

Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine

GUIDELINES

on Media Coverage of Gender Equality;
Prevention of Violence, Sexism,
and Gender Stereotypes



Kyiv-2023

These Guidelines on Media Coverage of Gender Equality; Prevention of Violence, Sexism, and Gender Stereotypes were approved by the Order of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine No. 333 of June 16, 2023.

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The following organizations have been involved in the preparation and/or validation of the Guidelines: Center for Democratic Reforms and Media, the National Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine, the Commission on Journalistic Ethics, the Association of Women Lawyers in Ukraine JurFem, Information and Consulting Women’s Center, Volyn Press Club, Gender in Detail, Legal Hundred, Ukrainian Institute for Media and Communication, Regional Press Development Institute, Povaha Campaign against Sexism in Media and Politics, Bureau of Gender Strategies and Budgeting, Transformation Communications Activity by USAID, International Media Support (IMS).

The National Council of Ukraine on Television and Radio Broadcasting has also provided its opinions and suggestions.



Photo from the cover by Anastasia Mantach, Public Broadcasting

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I.
General provisions

The Guidelines on Media Coverage of Gender Equality; Prevention of Violence, Sexism, and Gender Stereotypes (hereinafter — the Guidelines) have been developed to ensure the implementation of the Concept for Communication in the Field of Gender Equality, approved by the Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1128-r of September 16, 2020, and the implementation of the Action Plan for the Concept for Communication in the Field of Gender Equality, approved by the Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 79-r of January 27, 2023.

GOAL

The Guidelines have been developed to increase the level of society and the media's understanding of gender equality principles in content produced; to introduce gender-sensitive indicators that will influence the formation of a positive image of a woman leader devoid of established stereotypes; and to ensure that the media use common approaches and tools to create zero tolerance for violence, including gender-based violence.

FOR WHOM

These Guidelines are available to journalists and other media actors, regardless of their form of ownership and method of information dissemination, to help them consider gender aspects in their activities.

IN THESE GUIDELINES, THE TERMS ARE USED WITH THE FOLLOWING MEANINGS:

gender



means socially assigned roles, behavior, activities, and characteristics that society considers appropriate for women and men, girls and boys;

gender stereotypes



are traditional, generalized, stable ideas about women and men, models of their behavior, character traits, appearance, which encapsulate the understanding of “masculine” and “feminine” as a norm in our minds;

gender awareness



is the ability to look at society in terms of gender roles, and understand their impact on the needs of women and men;

gender sensitivity



is the ability to perceive and recognize existing gender differences, identify gender discrimination, sexism, and inequality in society, and take these aspects into account in strategies and actions aimed at overcoming negative phenomena and ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men;

gender-based violence



is violence committed against persons because of their sex or because of customs or traditions prevalent in society (stereotypical ideas about the social functions (position, responsibilities, etc.) of women and men), or acts that affect mainly persons of a certain sex;

sexism



is any discriminatory behavior (in the form of an action, word, image, or gesture) based on gender;

conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV)¹



is rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, forced sterilization, forced marriage and other forms of sexual violence of various degrees that are directly or indirectly related to armed conflict and committed against women, men, girls and / or boys.

Other terms are used in the meanings provided in the Laws of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men,” “On Media,” and other regulatory acts.

An analysis of the current situation regarding media coverage of gender equality, prevention of violence, sexism, and gender stereotypes is provided in Annex 1; brief information on regulations and other documents that define the principles of state policy on gender equality in the media is provided in Annex 2.

1 The definition of the CRSV used is from the UN Secretary-General’s report (March 2022), Section 1, paragraph 4, digitallibrary.un.org/record/3967573



II.

Using gender-sensitive indicators in the media

**TRUE DEMOCRACY
REQUIRES EQUAL
PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN
AND MEN IN PUBLIC LIFE.**



Democracy and gender equality are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The involvement of women and men based on equal rights and opportunities is an important prerequisite for democratic governance and sound decision-making. Gender equality means the balanced presence, authority, responsibility, and participation of both women and men in all spheres of public life, including the media. Achieving gender equality is a prerequisite for achieving social justice. This is not only in the interests of women, but it also concerns society as a whole.

While significant progress can be noted in the media's coverage of gender equality issues both in terms of amount and quality, in particular due to civil society and international organizations raising awareness among journalists, this issue requires further systematic work.

Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine has revealed difficulties in ethical media coverage of CRSV cases. Instead of discussing the problem, the media focuses on the stories of the survivors and the suffering they have experienced. This approach to media coverage is harmful to survivors of CRSV and other forms of sexual violence, leading to re-traumatization of survivors and silencing the concern.

IN THE MEDIA, GENDER EQUALITY OPERATES ON TWO LEVELS:



equality within media companies

(equal opportunities and treatment, equal access to leadership positions, equal pay)



equality in media content

(maintaining a gender balance, avoiding spreading gender stereotypes and sexism)

To achieve gender equality in media content and within media companies, it is advisable to take into account gender-sensitive indicators for media (GSIM) developed under the auspices of UNESCO.

A. GENDER BALANCE IN MEDIA COMPANIES



A.2.1. Gender balance at decision-making level

Indicators

01

Proportion of women in ownership, business management and board positions;

02

Proportion of women holding leadership positions within the media (editors-in-chief, editors, heads of department, heads of desks);

03

Cyclical review and reporting on actions to ensure gender balance at decision-making levels;

04

Effective equal opportunity policies with comprehensive implementing measures, targets, timeline, and monitoring mechanisms;

05

Measures/policies adopted for the enhancement of women's and men's work (e.g., part-time employment to help people combine work with parenthood);

06

Specific budget within the media company to support comprehensive equal opportunity policies;

07

Publicity of policies on gender balance in decision-making, which means that such policies should be published in writing and publicly disclosed;

08

Efforts of the media company to raise awareness of the equal opportunities policies among its employees, with regular reporting at various levels.

A.2.2. Gender equality in work and working conditions: equal treatment and recognition of the abilities of women and men in the workplace

Indicators

01

Existence of gender desk or gender mainstreaming officer(s) for monitoring and evaluation of gender equality in the workplace;

02

Awareness among staff members that the gender desk or gender mainstreaming officer(s) exists to address concerns of both women and men;

03

Existence of systems for monitoring and evaluation of gender equality in the workplace in the media company;

04

Proportions of women and men working in media organization sections (e.g., according to newsroom and production) and at all levels (junior, middle, and top management);

05

Existence of media policies securing equal treatment with respect to general working conditions/environment and rights, including wages and promotion opportunities;

06

Cyclical reviews and reporting on equal wages and promotion rates of women and men;

07

Equal and transparent recruitment practices (e.g., all interview panels should be gender-balanced, gender officer involved in the recruitment process/program of the organization at some point);

08

Existence of a collective agreement or a similar document securing equal treatment between women and men;

09

Alignment of all gender equality related policies to relevant articles of CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) such as Article 2, 4, 10, 11, etc.;

10

Existence and implementation of gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) in the media company;

11

Existence and publicity of human resources policies on gender, including on equal treatment;

12

Proportions of men and women producing or reporting various news subjects (e.g., sports, politics and armed conflicts);

13

Specific actions to increase the percentage of women who produce or report various news subjects where it is low (e.g. quotas);

14

Cyclical review and reporting on actions to increase women's involvement (e.g., producing or reporting) in all news subjects;

15

Applying an intersectional approach when collecting and analyzing data on the media company's employees, for example, taking into account disability, age, ethnicity and other characteristics.

A.2.3. Safe working environment for women and men

Indicators

01

Existence of facilities taking into account the different needs of women and men (including safe transport after late night duty for women, separate toilets for women, safety equipment for women covering war zones, such as bulletproof vests made with women's anatomy in mind);

02

Existence and implementation of comprehensive prevention, complaints, support, and redress system with regard to sexual harassment and bullying in the workplace;

03

Alignment of media policies to relevant articles of CEDAW concerning safe working environment for women and men and actions taken to address gaps.



A.2.4. Equal pay

Indicators

01

Comparative wages of women and men media professionals for work of equal value, type, and scope;

02

Transparent pay scale within the media company, using the same criteria to determine pay structure for men and women;

03

Transparent pay audits on an annual basis;

04

Cyclical internal evaluation of wages;

05

Cyclical external evaluation of wages;

06

Staff / collective agreements provisions securing equal pay for women and men.



