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# **DRAFT REPORT**

on gender equality in the media sector in the EU  
(2017/2210(INI))

Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

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## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

### on gender equality in the media sector in the EU (2017/2210(INI))

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Articles 11 and 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- having regard to Articles 2 and 3(3), second subparagraph, of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2010 on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive)<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission proposal on the third medium-term Community action programme on equal opportunities for women and men 1991-1995 (COM(90)0449),
- having regard to the resolution of the Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 5 October 1995 on the image of women and men portrayed in advertising and the media<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 7 June 2000 entitled ‘Towards a Community framework strategy on gender equality (2001-2005)’ (COM(2000)0335),
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 9 June 2008 on eliminating gender stereotypes in society,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 24 June 2013 on advancing women’s roles as decision-makers in the media,
- having regard to the Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006-2010 of 1 March 2006 (COM(2006)0092),
- having regard to the Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015 of 21 September 2010 (COM (2010)0491),
- having regard to Commission staff working document of 3 December 2015 on Strategic

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 204, 26.7.2006, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 95, 15.4.2010, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 296, 10.11.1995, p 15.

engagement for gender equality 2016-2019 (SWD(2015)0278),

- having regard to its resolution of 25 July 1997 on discrimination against women in advertising,
  - having regard to its resolution of 3 September 2008 on how marketing and advertising affect equality between women and men<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 12 March 2013 on eliminating gender stereotypes in the EU<sup>2</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 28 April 2016 on gender equality and empowering women in the digital age<sup>3</sup>,
  - having regard to the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe of 10 July 2013 on gender equality and media,
  - having regard to Recommendation 1555 of 24 April 2002 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on Image of women in the media,
  - having regard to Recommendation 1799 of 26 June 2007 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on The image of women in advertising,
  - having regard to the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe of 27 September 2017 to member States on gender equality in the audiovisual sector,
  - having regard to the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) study of 2013 entitled ‘Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Women and the Media – Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations’,
  - having regard to the Council of Europe report of 2013 entitled ‘Media and the image of women’,
  - having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (A8-0000/2017),
- A. whereas equality between women and men is a core principle of the European Union, as enshrined in the Treaties, and must be promoted in all its activities;
- B. whereas the media act as a fourth power, have the capacity to influence and ultimately shape public opinion, and have a duty to ensure freedom of information, diversity of opinion and media pluralism;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 295E, 4.12.2009, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 36, 29.1.2016, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0204.

- C. whereas the media have a significant impact on how social and cultural norms governing both women and men are formed and evolve, and constitute an important industry of economic value, directly employing over one million people in the EU;
- D. whereas the perspective of both women and men should be taken into account equally in order to achieve a complete picture and not to lose out on women's potential and skills in communicating information about the challenges faced by women in the media;
- E. whereas women constituted 68 % of journalism and information graduates in the EU-28 in 2015<sup>1</sup>, while employment data for the EU-28 over 2008-2015 show that the percentage of women employed in the media sector on average is continuously languishing at around 40 %;
- F. whereas gender pay and pension gaps are a persistent problem in the EU, and are evident in different economic sectors, including the media;
- G. whereas women continue to face a glass ceiling in the media owing to a variety of factors, including the procedures of an organisational culture which is often uncongenial to a work-life balance;
- H. whereas public media organisations in the Member States are able to establish their own equality policies, which leads to a wide spectrum of practices in the EU: from very comprehensive policy frameworks covering media content and providing for a balanced representation of men and women in decision-making bodies, to there being no such policy in place;
- I. whereas research has shown that only around 37 % of stories from both online and offline news sources are reported by women, a situation which has demonstrated no prospect of improvement in the past ten years<sup>2</sup>; whereas women are mostly asked to provide a popular opinion (41 %) or personal experience (38 %) and are seldom quoted as experts (just 17 % of stories); whereas research has also shown that less than one in five experts or commentators are women (18 %)<sup>3</sup>;
- J. whereas there are many women in the media working at a top professional level who are just as appreciated by society as their male counterparts and who include renowned film makers, journalists and reporters; whereas although they perform equally well as men, they may be more vulnerable and exposed to risks and dangers;
- K. whereas women are not highly present in the news and information media and are even less visible in the domains of sport, politics, the economy and finances, notwithstanding the variety of media outlets across the Member States;
- L. whereas female investigative journalists in particular are often subjected to violence and

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO OECD Eurostat (UOE) joint data collection, available from: [http://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/ta\\_educ\\_part\\_grad\\_educ\\_oe\\_grad02](http://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/ta_educ_part_grad_educ_oe_grad02)

<sup>2</sup> Lenka Vochocová, FEMM public hearing 'Gender equality in the media sector in the EU', 26 June 2017, recording available at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/ep-live/en/committees/video?event=20170626-1500-COMMITTEE-FEMM>

