallagher, M., *An unfinished story: Gender patterns in media employment*, Unesco, Paris, 1995; Byerly C. M., *Global report on the status of women in news media* (technical report), International Women's Media Foundation, Washington DC, 2011; *Women in Journalism, Seen But Not Heard: How Women Make Front Page News*, London, Wil, 2012

³ See for example, EFJ, IFJ, EWL; European Commission Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, Opinion on 'Breaking gender stereotypes in the media', Brussels, European Commission, 2010b.

media are firmly on the research map. For example, Malta has been part of the *Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP)* since 2000 – participating in 2000, 2005, 2010 and in 2015 – which has been a powerful strategy for helping raise awareness amongst media practitioners, policy makers, educators and the public. Involvement in the GMMP is crucial, as there are few opportunities to a) gather local data and b) ensure that the analysis and interpretation of 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 (Murphy 2010. See also Murphy 2016; Murphy and Sammut 2016).

Women in the Media in Malta:

In the *Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations 2013* Report it reviewed the situation with regard to women in decision-making as employees, and women on boards, and documented gender-equality policies and strategies in public and private media organisations. The overall percentage of women in decision-making positions in the media⁴ in Malta at all levels (see above) was 16%, which compares poorly with the European average of 32%. While women comprise a mere 32% of all top level decision-making positions in the EU-27 there are Member States where women still find it difficult to reach decision-making positions in media organisations, including Malta. There were no women in CEO positions in the companies surveyed although 38% of Board positions were taken up by women, a higher proportion than the EU average. However, this only applies to the public service media since no women appear in Level 1 in the private companies. A total of 30% of all Level 1 (strategic) positions are held by women, and that figure reduces as we move through Levels 2-5 (operational). When this data is viewed across formats, there are some minor differences: in newspapers the percentage of women occupying decision-making positions stands at 14% (EU 29%); in TV 11% (EU 36%) and none in radio (EU 33%).

The study also found that Malta was one of several countries which had a high concentration of factual programmes and fewer news programmes. With regard to the number of programmes broadcast by public and private channels, Malta showed a lower percentage of programmes on public channels. Across the EU project as a whole, women were significantly under-represented in the programmes monitored, contributing 36% of everyone coded. Malta returned the lowest proportion of women appearing on public and private channels across all countries - public channels

⁴ The media surveyed for Malta were: TVM (public service TV); Radju Malta (public service radio); ONE TV (private TV); and the *Times* newspaper.

24% and private 27%. Malta had the lowest number of programmes in the news genre where 21% of individuals coded were women compared to the EU average of 34%, and 33% of individuals monitored in factual programming were women. These low percentages are reflected in the GMMP 2015 where it was found that women appeared in the news, as sources, in Maltese TV, Radio and Newspapers less than 20% of the time [TV: Females 16% (Males 84%), Radio: Females 16% (Males 84%), and in Newspapers: Females 18% (Males 82%)]. The absence of women in the media reflects and perpetuates a particular version of the world around us, where women occupy only the smallest slice of democratic public life.

In conclusion: Whether we are viewing global, EU or country specific data, women's and girls contested presence, portrayal and participation in the media continues to be overwhelming. Three decades ago Stuart Hall cautioned 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).

With increasing urgency, there is a need to address the systematic absence of women in media - in the news (as newsmakers and subjects), in media organisations (as decision makers) and in programming where under/misrepresentation produces false realities. The absences culminate in a failure to nurture and uphold claims to a *real* democratic process, where both genders can wholly and fully participate in and have access to media presence, media decision-making and media literacy.

Without gender equity in portrayal, decision-making and in practice in the media, women are prevented from playing a full and fair role in the democratic process, and this impinges on all other groups and demographics.

Recommendations for change: Recommendations for change are varied and numerous. In this paper I focus on four key sets of recommendations – all current except the last, which retains its value despite the passing of time. They are: European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) 2013; European Federation of Journalists/International Federation of Journalists (EFJ/IFJ); The UK’s House of Lords Select Committee Report on Communications (2015); and a revisit to the UN Beijing Platform for Action - Women and the Media 1995.

EIGE advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations: main findings (2013), made the following recommendations to increase women’s participation in decision-making in organisations.