A.2.5. Work-life balance

Indicators

01

Existence and implementation of flexible working arrangements for women and men;

02

Collective agreements or other documents providing for flexible working arrangements for women and men;

03

Policies on paid maternity / paternity leave;

04

Availability and accessibility of assistive childcare means in the workplace.



A.2.6 Media organizations promote ethical codes / editorial policies in favor of gender equality in media content

Indicators

01

Integration of gender awareness into media practices through the adoption of policies and initiatives to encourage gender-sensitive journalists and other creative / technical staff contributing to media content production;

02

Existence of (written) gender policy with specific reference to media practices (such as sourcing);

03

Using existing (e.g., “Ask a Woman” database of women experts by the Povaha Campaign Against Sexism in Politics and Media) or creating in-house gender-sensitive reports / guides / reference books on women experts in various subject areas;

04

Media companies’ awareness of organizations that can offer a gender perspective on various topics, etc., to help journalists avoid sexism and accept gender sensitivity as a basic component of professional practice;

05

Familiarization of professional staff of the media company, including editors and management, with the gender and diversity policies, the code of ethics, and relevant supporting guidelines, their acceptance and practical use;

06

Organization or facilitation of training programs / seminars to familiarize professional staff with relevant resources, such as gender policies and the gender-sensitive code of ethics, and help them integrate gender awareness into media practice;

07

Availability of gender-disaggregated lists of participants in such training / seminars;



08

Cyclical internal monitoring of media content to measure the effectiveness and evaluate the results of measures such as the media company's gender policy and the effectiveness of training programs / seminars;

09

Internal mechanisms to provide the public with a platform for complaints and criticism regarding gender equality issues in the content produced, for example, in the form of an ombudsman (readers' editor), as well as ensuring that the public is informed about this mechanism or the possibility to apply to the Commission on Journalistic Ethics;

10

Publishing a gender policy and reporting regularly to the public on the media company's response to complaints;

11

Promotion of gender disaggregated data / statistics in journalistic content.

B. GENDER BALANCE IN MEDIA CONTENT



B.2.1. Balanced presence of women and men — reflecting the composition of society, and human experiences, actions, views, and concerns, in media coverage of news and current affairs

Indicators

01

Proportions of women and men seen, heard or read about in news and current affairs content over a random selection of one day, week, or month;

02

Proportions of women and men directly interviewed/quoted in news and current affairs content as sources of information and / or opinion;

03

Proportion of women and men in the news appearing as:

- spokespersons
- experts
- citizens / civil society representatives;

04

Proportion of external or societal orientation of women and men seen, heard or read about in news and current affairs content including image (e.g., work-related rather than home-related, relationship-related rather than family relationship-related);

05

Proportions of women and men seen, heard or read about in news and current affairs content disaggregated according to various characteristics (e.g., representatives of the Roma community, people with disabilities, IDPs, people from rural areas, etc.);

06

Proportions of women and men seen, heard or read about and / or interviewed / quoted as sources of information / opinion in news and current affairs content differentiated according to thematic areas such as:

- politics and government
- economy and business
- war and the army
- science and technology
- sports
- culture
- education
- other;

07

Percentage of stories focusing centrally / specifically on women and / or issues of special relevance / concern to women in news and other content (e.g. gender-based violence, women's rights, women's political engagement, etc.)

08

Proportion of time/space and prominence (in respect to prime-time or peak hours, front page or feature story) given to stories featuring women as sources of information / opinion and / or focusing centrally on women or issues of special relevance / concern to women in news and other content.

B.2.2. Fair portrayal of women and men through elimination of stereotypes and promotion of multidimensional representation / portrayal

Indicators

01

Proportions of stories with stereotypes (openly sexist interpretations of the characteristics and roles of women and men in society);

02

Proportions of stories with stereotypes (depiction of traditional “feminine” / “masculine” characteristics and male / female roles, thereby making them appear normal and inevitable while excluding other possible traits and functions for men and women in society);

03

Proportions of women to men portrayed as victims (e.g., of crime, disaster, etc.);

04

Percentage of stories that include multidimensional representation / portrayal of men and women (indicating journalistic effort to challenge / counter gender-based stereotypes);

05

Percentage of stories that contain sexist language used by reporters or broadcasters, except in case of direct quote from a source and disclaimer with a warning about unacceptable content. (i.e., indicative of bias, discrimination, or stereotyping based on sex or gender role);

06

The proportion of feminine noun forms used to refer to a profession, position, or type of occupation when speaking about women.

