

CEE
HER

 **GLOBSEC**
IDEAS SHAPING THE WORLD

OPEN SOCIETY
FOUNDATIONS

Women's Voices in the Media: A Look at Central Europe

Authors

Lead author:

Sofiia Shevchuk, Independent
Consultant in Foreign Policy,
Security and Diplomacy

Co-authors:

Linda Tothova, Former
Coordinator of the CEE Her
Initiative

Malwina Talik, Research
Associate, Institute for the
Danube Region and Central
Europe (IDM)

Zsofia Biro, International Project
Assistant, Equilibrium Institute

Nikoleta Nemeckayova, Project
Assistant, Democracy and
Resilience Centre, GLOBSEC

Support to authors:

Viktoria Vanova, Project
Assistant, Centre for Global
Europe, GLOBSEC

Edited by:

Vladislava Gubalova, Senior
Fellow, Centre for Global
Europe, GLOBSEC

Design by:

Dominika Rafayova,
Graphic Designer, GLOBSEC

Financial support by:

**OPEN SOCIETY
FOUNDATIONS**

© GLOBSEC



CEE HER

The **CEE Her Initiative**, powered by GLOBSEC, aims to amplify expert female voices in influential policy-making debates. The goal is also to create a public resource for conference organisers, think tanks, non-profits and public institutions to find women experts from and interested in the **Central and Eastern Europe+ region** for their panels, articles and discussions and to bolster a creation of a vivid network of female experts who seek more diverse debates and can provide a valuable perspective on contemporary societal issues. Through this initiative, GLOBSEC strives to contribute towards a more comprehensive goal of changing narratives and policies in CEE+ where gender equality can lead to more stable, secure, and prosperous region.

Executive summary

The *Women's Voices in the Media: A Look at Central Europe* report aims to shed light on progress towards gender equality and women's media participation in Central Europe (CE) and advance a series of recommendations for the creation of a more inclusive and equitable press landscape. The report further seeks to raise public awareness regarding societal benefits, including inclusion and tolerance, that come from female media participation. It additionally contributes to addressing the data void on women's voices in CE media. The promotion of more comprehensive narratives and policies on gender equality in Central Europe, fostered by the report, can contribute to a more stable, secure, and prosperous region.

Several pressing questions are explored:

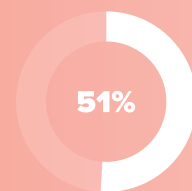
1. Why is there a need to examine women's status in the media? What are the benefits of their participation in media?
2. What is the current representation of women as authors and contributors at CE media outlets?
3. What are the identifiable barriers for women to participate in media as authors and contributors? And what are some positive developments?
4. How can women as authors and contributors in the media become more involved and influential?

The media industry has been impacted by numerous social shifts in recent years including digitalisation, increased connectivity, and demographic and human behavioural changes. This report, consequently, predominantly focuses on digital media outlets including primarily the most popular and cited news platforms in the region (specifically scrutinizing media outlets based in Czechia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia). These case studies provide a representative sample to draw conclusions about the presence of women's voices in the media sector in the Central European region more broadly. The analysis especially puts a spotlight on the gender ratio between men and women authors, the thematic focus of articles written by men and women, and the organisational staff structures of media outlets.

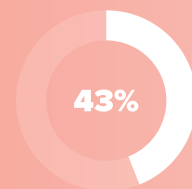
Among the four monitored countries, the percentage of female authors is close to parity in three (Slovakia at 51%; Czechia at 43%; Poland at 42%), with Hungary (women authored only 25% of articles in the country) an outlier. There is, that said, a discrepancy concerning the topics covered by women and men across the region. Affirming broader European patterns, women tend to publish articles on topics related to health, culture, and society. Women's voices on economics, finance, and science and technology, meanwhile, are lacking.

Share of articles authored by women

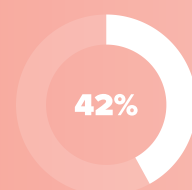
Slovakia



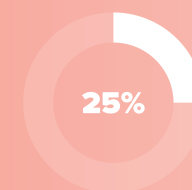
Czechia



Poland



Hungary



It is notable that women comprise a majority of university journalism graduates. But this success has not yet translated to equitable job representation in the media industry. And even though near gender parity has been attained, with few exceptions, when it comes to the entire organisational structure of media outlets in the region, women still represent a minority (or are not present at all) in management and decision-making positions.