<sup>3</sup> Global Media Monitoring project, regional report for Europe (2015), available at [http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/reports\\_2015/regional/Europe.pdf](http://cdn.agilitycms.com/who-makes-the-news/Imported/reports_2015/regional/Europe.pdf)

the target of deadly attacks, as evidenced by the cases of Veronica Guerin or Daphne Caruana Galizia;

### ***Women's presence in the media***

1. Highlights the fact that although women are overrepresented in this field at a graduate level and constitute a substantial workforce, they are underrepresented in management and top-level positions;
2. Regrets the fact that the representation of women in public service media in the EU is low on average, in both strategic and operational high-level posts and on boards (in 2017: 35.8 % for executive posts, 37.7 % for non-executive posts and 33.3 % as board members)<sup>1</sup>;
3. Notes that despite being insufficiently represented in them at present, women are still more likely to be recruited or promoted to high-level positions in public service media than in private media organisations<sup>2</sup>;
4. Calls on the Member States, in conjunction with equality bodies, to focus on the implementation of existing legislation addressing equality between women and men, and to encourage regulatory bodies to pay attention to women's presence and advancement in the media sector and to non-stereotypical media content;
5. Recalls that media organisations are at liberty to determine roles for their employees, both men and women, but urges them to do so with the utmost respect for personal dignity and professional quality; observes, in this context, worrying instances of female reporters deemed more suitable for television journalism for their perceived attractiveness to the audience, and being subsequently replaced by younger colleagues as they get older;

### ***Media content and women***

6. Stresses that while any regulatory action of sexism and stereotypical gender portrayals in media content is a prerogative of the Member States and subject to due considerations of the principle of freedom of expression, editorial freedom should not serve to encourage or legitimise stereotypical or negative portrayals of women;
7. Calls for support and incentive measures, such as guidelines for the equal representation of women and men in decision-making posts in media organisations, and for the effective monitoring of such efforts to be given greater prominence in those organisations;
8. Recommends that regulations issued by media and communication regulatory authorities set out criteria to ensure stereotype-free portrayals of women and girls and

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<sup>1</sup> Gender Equality in Power and Decision-Making. Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States, 2017 (Source: EIGE Gender Statistics Database – Women and Men in Decision-Making).

<sup>2</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE): Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Women and the Media – Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations (2013).

include the possibility of removing offensive content; recommends that specialist organisations, such as national equality bodies and women's NGOs, are involved in monitoring the implementation of these regulations;

***Examples of good practice***

9. Notes with enthusiasm the various examples of good practice that can be observed in all Member States, including: media campaigns, specific legislation, awards or anti-awards for stereotypical and sexist advertising, databases of women experts, training courses for industry professionals, and media organisations' equality plans, codes of conduct and equal opportunity and diversity policies;
10. Recommends that public and private media organisations adopt internal policies which include anti-harassment measures, maternity, paternity or parental leave schemes, flexible working arrangements and mentorship and management training programmes for women;
11. Encourages the Member States to initiate campaigns such as the Belgian Expertalia tool, the Czech 'Sexist Piggy' awards or the Swedish #TackaNej ('No, thanks') initiative, among others;

***Further recommendations***

12. Calls on the Commission to conduct further research on the participation of women in senior positions in the media; commends the EIGE for its work in the field and invites it to continue to monitor the relevant set of indicators;

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13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

This report deals with equality between men and women in the media across the EU. The media is the fourth power, and it wields a great deal of influence over politics and society. We must therefore take great care to ensure that it can function properly and in a balanced way, which necessarily involves ensuring that there is a balance between women and men. Given that the media – both public and private – is supposed to serve society as a whole, its structure and its work should reflect the fact that women make up half of society.

The report focuses on the situation of women working in the media as reporters or commentators, but also draws attention to the lack of women in decision-making positions. This latter situation is particularly worrying: only 30-40% of directorial posts in the media are occupied by women, although the majority of media graduates are female. Not only can this imbalance affect the content and focus of the media, but it also contributes towards the general widening of the pay and pension gap between women and men.

Women also encounter significant difficulties as reporters and moderators: they are under huge pressure to conform to high standards of attractiveness for their audiences, and they are rarely given important political or economic issues to work on. The situation of women is also often more difficult because of a greater need to reconcile their family (maternal) duties and their professional duties. We would like to offer as much support as possible in this area.

A special chapter is devoted to the depiction of women in the media and the advertising industry, where they are subject to stereotypes or even sexism. The situation is similar in the area of new social media, which is not covered by this report due to lack of data and research. This area should not be omitted in future, however.

It is right that the EU does not regulate equality between men and women in the media, but the absence of such laws does not relieve us of our duty to deal with the matter and call on the relevant people and bodies to act. Responsibility lies with the media, the regulatory and supervisory bodies and civil society to draw attention to the various issues. National and EU bodies can, however, ensure that anti-discrimination laws are properly enforced and improve the legal framework for reconciling work and family life.