B.2.3. Coverage of gender equality and equity issues as an important and integral part of the media's acknowledged role as a watchdog of society

Indicators

01

Percentage of stories focusing on issues of gender equality / inequality (stories about specific cases of equality or inequality between women and men, relevant policies, legislative issues, programs designed to protect and promote human rights, women's rights and gender equality);

02

Percentage of stories highlighting gender equality / inequality aspects of events and issues (including politics & government, economics & business, war & conflict, crime, violence/atrocity, poverty, science & technology, sports, etc.);

03

Percentage of time or space and prominence (in respect to prime-time or peak hours, front page or feature story), as compared to other stories, given to stories highlighting gender-related issues or drawing out the gender aspects of events or issues.

B.2.4. Evidence of gender consciousness in different types of editorial content (e.g., reporting, editing, commentary, features, documentaries, interviews, talk shows, etc.) **and across the spectrum of subject-areas** (politics & governance, economics & business, science & technology, etc.) **and content categories / sections** (e.g., news pages, edit/op-ed page, business section, sports section, etc.).

Indicators

01

Percentage of such stories on the front page or during prime-time bulletins, on the editorial or op-ed pages, in columns, studio discussions / interviews, features / documentaries, talk shows, etc.

02

Percentage of stories on gender-related issues or gender aspects of events/issues in subject areas such as politics (including election coverage), economics & business, science & technology, rural development, sports, etc.

03

Percentage of stories that include gender-disaggregated data on such events or issues.

B.2.5. Evidence of accurate and holistic understanding of gender-based violence in all its forms as an internationally recognized violation of human rights (ref. UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, 1993), the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention, 2011), and other legal documents

Indicators

01

Using non-judgmental language, avoiding accusations of survivors in the offenses or crimes committed against them, avoidance of victimization

For example avoiding expressions like:

- ✘ “it’s her fault”
- ✘ “she provoked”
- ✘ “she asked for it”
- ✘ “that’s because she was dressed like that”
- ✘ “why did she go there”

02

Distinguishing between consensual sexual activity and criminal acts

Avoiding phrases such as:

- ✘ “fulfillment of marital duties”
- ✘ “courtship”
- ✘ “attention”
- ✘ “expression of feelings”



03

Using acceptable terminology

(e.g., “survivor” “person who has experienced traumatic experience”, “person who has suffered from violence” rather than “victim” unless the violence-affected person uses the latter term or has not survived);

04

Using background information and statistics to present gender-based violence as a societal problem rather than as an individual, personal tragedy or part of a criminal record;

05

Inclusion of local contact information for support organizations and services, i.e., hotlines, crisis rooms, shelters available to persons affected by domestic and gender-based violence;

06

Proportion of time or space and prominence given to stories on gender-based violence in relation to other stories.

THE FOLLOWING CAN SERVE AS A MEANS OF VERIFYING GENDER INDICATORS:

Mapping of workplaces, indicating women in leadership positions, both internally (including trade unions) and based on the results of external audits;

Personnel records related to recruitment, job descriptions, personnel records on the use of leave, etc.;

Internal assessment of policies, procedures, conditions for equal treatment of staff;

External assessment of policies, procedures, conditions, and other audit reports;

Staff surveys on the working environment;

Gender-disaggregated pay and promotion rates;

Policy against sexual harassment and bullying;



Number of complaints and their successful resolution;

Lists of participants in training courses (ratio of women to men);

Interviews with leaders and members of trade unions / associations;

Surveys on the prevalence of written organizational policies, codes of ethics, manuals, gender media practices in the organization;

Surveys or organizational records on the availability of training programs / seminars on gender equality in the media company;

Gender-disaggregated analysis or monitoring of news and other content retrieved from media archives or independent research conducted by stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations;

Application of the rule of inversion (the so-called “mirror rule”) or role reversal (to help illustrate the meaning of the stereotype);

Assessment reports and / or assessment of news content and current affairs by managers, editors and / or journalists and other media professionals.