Barriers to the participation of women in the media sector include harassment and bullying, cultural norms and expectations, the generation gap, and insufficient social security benefits. A few best practices and constructive developments across the CE region can also be identified though. These include the development of practical tools such as (1) databases that feature women experts in particular areas and (2) initiatives and advocacy campaigns targeted towards monitoring and evaluating media content that deploy gender stereotypes and sexist language.

The report puts forward concrete recommendations that can be implemented at the national, regional, and local levels. They encompass promotion of women's voices and gender-sensitive language, legal protections, and inclusive workspace.

Affirming broader European patterns, women tend to publish articles on topics related to:



Health



Culture



Society

Women's voices on economics, finance, and science and technology, meanwhile, are lacking.



Finance



Economics



Science and technology

Barriers:

harassment and bullying

•

cultural norms and expectations

•

the generation gap

•

insufficient social security benefits

Best practices:

databases that feature women experts in particular areas and

•

initiatives and advocacy campaigns targeted towards monitoring and evaluating media content that deploy gender stereotypes and sexist language

Main findings

Women are underrepresented in the media industry across all CE countries (particularly at senior and managerial levels).

Women as authors and experts are especially underrepresented on topics related to economics, international affairs, and science and technology.

Men are still the main decision-makers in the media sector and generally enjoy a more predominant role in shaping public opinion.

In the media sector, women are still portrayed in traditional and sexualised roles more often than men.

There is lack of transparency when it comes to organisational structures within media outlets.

The journalism profession provides inadequate social security benefits and flexibility, with long-term contracts and full-time employment difficult to obtain and not inclusive for employees with families.

Journalism is still considered a risky profession (particularly for women) due to harassment, bullying, and gender-based violence, thereby hindering inclusion.

Cultural norms and expectations in CE continue to hinder inclusion of women in the media sector.

Positive shifts are occurring among younger journalists - they tend to be bolder and more outspoken than their older colleagues.

Introduction

Studies suggest that where gender equality has been embraced, clear benefits can be felt in the public and private sectors. Yet even as we march ever closer towards equality, there are still major gaps^{1,2,3}. The COVID-19 pandemic, moreover, has exacerbated barriers⁴. It is especially alarming that Central Europe continuously performs below the EU average in the Gender Equality Index and that women's participation in leadership and decision-making processes in both the public and private sectors remains insufficient^{5,6}.

Even though women account for more than 60% of college graduates in the CE region, they make up just 45% of the labour force and only 37% of managers. The failure to provide an adequate work-life balance constitutes one of the potential reasons explaining this gap at the top, with 27% of women listing this factor as important (compared to 10% of men)⁷.

The greatest gender disparities in the region indeed concern leadership roles, unpaid labour, legal protection, and political representation. According to a 2018 Eurostat survey, nearly 70% of women in the CE region performed household chores daily and nearly 40% of women engaged in unpaid care work daily (e.g. looking after children, the elderly, and/or people with disabilities). These findings suggest that women essentially cover a "double shift"⁸.

A 2019 Pew Research Centre survey further revealed that 85% of Hungarians, 70% of Czechs, 69% of Poles, and 67% of Slovaks - significant majorities - believe that gender equality is very important (i.e. men and women should be able to exercise the same rights)⁹. Despite these attitudes, around half of respondents, according to the same survey, noticed very few improvements in women's social and legal rights since the fall of communism.

Why do we focus on the media sector?

The media, which generally serves as an important vehicle through which people obtain news and information, can play an important role in shaping societal perceptions, opinions, and behaviours. As an influential actor, the press indeed must be a key partner to achieving gender equality. The media can, for example, combat sexist stereotypes and discuss the diverse realities of the lives of women and men. The media, in this way, carries a responsibility to society.

1 <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2021>

2 <https://www.oecd.org/gender/OECD-ILO-2021-Women-at-Work-P%C3%B6licy-Action-Since-2020-G20-Italy.pdf>

3 https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

4 Ibid.

5 <https://www.globsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Absent-Voices-Missing-Female-Perspective-in-CEE-CEE-Her-Report.pdf>

6 <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/europe/closing-the-gender-gap-in-central-and-eastern-europe>

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2019/10/14/gender-equality-2/>

“(Women in media) can serve as role models through demonstrating their ability to take responsibility for maintaining democratic values. The media have considerable power in their hands and this power should be distributed in a gender-balanced way.”

**(Michaela Žureková,
SME, 2022)**

As much as the media could contribute towards more gender equality, however, it could also further the inequality gap through the underrepresentation of women in journalism, editorial, and management positions. The research conducted for this report underscored that women are less cited than men in articles and experience underrepresentation in interviews and as news subjects (apart from certain women’s magazines and advertising).