At the EU and national level:

- Introduce explicit policies and actions encouraging the media sector to promote and support more women in decision-making positions.
- Make use of the proposed indicators for regular monitoring of the advancement of gender equality in media sector.
- Improve awareness of gender equality in the media by disseminating and sharing good practices identified in this area.
- Assure specific funding and support civil societies’ initiatives on gender equality in the media.
- Cooperate with the media and civil society organisations on creating a platform and sharing good practices on women and the media.

At national level:

- Adopt a proactive approach to ensure gender equality in media organisations by including gender equality in the media in national action plans on gender equality.
- Encourage national media regulatory bodies to develop and implement specific policies on gender equality.
- Professional media organisations and associations could act as role models by striving for gender equality in their own internal structures.

Suggestions for future research:

- Extend research to online, digital and private media sectors.
- Support and fund further research on women’s and men’s career advancement in the media sector.
- Promote the development of comparable and representative research on gender and the media at the EU level.

The European Federation of Journalists/ International Federation of Journalists

produced a *Handbook on Gender Equality*, detailing best practices in European Journalists' Unions. In order to increase participation, the gender equality best practice in European journalists unions was found to include: setting up a gender equality agenda, gender monitoring, adopting positive discrimination measures, developing gender and/or equality councils, getting women involved in the union, women in decision making positions, and developing checklists.

Impacting the Workplace, the best practices were detailed as: establishing Parental Leave, fighting for equal pay, fighting against harassment, equality plans, networking, mentoring programmes, use of language, and collective agreements.

And the best practices adopted by media organisations included: monitoring, fair gender portrayal, connecting with female readers, support to parents, and affirmative action programmes. (European Federation of Journalists/ International Federation Of Journalists - A Handbook on Gender Equality Best Practices in European Journalists' Unions Online)

The House of Lords Select Committee on Communications. The third set of recommendations I spotlight is located in the UK. The House of Lords Select Committee on Communications (Online Report 2015:50-1) made several recommendations – to monitor the rate of change in the industry; to task Ofcom to use its power to require broadcasters to record, annually, the gender balance within their organisations; that broadcasters distinguish between gender equality and diversity, Ofcom, through an enhancement to its existing monitoring system, should collect and publish information on the broadcasters' progress towards greater gender equality; instead of mandatory quotas for women in news and current affairs broadcasting they propose non-binding targets to help focus broadcasters on achieving a better gender balance for expert commentators and employees; Ofcom (or similar) should use its power under the Communications Act 2003 to require public service broadcasters to set their own short term, medium term and long term targets for gender balance of expert commentators and employees. It should encourage commercial broadcasters to set targets in this area, and it should exercise the power it has to levy sanctions, if appropriate, where a broadcaster is not making sufficient progress; they encourage broadcasters to consider, before signing contracts with independent production companies, whether obligations relating to recruitment and promotion policies should be incorporated into their contracts (House of Lords Select Committee on Communications 2015: 50-51).

The fourth and final key reference for recommendations and actions is the Beijing Platform for Action: Twenty years ago 189 UN Member States recognised the key role the media plays in situating and changing the gender stereotypes that influence how we think and act. Women and media was one of 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action, and it called on media to make changes. There was a call for the number of women in the media to increase, including in decision-making.

It was recognised that more needed to be done to present women as leaders and role models, and to abandon stereotypes. There was a call to encourage women’s training, to adopt professional guidelines to reduce discrimination, and to establish media watch groups for monitoring as some of the measures necessary to move forward.

Beijing20 reports that there has been some progress since the 1995 Beijing Conference. The percentage of stories reported by women has edged up in most issue areas, and women are among the most active social media users. But, as detailed above, even a cursory look at media content shows how far there is to go.

As detailed in *UN Beijing Platform for Action Turns 20*, women in all types of media tend to be thin and sexualized. They talk less than men. They have fewer opinions. And they are far less likely, in the entertainment industry, to play roles as leaders or professionals, or even as women who work for a living. Research spanning more than 100 countries found that while women represent half of the world’s population, 31% (less than a third) of all speaking characters in film are female. 4 out of every 5 filmmakers are male (79% male : 21% female), and 23% of films feature a female protagonist.