The state of gender equality in the media at the national and regional levels needs to be regularly assessed and monitored based on acceptable indicators. The process should involve non-governmental organizations. Gender equality indicators should be regularly updated in response to new challenges.

III.

**Recommendations
for media coverage
of gender equality
issues, prevention
of sexism and gender
stereotypes**

Gender equality provides for the equal presence, power, responsibility, and participation of both women and men in all spheres of public life, including the media.

The media can both obstruct and accelerate structural changes aimed at achieving gender equality. This inequality becomes even more pronounced when it comes to the presence of women in media content, both in terms of quality and quantity.

It is important to promote a positive image of women as active participants in social, economic, and political life. It is about meaningful participation of women as experts, which requires giving them the floor, instead of talking about women indirectly or mentioning them only in passing.

Journalists and other media actors should present information with a balanced representation of women and men, making efforts to find women experts in those areas where women are unfairly underrepresented, such as the military, army, politics, economics, etc., and not mainly in education, culture, and the arts.



The media are advised to avoid commenting on the appearance of women and men (e.g., focusing on their clothes, hairstyle, makeup, or asking if they have time for family, housekeeping, etc.), as well as inappropriate focus on gender and age in the performance of their professional duties. They are also advised to avoid disseminating content that promotes or may promote the sexualization and / or objectification of women and men, i.e., the process of treating a person or portraying a person as a sexual object that serves solely for the sexual gratification of others.

The media should avoid outdated stereotypical images of women, such as “home keeper woman”, “barbie” or “woman is the weaker sex representative”. Norms of behavior, appearance, or certain professions do not depend on gender.



It is inappropriate to refer to women through the lens of a famous husband, as well as to spread stereotypical images of femininity and masculinity in relation to women and men.

It is recommended to pay more attention to the topics of women’s rights, gender equality, domestic violence, sexual violence, including CRSV, implementation of the Istanbul Convention, representation of women in politics, sports, military professions, and the processes of restoration of Ukraine.

Visualizations (illustrations or photographs) are an important component of publications. They can reinforce the written text, and thus either promote the principles of equality or broadcast gender stereotypes.

It is not necessary to emphasize gender, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity, nationality or race, citizenship, disability, social status, marital status of women and men, unless it is an essential, substantive component of the material.

It is recommended to use the acceptable terminology and feminine noun forms to increase the visibility of women’s full participation in social processes.

When covering the topic of domestic violence, it is necessary to distinguish and inform the audience about different forms of violence: physical, sexual, psychological, and economic.



**SHOW ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE
IN CONTENT, REMEMBERING THAT
THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR VIOLENCE LIES
ONLY WITH THE ABUSER, NOT THE SURVIVOR**

Efforts should be made to reduce excessive sensationalism in the presentation of information: do not use stereotypical headlines, do not accompany the text with shocking photos or illustrations.

It is worth emphasizing the fact of the crime committed, not its details and the emotions of the survivors, taking care of their confidentiality, and considering the risks of repeated traumatization. Be sure to include contacts and addresses of assistance to survivors, and accompany materials with professional comments from human rights organizations and experts.

Responsible journalism can help to highlight a problem or phenomenon, while negligent reporting on sensitive topics, such as war-related sexual violence, can exacerbate the situation and put survivors at additional risk.



On June 25, 2010, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) adopted Resolution 1751 (2010) and Recommendation 1931 (2010), both of which are entitled “**Combating Sexist Stereotypes in the Media**”.

The resolution notes and deplores the fact that women are affected by sexist stereotypes in the media. They are underrepresented and subject to persistent gender stereotypes in the media based on roles traditionally assigned by society. This creates a barrier to gender equality, resulting in a negative impact on the formation of public opinion and the justification of the use of gender-based violence.





IN THIS CONTEXT,
**THE MEDIA HAVE
A SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY
TO PROMOTE EQUALITY
BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN,**
AND THEREFORE THE MEDIA
CAN PLAY A POSITIVE ROLE
IN COMBATING THE SPREAD
OF GENDER STEREOTYPES.

THEREFORE, IT IS ABSOLUTELY
ESSENTIAL TO LEARN HOW
TO RECOGNIZE, UNDERSTAND,
AND OVERCOME SUCH
STEREOTYPES.