According to a 2018 European Parliament Research Centre report, women are underrepresented among reporters and as subjects in news covers. Women as reporters constitute a minority across all EU member states including 41% in

Hungary and 31% in Poland. Thematically, women are most underrepresented in politics and economics news reporting at 38% and 39%, respectively, in the EU.¹⁰ Women appear as subjects in around only a quarter of news articles in Poland and Hungary. The media, through this approach, reproduces an unequal representation of women across those sectors and strengthens gender stereotypes around women in power, politics, and economics. This all holds true despite the fact that women account for around 70% of graduates in journalism and the social sciences.¹¹

“There were 80 students – of which 60 were girls - who majored in communication in my graduating class. It’s not that women or young girls don’t care about the media or journalism, but rather they get lost somewhere between graduation and looking for a job.”

**(Ildikó D. Kovács,
24.hu, 2022)**

Women remain significantly underrepresented in the media sector, especially at the decision-making level. Research conducted by the European Institute for Gender Equality in 2021 revealed generally lacklustre progress concerning women’s placement on the boards of main public media broadcasters in Central Europe (Hungary at 43%; Slovakia at 22%; Poland at 20%; and Czechia at 15%). And not a single woman serves as president of any of these boards. An examination of the gender diversity of chief executive, executive, and non-executive positions (highest decision-making bodies) yields similar results. Only Poland achieved gender parity among public broadcasting CEOs (no women held these positions in other countries). A total of 29% of women (the highest in the region) held executive positions within the public media broadcasters in Hungary but only 11% in Czechia (the lowest in the region).¹²

This gender imbalance, importantly, comes to be reflected in the media content published by these outlets. Women’s voices are often vulnerable to portrayals that view them through sexist stereotypes (e.g. presumed domestic role and family-orientation) and sexualised lenses. These depictions further contend that women lack managerial skills, assertiveness, and capabilities compared to their male colleagues.

10 <https://epthinktank.eu/2018/03/07/spotlight-on-gender-equality-in-the-media-and-digital-sectors/>

11 <https://www.newtonmedia.cz/zeny-ve-vedeni-medii-a-mohla-bych-je-videt/> ; <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/edukacja/edukacja/szkolnictwo-wyzsze-w-roku-akademickim-20202021-wyniki-wstepne,8,7.html>

12 <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dqs>

“Diversity – which often remains just a slogan – gains true meaning when the audience can understand a story from a different perspective. For example, a story about the coronavirus pandemic is completely different from the angle of a single mother working in an essential service sector than from the point of view of a white-collar single male executive.”

(Hungarian journalist)



Representation of women as authors and contributors in CE media outlets



Czechia

A total of 43% of all articles published by Czech media outlets monitored in this study were written by women.

While the 43% overall figure is close to parity, careful scrutiny reveals significant gaps in specific thematic areas. Women as authors are still underrepresented in articles covering government and science and technology issues at, respectively, 31% and 21%.

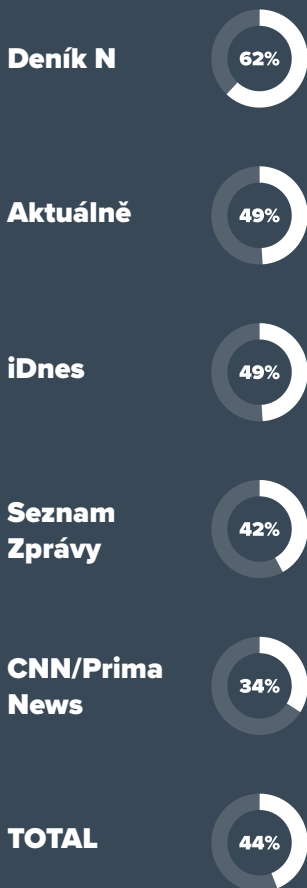
Articles related to health (women represent a majority of authors) and culture and society (parity between male and female authors) are

particular success stories. And, interestingly, women are more likely to publish articles on international affairs (24%) in Czechia compared to the EU more broadly. But science and technology remains a major laggard in 2022.