Additionally new media has added to the media landscape. Roughly half of social media users are women, and while the internet is lauded as a transformative platform for social change, misogyny and abuse are rife online. Cyberviolence has extended the harassment and stalking of women and girls to the online world. In the US 26% of young women aged 18-24 are being stalked online and 25% were targets of online sexual harassment (UN Beijing Platform for Action Turns 20 Online).

To serve as a reminder - the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women Beijing, China September 1995 Action for Equality, Development and Peace PLATFORM FOR ACTION Women and the Media Diagnosis tasked countries to:

Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication.

(Strategic objective J.1.)

and to

Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media

(Strategic objective J.2.)

In this report I focus on the 2nd strategic objective and strategies to promote balanced and non stereotyped **portrayal of women** – the Actions called for were:

numerous (see Annex 1). For Governments and international organizations to promote research, education and communication aimed at promoting a balanced portrayal of women and girls and their multiple roles; to encourage the media and advertising agencies to develop specific programmes to raise awareness; to encourage gender-sensitive training for media professionals, to encourage the creation and use of non-stereotyped, balanced and diverse images of women in the media; to encourage the media to refrain from presenting women as inferior beings and exploiting them as sexual objects and commodities; to promote the concept that the sexist stereotypes displayed in the media are gender discriminatory, degrading in nature and offensive; and to take effective measures or institute such measures, including appropriate legislation against pornography and the projection of violence against women and children in the media.

Mass media and advertising organisations were specifically tasked to develop professional guidelines and codes of conduct and other forms of self-regulation to promote the presentation of non-stereotyped images of women; to establish professional guidelines and codes of conduct that address violent, degrading or pornographic materials concerning women in the media, including advertising; to develop a gender perspective on all issues of concern to communities, consumers and civil society; and increase women's participation in decision-making at all levels of the media.

Finally, in a joint call - the media, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, in collaboration with national machinery for the advancement of women were tasked to promote the equal sharing of family responsibilities through media campaigns; to produce and/or disseminate media materials on women leaders including but not limited to their experiences in balancing work and family responsibilities, as mothers, as professionals, as managers and as entrepreneurs, to provide role models, particularly to young women; to promote extensive campaigns

to disseminate information about and increase awareness of the human rights of women; to support the development of and finance alternative media and the use of all means of communication to disseminate information to and about women and their concerns; and to develop approaches and train experts to apply gender analysis with regard to media programmes.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/media.htm>

There are many other spaces, organisations and sites that make solid recommendations with regard to women and girls in the media. Media Smarts in Canada provides guidelines and tools for positive and healthy portrayal in programme <http://mediasmarts.ca/gender-representation/women-and-girls/media-portrayals-girls-and-women-introduction>. In the USA, the National Cable & Telecommunications Association (NCTA) reports the Healthy Media Commission for Positive Images of Women and Girls which releases recommendations to support Healthy Media Efforts <https://www.ncta.com/news-and-events/media-room/content/healthy-media-commission-positive-images-women-and-girls-releases-recommendations-support-0> In Europe, the Directorate General For Internal Policies Policy Department C: Citizens' Rights And Constitutional Affairs Gender Equality published a report on Women and Girls as Subjects of Media's Attention and Advertisement Campaigns: The Situation in Europe, Best Practices and Legislations (2013), which looked at the mechanisms through which gender representation on the media (TV, advertising, news and new media) hampers the achievement of gender equality. It provides an overview of the main definitions, theories and studies and explores the regulatory acts existing in EU 27 Member States exploring the most interesting experiences (good practices) in order to present under what conditions they are more effective.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2013/474442/IPOL-FEMM_ET\(2013\)474442_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2013/474442/IPOL-FEMM_ET(2013)474442_EN.pdf)

In conclusion, 'What are the critical challenges facing women and girls in the media?' is now ultimately not the key question anymore. In the face of the numerous reports, guidelines and recommendations that have been issued over the years the question we may need to focus on, ask and answer is 'Why haven't the numerous recommendations made by various bodies across the commonwealth been taken up and acted upon?'

"Fair gender portrayal is a professional and ethical aspiration, similar to respect for accuracy, fairness and honesty."