It is important that the Gender Monitoring Methodology developed by Ukrainian scholars and scientists in cooperation with the National Council on Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine pays significant attention to the content and structure of gender stereotypes and clarification of their potentially negative impact on the audience.

In order to achieve the goals of raising awareness and understanding of society in the context of gender equality, media actors should pay more attention to the practical verification of gender stereotypes, which will help improve their performance in terms of content quality.

This methodology provides a substantive understanding of gender stereotypes, manifestations of sexism, eroticization, objectification, face-ism, and machismo in media content, and how to conduct gender monitoring.



IV.

Recommendations for covering CRSV in the Ukrainian media

COVERING SEXUAL VIOLENCE IS ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGING TASKS IN JOURNALISM AND REQUIRES SERIOUS TRAINING

Sexual violence is a form of violence that has severe physical, psychological, social, and economic consequences for survivors and witnesses, and has a profound destabilizing effect on communities. Sexual violence in war against civilians is a war crime committed to achieve military objectives. It is used to intimidate, control and demoralize the local population.

Journalists and other media actors are advised to be guided by the **global code of conduct on the reporting and use of information on systemic and conflict-related sexual violence** ([the Murad Code](#)).

The Code sets out standards for the safe, effective and ethical collection and use of information on survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.



In particular, the overarching principles include:

Understand survivors as individuals.

This means that journalists should prioritize a survivor's safety, wellbeing, and dignity ahead of their objectives. Journalists are expected to work to understand the risks and repercussions to survivors and those around them which could arise from any contact with them. Such risks can include revictimization, reprisals, stigmatization, physical, online, information and communications safety risks, and legal risks;

Respect survivor control and autonomy.

This means that survivors are not to be contacted without prior warning. It is unacceptable to disseminate information about the testimony of survivors or witnesses of such crimes, including names, places and other details. A direct interview with a survivor should be avoided if there is a threat that it will contribute to re-traumatization. Instead, journalists can record interviews with survivors' service providers: psychologists, lawyers, social workers. Interviews should be conducted only with the express consent of the survivor and explanation of all potential risks and consequences. Survivors of sexual violence should be made clear that they pause or terminate any interaction with journalists at any time and decide not to answer any particular question. The media should respect a survivor's decision not to participate or continue;

Be responsible and have integrity.

This means not exploiting survivors of sexual violence for sensationalism. Journalists should not be extractive, instrumentalizing, exploitative, abusive, harassing or take advantage of survivors and their information;

Add value or don't do it.

This means taking into account that preparation for reporting such information is fundamental, knowing and understanding the contexts; gathering information from sources apart from survivors to avoid re-traumatization and risks to their safety; ensuring polite interaction, taking time and creating a comfortable space.

When covering complex and sensitive topics, the media should strike a balance between their right to publish socially important information, their responsibility to protect survivors, and the impact of such information on the audience.



The protocol of interaction with the media created by Sema Ukraine, an organization that unites women in Ukraine who have survived CRSV, is also worth mentioning. This protocol is based on the advice of the Media Engagement Protocol / Dr. Denis Mukwege Foundation, the Ukrainian experience in general and, in particular, the experience of survivors of CRSV in Ukraine. Among other things, the protocol states:

the media should be aware that survivors may face risks to themselves, their families, relatives, or acquaintances as a result of appearances in the media. Therefore, **journalists should always inform how photos, audio and / or video will be disseminated and for what purpose;**

journalists should make sure that survivors are informed that photographs and names may be made public and visible worldwide for an unlimited time. Therefore, **there should always be informed consent from survivors to disclose information that identifies them;**

journalists should ensure that **survivors fully understand the outcome of the disclosure.** Survivors should never be misled by assurances that media exposure guarantees a significant global response;

photographing / filming of survivors under the age of 18 is limited to rare exceptions and is possible only with the consent of parents or persons in loco parentis. The same concerns interviewing underage children. When publishing any materials depicting children, their faces and / or personal data that could identify them should be hidden;

survivors should **always be allowed to have a “third party” with them,** such as a staff member, friend, family member or other person they can trust during the interview;



journalists should always avoid judgmental language. For example, the words “sexual intercourse” should not be used when describing rape, assault or other forms of sexual violence. The word “victim” should be avoided, as it has a negative impact and adds a sense of despair. We can talk about survivors of traumatic events, survivors of CRSV. It is important to avoid direct or indirect accusations of those who experienced these traumatic events;

journalists have no right to put pressure on survivors to disclose information about their experience of violence;

journalists should ensure the comfort of survivors during interviews to avoid the risk of re-traumatization. Signs of re-traumatization include, for example, obvious emotional stress, crying, anxiety, detachment, passivity, and outbursts of anger. When such signs appear, it is necessary to show understanding, offer a break or terminate the interview, if necessary, with the consent of the survivors;

journalists should respect the right of survivors or their relatives present to terminate the interview.