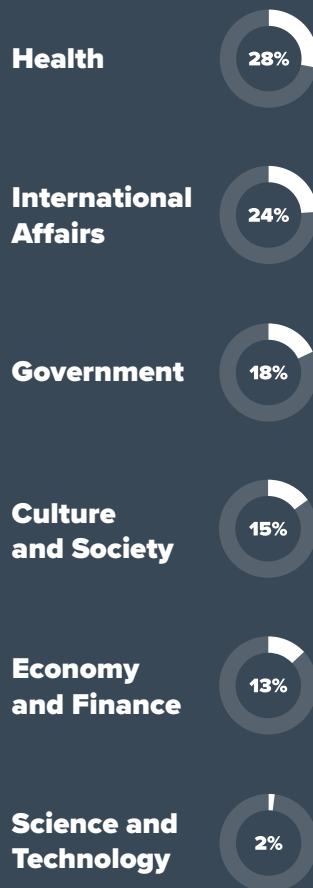
Alarming, women are still underrepresented in positions of power within the media. Among the selected media outlets, women occupy only 36% of top management positions (this data excludes iDnes which lacks a public organisational chart). While women, therefore, make up nearly half of the overall staff of these outlets, men still hold

two-thirds of the top positions. This finding underlines a persistent power imbalance in the Czech press. Men continue to enjoy their status as the primary decision-makers in the media sector and play an outsized role in shaping public opinion.

Share of articles authored by women in Czechia (arranged by outlet)



Share of articles authored by women in Czechia (arranged by theme)





Hungary

Women are highly underrepresented in journalism in Hungary, with this report finding that women authored only 25% of published articles.

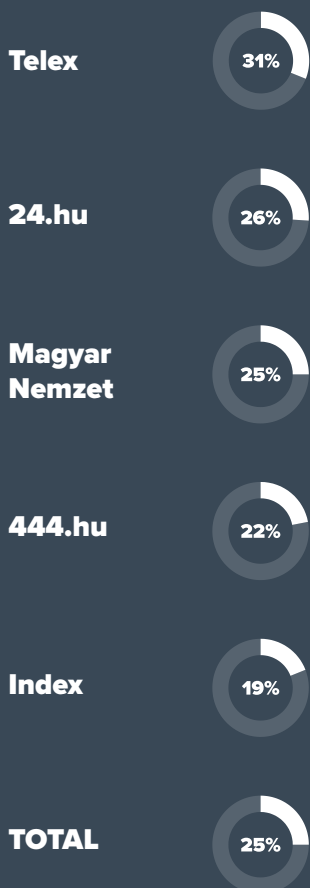
During the seven-day study period, the share of articles authored by women exceeded 50% at only one outlet and on one particular day (51% at Telex on January 16th, a Sunday). The lowest share was measured the same day at 444.hu - the percentage of articles written by a woman amounted to a mere 3% of all pieces published. The daily share of articles written by women peaked on Tuesday at

30%. The lowest female share, at 20%, occurred on Monday.

Turning to general themes, the most frequent topic covered by women concerned internal affairs and government - women drafted 197 articles related to Hungary (40% of all articles falling under this theme). Meanwhile, international affairs and culture and society saw women writing 17% of all articles; economy and finance stood at 15%; and science and technology the least common at 12%.

According to the available data, women also occupy only 20% of the management staff of these five media outlets, indicating that women are underrepresented in higher level positions in Hungary. Among these five media outlets, three currently lack any women on their management boards.

Share of articles authored by women in Hungary (arranged by outlet)



Share of articles authored by women in Hungary (arranged by theme)





Poland

The share of articles authored by women in Poland sits at 42% but varied widely in the analysed period.

Female authorship ranked highest at Interia (58%) and GW (48%) – these were followed by WP (43%) and Rzeczpospolita (35%). The most influential medium Onet, meanwhile, boasted the smallest percentage of women authors (29%). These publications across the different

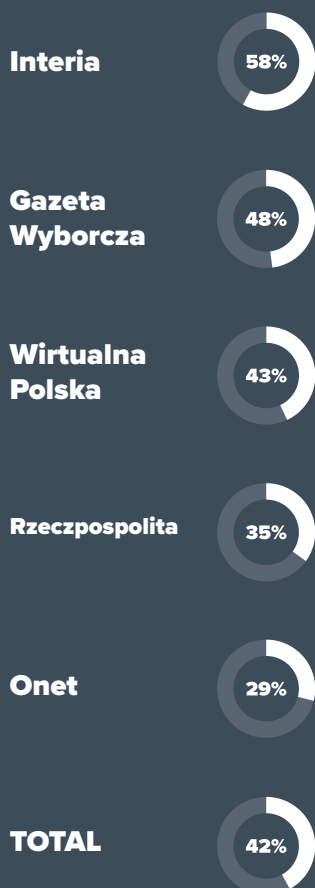
outlets were overwhelmingly oriented towards politics, economics, legal affairs, and health.¹³

The five media outlets, furthermore, display the “glass ceiling” phenomenon, with men filling all executive editor positions. Rzeczpospolita’s three deputy editors are also all men and so too are eight of its nine section heads (the legal section is the only exception).