Aidan White, General Secretary of the International Federation of Journalists in *Getting the Balance right: Gender Equality in Journalism*. IFJ. 2009 (GMMP Online 2010)

The interventions need to approach on two fronts and in two directions:

- Top down – policy, legislation & enforcement, regulation, monitoring and training
- Bottom up – media literacy and gender equality training, activism, and advocacy

Women have an equal right to participate in public debate and in public life. Much of this life is played out in the media. Everyone deserves to live free from the burden of harmful gender stereotypes. The media shapes our world—but so do women. They are powerful agents of change in all areas of society but the media does not currently reflect this reality (UN Beijing Platform for Action Turns 20 Online).

References

Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations: Report. European Institute for Gender Equality, (2013), (Online: <http://eige.europa.eu/content/document/advancing-gender-equality-in-decision-making-in-media-organisations-report>) [Accessed June 2015]

Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations: Main findings (2013), (Online): <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/eige-publications/advancing-gender-equality-decision-making-media-organisations-main-findings> [Accessed June 2015]

Council of the European Union (2013), Adoption of the first indicators in the area of Women and the Media of the Beijing Platform for Action. (<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&t=PDF&gc=true&sc=false&f=ST%2011470%202013%20INIT>). The country specific data was collated and the Malta report can be found online <http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/MH0213663ENN.pdf> [Accessed July 2015]

Directorate General For Internal Policies Policy Department C: Citizens' Rights And Constitutional Affairs Gender Equality published a report on Women and Girls as Subjects of Media's Attention and Advertisement Campaigns: The Situation in Europe,

Best Practices and Legislations (2013),
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2013/474442/IPOL-FEMM_ET\(2013\)474442_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2013/474442/IPOL-FEMM_ET(2013)474442_EN.pdf)

EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF JOURNALISTS/ INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF JOURNALISTS *A Handbook on Gender Equality Best Practices in European Journalists' Unions* Online
http://www.ifj.org/fileadmin/images/Gender/Gender_documents/Gender_Equality_Best_Practices_Handbook_-_English_version.pdf

Gallagher, M. (1981), *Unequal Opportunities: The case of women and the media*. Paris: UNESCO

Gallagher, M. (1995), *Lipstick Imperialism*. Available:
<http://www.un.org/documents/ecosoc/cn6/1996/media/gallagh.htm>. Last accessed 5th November 2008.

Gallagher, M. (2001), *Gender Setting*. London: Zed Publication.

Gill, R. (2012), Media, Empowerment and the 'Sexualization of Culture' Debates. *Sex Roles* 2012;66 (11–12):736-745.

GMMP (2000), *Who Makes the News*, Online http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/reports_2000/gmmp_2000.pdf

GMMP (2005), *Who Makes the News*, Online http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/reports_2005/gmmp-report-en-2005.pdf

GMMP (2010), *Who Makes the News*, Online http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/reports_2010/highlights/highlights_en.pdf

GMMP (forthcoming 2015), *Who Makes the News*, Online <http://whomakesthenews.org/gmmp-2015>

Hall, S. (1986), 'Media power and class power', in J. Curran *et al.* eds., *Bending Reality: The State of the Media*, London: Pluto

House of Lords Select Committee Online (2015),
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/lords-select/communications-committee/news/wncab-report-publication/>

House of Lords Select Committee Online Report (2015),
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201415/ldselect/ldcomuni/91/91.pdf>

House of Lords Select Committee on Communications (2015), *Women in News and Current Affairs Broadcasting Online*
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201415/ldselect/ldcomuni/91/91.pdf>

Kilbourne J. (1999), *Can't buy me love, How advertising changes the way we think and feel* New York, Touchstone.

Kilbourne J. (2002), *Killing us softly 3, Advertising's images of women* (DVD)
Northampton MA, Media Education Foundation.

Levin. D. and Kilbourne, J. (2009), *So Sexy So Soon: The New Sexualised Childhood*,
London and New York: Random House

Murphy, B. (2010), *GMMP Global Media Monitoring Project 2010* (GMMP) National Report
(Malta),<http://www.whomakesthenews.org/images/stories/restricted/national/malta.pdf>

Murphy, B. (forthcoming 2016), 'Malta'. In Ross K. and Padovani C. (eds) *Gender Equality and the Media: A Challenge for Europe*. Routledge.

Murphy, B. and Sammut, C. (forthcoming 2016), 'Media Stories - histories, methods and practices'. In Briguglio, M. & Brown, M. (Eds.). *Sociology of the Maltese Islands. Malta: Agenda*.