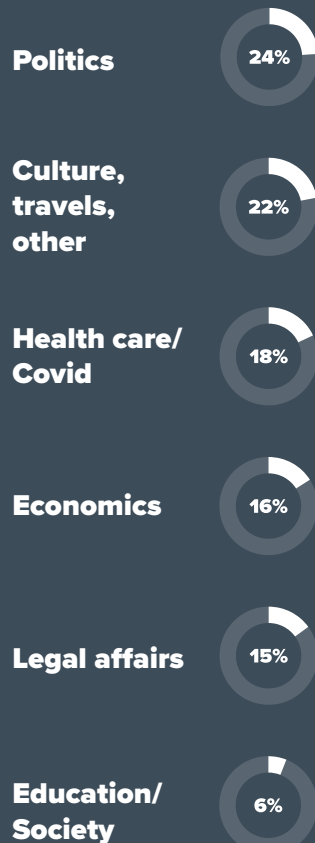
GW¹⁴, for its part, features only one female deputy editor (of six total) and five women as section heads (out of 14 sections altogether). According to EIGE, all management boards are dominated by men: RASP (Onet) at 100%, Interia at 100%, Gremi Media (Rzeczpospolita) at 100%, Wirtualna Polska Holding at 75%, and Agora S.A. (GW) at 60%.

Two of six analysed issues of GW saw women take the role of lead editor – these two releases (January 11th and 14th) coincided also with the highest percentage of articles written by women authors. No similar pattern was discerned with respect to Rzeczpospolita (where a woman only once served as lead editor) though. The media outlet staff are also dominated by men, with 36 men and 16 women journalists based at Onet (News) and the wider discrepancy of 27 men and 7 women editors.¹⁵ Interia Wiadomości (News) and Interia Biznes (Business), meanwhile, listed 30 men and 18 women as authors on the website. The organisation charts for other media outlets are not publicly accessible, a decision that raises questions regarding media transparency and accountability when it comes to gender parity.

Share of articles authored by women in Poland (arranged by outlet)



Share of articles authored by women in Poland (arranged by theme)



¹³ One reason could be related to the fact that the print editions of Rzeczpospolita and GW advance a strong focus on these issues. Moreover, the leading topics during the week screened included the use of Pegasus spyware in Poland against the opposition, the implementation of the “Polish Deal” (an economic programme for recovery from the pandemic) and the deteriorating Covid-19 situation.

¹⁴ https://wyborcza.pl/centrumpomocygw/0,134959.html?gclid=Cj0KCQiArt6PBhCoARIsAMF5waguelVpA8KrUK9wilju-1ZmRuPcDG-2bOjXaHdgHLZit3jvMSigejDwaAgjAEALw_wcB&disableRedirects=true

¹⁵ <https://wiadomosci.onet.pl/autorzy>



Slovakia

An overall 51% of all authored articles published by Slovak media outlets analysed herein were written by women.

A wide range of gender ratios were displayed related to publishing. Pravda (75%) and Hospodárske Noviny (60%) stand out in boasting majority female authorship. By contrast, SME (42%), Aktuality.sk (40%), and Denník N (39%) share fewer articles written by women.

This general parity, however, is not mirrored within all thematic areas.

Women mostly cover issues associated with culture and

society – these topics amount to 30% of all articles, opinion pieces, and other contributions written by women. The umbrella term encompasses literature, lifestyle, education, family life, architecture, municipal public policy, interviews with non-political figures, and issues concerning minorities and gender-based violence. The next largest category of coverage by women included government related developments (29%) such as parliamentary affairs and corruption cases. The public health category sits third (22%) incorporating public health broadly defined and the COVID-19 pandemic. The

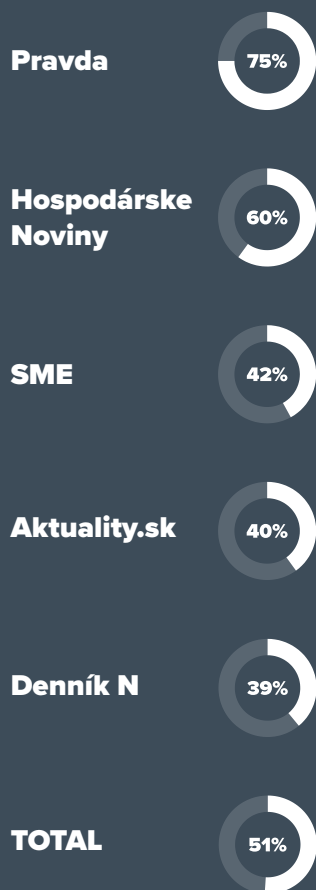
areas of international affairs (7%), economics and finance (6%), climate change and sustainability (5%), and science and technology (2%) made up a considerably smaller share of articles penned by women. These topics, moreover, saw greater male publication dominance.

“I believe Slovakia has many influential women voices in the media whether it is on-line, print, television or radio. Their representation is relatively balanced overall. However, there are fewer women in decision-making positions.”

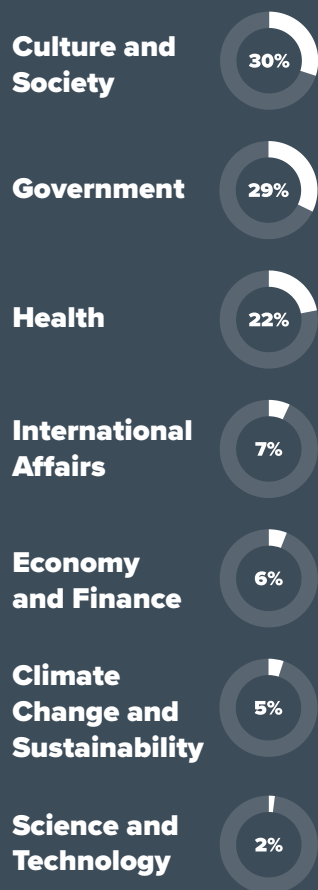
(Michaela Žureková, SME, 2022)

Organisational data from media platforms where this information is available (SME, Denník N, Pravda) reveal that women make up 46% of all journalists. This figure remains the same when it comes to the share of women in publishing. Only 15% of top management and editor-in-chief positions are held by women, however, underlining the powerful decision-making powers that men enjoy at these institutions.

Share of articles authored by women in Slovakia
(arranged by outlet)



Share of articles authored by women in Slovakia
(arranged by theme)



Barriers and positive developments for women in media

Barriers

While this report is primarily focused on women's representation, this issue is only one component of gender (in)equality in the media. Multiple barriers, notably, recurred across all researched countries.

“I have often received “bullying” comments that referred to my femininity. My male colleagues also receive such disgusting letters, but these are less concerned about their ‘blondness’ or their looks.”

(Veronika Munk, Telex, 2022)

Harassment and Bullying

According to a Reuters Institute for Study Journalism poll, 65% of all surveyed journalists in Central and Eastern Europe reported they had been threatened or harassed in their professional work. More than 83% of these respondents said the attacks had occurred online and just over half reported offline abuse. Female journalists, who are often the primary

victims of attacks, indeed disproportionately affirmed that they had been subject to abuse. In the CE region particularly, women journalists are more likely to be judged based on their physical appearance and attacked in highly sexualised terms.¹⁶

“There was more feedback from readers that I, as a woman, don’t understand a topic or I’m stupid or something. But that wasn’t because I was a journalist. Simply, these people think that in any profession, if a woman speaks, she will never be as legitimate as a man”

(Ildikó D. Kovács, 24.hu, 2022)

The politicisation of the media sector should be also considered as a factor compounding these processes (especially in the CE region). The press has become a constant political target. The potentially dangerous nature of the profession further hinders progress on inclusivity.

Insufficient social security benefit guarantees

The journalism profession provides insufficient social security benefit guarantees, with long-term contracts and full-time employment difficult to obtain. Many journalists rather are forced to work as freelancers, a precarious arrangement that enables employers to seamlessly terminate cooperation at any moment of their choosing. This job insecurity can be particularly challenging for single mothers and influence their professional choices. Some interviewed journalists suggested that

16 https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2020-01/MSelva-Journalism_Under_Assault_FINAL_0.pdf

mothers are often given a cold shoulder during job interviews and are less welcomed after maternity leave. The frantic pace of daily newspapers demands generally availability and flexibility, a condition that poses an obstacle when the burden of domestic work and childcare is placed solely on women.

Inflexible work, which is inherently a part of journalism, makes the field difficult for women, as the ad hoc nature of the industry is the complete opposite of what most women are seeking, keeping in mind the double shift they work at home (social reproduction and child/elderly care).