Richardson N, and S. Wearing (2014), *Gender in the Media*, London: Palgrave Macmillan

Ross, K., Claudia Padovani, C., Erzsébet Barát, E. and Azzalini, M. (2013),
Monitoring European TV. Final Report Study on Area J of the Beijing Platform for Action: Women and the Media in European Union EIGE/2012/OPER/07 Online:

<http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/MH3113742ENC-Women-and-Media-Report-EIGE.pdf> [Accessed August 2015]

UN Beijing Platform For Action - Women and the Media (1995)
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/media.htm>

UN Beijing Platform for Action Turns 20 Online: <http://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/in-focus/media>.

About:

Dr Brenda Murphy is a Senior Lecturer and Head of the Department of Gender Studies at the University of Malta. She is one of a team of academics who has recently set up a *new* Department of Gender Studies and is involved in the design of postgraduate programmes, research and activism.

Born in Ireland, and educated in Waterford, Dublin and London, she has worked in the media industry in London and Dublin, Chaired the Gender Advisory Committee at the Malta Broadcasting Authority and is currently President of the University of Malta's Academic Staff Association (UMASA).

Murphy is active in EU projects, as a research partner, on gender portrayal in the media, is a collaborative researcher with the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE); COST Actions and others. She has been the National Coordinator for the Gender Monitoring Media Project (GMMP) since 2000, and recently, National Coordinator in a 27 country 'Women and Media' monitoring on behalf of EIGE.

Her personal research is located around gendered places and spaces, the construction of identities of various kinds, (national, gender, ethnic etc.), in and through consumption and performances of consumption and spaces of consumption.

Her most recent publication - *Brewing Identities: Globalisation, Guinness and the production of Irishness* - has just been published by Peter Lang Publishers, New York.

She can be contacted at brenda.murphy@um.edu.mt.

Annex 1

The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women Beijing, China September 1995 Action for Equality, Development and Peace PLATFORM FOR ACTION
Women and the Media Diagnosis called for

Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication.

(Strategic objective J.1.)

and to

Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media

(Strategic objective J.2.)

Paying special attention to issues around portrayal – the Actions called for were:
243 By Governments and international organizations, to the extent consistent with freedom of expression:

- Promote research and implementation of a strategy of information, education and communication aimed at promoting a balanced portrayal of women and girls and their multiple roles;
- Encourage the media and advertising agencies to develop specific programmes to raise awareness of the Platform for Action;
- Encourage gender-sensitive training for media professionals, including media owners and managers, to encourage the creation and use of non-stereotyped, balanced and diverse images of women in the media;
- Encourage the media to refrain from presenting women as inferior beings and exploiting them as sexual objects and commodities, rather than presenting them as creative human beings, key actors and contributors to and beneficiaries of the process of development;
- Promote the concept that the sexist stereotypes displayed in the media are gender discriminatory, degrading in nature and offensive;
- Take effective measures or institute such measures, including appropriate legislation against pornography and the projection of violence against women and children in the media.

244 By the mass media and advertising organizations:

- Develop, consistent with freedom of expression, professional guidelines and codes of conduct and other forms of self-regulation to promote the presentation of non-stereotyped images of women;

- Establish, consistent with freedom of expression, professional guidelines and codes of conduct that address violent, degrading or pornographic materials concerning women in the media, including advertising;
- Develop a gender perspective on all issues of concern to communities, consumers and civil society;
- Increase women's participation in decision-making at all levels of the media.

245 By the media, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, in collaboration, as appropriate, with national machinery for the advancement of women:

- Promote the equal sharing of family responsibilities through media campaigns that emphasize gender equality and non-stereotyped gender roles of women and men within the family and that disseminate information aimed at eliminating spousal and child abuse and all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence;
- Produce and/or disseminate media materials on women leaders, inter alia, as leaders who bring to their positions of leadership many different life experiences, including but not limited to their experiences in balancing work and family responsibilities, as mothers, as professionals, as managers and as entrepreneurs, to provide role models, particularly to young women;
- Promote extensive campaigns, making use of public and private educational programmes, to disseminate information about and increase awareness of the human rights of women;
- Support the development of and finance, as appropriate, alternative media and the use of all means of communication to disseminate information to and about women and their concerns;
- Develop approaches and train experts to apply gender analysis with regard to media programmes

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/media.htm>