(Veronika Munk, Telex, 2022)

Cultural norms and expectations

The media sector is still treated like a man's world - top management are predominantly men and cultural norms and expectations can hinder many women from questioning the status quo. Women are often pigeonholed into topics perceived as less important and as "soft" issues, a finding underscored in research conducted as part of this report. Male journalists, by contrast,

overwhelmingly report on international affairs, economics, finance, and especially science and technology. The underrepresentation of women in media circles reflects broader societal patterns that have seen women also underrepresented in high-skilled jobs in finance, trade, technology, and science. This conclusion aligns with GLOBSEC's 2021 Report on Absent Voices: Missing Female Perspective in CEE. The media is not immune to the vicious cycle of women's underrepresentation; greater attention must be placed on the diversification of reporting methods.¹⁷

Generation Gap

As one journalist pointed out, regional media outlets are particularly laggards on gender equity. Generational differences were also mentioned as a potential barrier. But change could be underway, with young women in the profession typically bolder and more outspoken than their older colleagues and male counterparts becoming more open to women covering topics reserved "traditionally" for men.

"Mentoring is important, to have experts in the field who are willing to embrace and pave the way for their younger colleagues."

(Veronika Munk, Telex, 2022)

"From my experience, I know that you should accept invitations to interviews, programs and conduct and organize debates yourself, not counting that the situation will change by itself. Young women and girls should also be encouraged to be more audacious in the media and educated about self-presentation."

(Sylwia Chutnik, Writer and Activist, 2022)

Internship programmes could provide a vehicle for integrating a new generation into the media industry but they are currently few in number. Although some newspapers have started offering internships, young journalists are impeded by generally limited opportunities.

17 <https://www.globsec.org/publications/ceeher-report-absent-voices-missing-women's-perspective-in-cee/>



Positive developments and best practices

Not all is bad news - some initiatives have been developed that are aimed at overcoming barriers and promoting gender equality in the media sector.

Databases

Two Polish databases, Ekspertki and Znane ekspertki, have spotlighted female experts for years. The platforms aim to enhance women's participation in media discussions. The CEEHer tool from Slovakia (but covering the entire Central and Eastern Europe region), AMO's Database of Women Experts in Czechia (#Ženyjsou) and The Brussels Binder at the European level all promote a wide range of female experts in different areas globally.

Gender-balanced content algorithm

RASP (Onet), based in Poland, initiated the Equal Voices project that deploys an algorithm to measure the extent to which their own publications are gender-balanced. RASP also plans to implement the project in its publications offered on the Slovak, Hungarian, and Serbian markets.¹⁸

Calling out sexist and gender stereotypes

The Czech campaign, Sexistické prasatečko (Sexist Piggy), has sought to raise awareness concerning sexism and gender stereotypes. The project, for example, scrutinizes Czech advertisements for sexist elements and then empowers the public vote on the most sexist one. The initiative thereby helps reveal Czech perceptions about sexism and gender inequality. It also facilitates mapping and comparing the development of public attitudes on the issue.



18 https://www.ringieraxel-springer.com/press_room/women-more-visible-in-media-ringier-axel-springer-polska-launches-the-equal-voice-initiative/

Recommendations

Gender inequality is a problem that affects all of society and nearly every industry. Gender pay gaps and gender-based discrimination and harassment still typify European media companies. The achievement of women's emancipation remains unfulfilled. But some recommendations, if heeded, could lead to swifter and more effective inclusion in the media sector both in CE and in Europe.

General recommendations include media campaigns, targeted legislation at the EU and national levels, online databases with women experts and journalists (who otherwise appear less frequently in media coverage), training courses on gender-sensitive content, anti-harassment practices directed at media professionals from the bottom to the highest organisational levels, and relevant gender-sensitive data collection. But more specifically:

More women authors, journalists, and experts in the media

- ▶ Advocating for more women journalists and the guarantee of safe working spaces for these employees.

- ▶ Adapting working structures, norms, and practices to provide an inclusive environment for women.

- ▶ Applying, where necessary, gender quotas (this approach has proven to be an effective temporary solution towards addressing gender imbalances). This is particularly pertinent when it comes to managerial, board, and decision-making positions and topical areas where women voices are underrepresented (economics and finance, international affairs, and science and technology).

- ▶ Expanding and further developing initiatives related to traineeships, mentorships, and networking for women aimed at assisting and supporting women in overcoming systemic entry barriers and disadvantages in the media sector and facilitating their promotion to more senior levels.

- ▶ Implementing monitoring mechanisms to ensure the enforcement of gender equality, mapping gender equality progress in the media, and introducing better collection of sex and gender disaggregated data pertaining to content and proportions of articles written by women.

- ▶ Fostering greater use of databases that promote women experts and contributors to cover topics where editorial office diversity is lacking.

- ▶ Effective and swift responses to gender inequality on digital media platforms as they constantly evolve and expand.

Diversifying content and language for a more diverse audience

- ▶ Using gender-sensitive language and refraining from the use of gender stereotypes and sexist language and visuals.
- ▶ Raising awareness and incorporating the business case for more gender equal and diverse workforces in media outlets – this change will contribute to more compelling media content that appeals to a broader range of consumers.
- ▶ Setting internal benchmarks such as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with a specific number of articles and other content focused on women's expertise and perspectives.
- ▶ Diversifying content and expanding traditional sections heeding the role that women may serve in filling these gaps (e.g. focusing more on often overlooked environmental issues in the region).

Legal protections against harassment, gender-based violence, and bullying

- ▶ Enforcing internal surveys and binding codes of conduct and trainings related to gender-based discrimination and inequality, sexual harassment, bullying, and implicit bias. These latter practices additionally detrimentally affect media content. Legal consequences should follow any violations and not result in undue career risks for women.
- ▶ Strengthening journalist trade unions to improve social security and enhance the protection of employee rights including those of women.
- ▶ Confronting gender-based violence in the media sector and developing a viable support system for women who find themselves facing virtual or physical harassment.

Inclusive working conditions for all

- ▶ Enacting sufficient provisions and ensuring adequate conditions for parents with childcare responsibilities – these may include social security, permanent contracts, and flexible arrangements for parents.
- ▶ Introducing changes to content publishing during weekends to reduce pressure on all authors and enable both men and women to devote time to their families and domestic duties.
- ▶ Improving the transparency of the staff organisational charts of media companies, the recruitment process, and work contracts.

“As a journalist, I feel like I can help the situation by promoting other women in my stories. Female experts must be quoted across the disciplinary spectrum, not only regarding fashion or raising children. It’s not only about us, female reporters, but also about other female experts, scholars or other authorities who need space to raise their voices.”

(Kristina Bohmer, Denník N, 2022)

Methodology

The report focuses on four CE countries: Czechia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. Data was collected through fieldwork, interviews, and existing research.

Fieldwork involved the screening of five media portals in each country ranked based on their viewership and citation records and ensuring an appropriate balance between different parts of the political spectrum.

The media outlet analysis was conducted through a seven-day screening period (the period was selected during the timeframe of January 10th-23rd, 2022). The research was concentrated on ascertaining the share of articles authored by women, the topics (not) garnering coverage by female journalists, and the relative placement of women within the organisational structures of media outlets including at the highest echelons.

The articles were divided into different news topics including: international affairs; internal affairs and government; health; culture and society; climate change and sustainability; economics and finance; and science and technology. Considering that many of the analysed media outlets feature anonymous articles, the share of publications written by women is calculated only compared to all texts where the author's name is provided.

The organisational structures of the identified outlets were retrieved through open sources and written requests. Not all organisational staff charts could be scrutinized due to a lack of transparency in some cases.

All data was complemented by contributions from women journalists from the CE region.

Czechia

Duration of fieldwork:
17-23 January 2022

Media outlets screened:

- ▶ Aktuálně
- ▶ CNN/Pima News
- ▶ Deník N
- ▶ iDnes
- ▶ Seznam Zprávy

Hungary

Duration of fieldwork:
10-16 January 2022

Media outlets screened:

- ▶ 24.hu
- ▶ Telex
- ▶ Index
- ▶ 444.hu
- ▶ Magyar Nemzet

Poland

Duration of fieldwork:
10-16 January 2022

Media outlets screened:

- ▶ Onet,
- ▶ Wirtualna Polska (WP)
- ▶ Rzeczpospolita
- ▶ Gazeta Wyborcza (GW)
- ▶ Interia

Slovakia

Duration of fieldwork:
10-16 January 2022

Media outlets screened:

- ▶ Aktuality.sk
- ▶ Denník N
- ▶ Hospodárske Noviny
- ▶ Pravda
- ▶ SME

**“As a woman in the media:
trust in your abilities and use
opportunities you are given
find your own journalistic area of
interest and focus on it thoroughly
don’t be afraid to bring different
perspectives than the others
don’t be afraid to speak up if you
believe you are treated unfair
use your voice to bring awareness
to specific women’s problems –
whether it is health issue, impact of
political decisions on their lives or
violating their human rights”**

(Michaela Žureková, SME, 2022)