V.

Self-regulation on gender equality in the media

Newsrooms, even in inclusive teams, often lack formalized policies on non-discrimination and gender equality. This is perceived as something understood by default. **However, the presence of written and transparent rules can serve not only as a way to resolve conflicts but also as a declaration of values. It is also a powerful signal to readers, viewers, and listeners that a particular outlet has zero tolerance for discrimination.**

Media actors should be encouraged to adopt self-regulatory measures, such as internal codes of conduct and ethics, internal oversight, development of broadcasting standards that promote gender equality, implementation of gender equality and non-discrimination policies in the workplace and in content, and regular training of their employees on gender awareness.

Such measures will promote proper internal policies in content production and aim to create an image of men and women devoid of stereotypes. They will help avoid sexist advertising, language and content that may lead to gender discrimination, as well as incitement to hatred or violence based on gender.

The Commission on Journalistic Ethics, as a self-regulatory body for journalists and editorial offices in Ukraine, can receive complaints, analyze them, initiate consideration of complaints related to sexism in the media, and prepare recommendations for the media to remove sexist content.

Good practices should be supported and promoted through dialogue and the development of networks and partnerships between media stakeholders to further combat sexism and gender stereotypes in the sector and promote gender equality.

Appendix 1

to the Guidelines on media coverage of gender equality, prevention of violence, manifestations of sexism and gender stereotypes

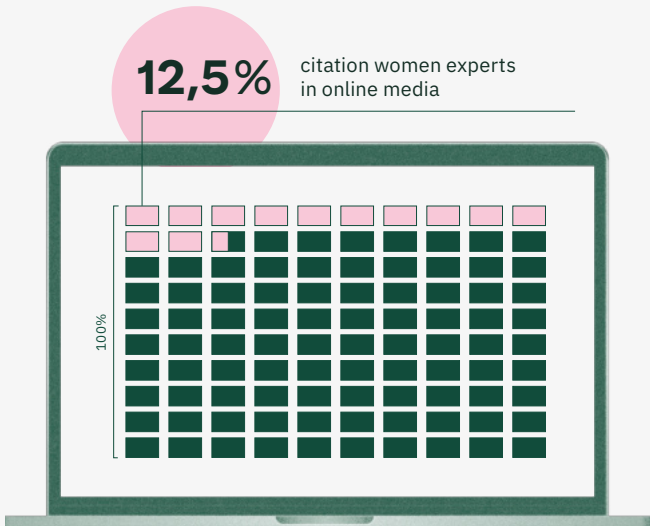
ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION REGARDING MEDIA COVERAGE OF GENDER EQUALITY, PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE, MANIFESTATIONS OF SEXISM AND GENDER STEREOTYPES

In the Ukrainian media, there are 2.5 times as many negative publications on gender equality as positive ones. This is evidenced by the study [“Gender Equality in the Ukrainian Media,”](#) conducted by the project “Povaha: Campaign against Sexism in Ukrainian Media and Politics” and the Semantrum AI platform of media analytics. In particular, among the entire array of publications, the main manifestations of negativity concerned the topic of “gender equality” and had characteristics of sexualization and objectification of women. There was also negativity regarding the subject of “women’s leadership” with stereotypes about gender roles and representation of women.



According to the monitoring of the observance of gender equality by TV and radio organizations, the National Council of Television and Radio Broadcasting found that in advertisements, women are often portrayed as nervous, preoccupied with everyday problems, for example, dirty dishes or uncleaned laundry. Instead, men act as experts in the private sphere of the home and family. **The distribution of roles is stereotypical as well: for women, the main social roles are family (77% of commercials), and for men – the professional field (23% of commercials).** When jobs are portrayed in advertising products, it is asymmetric in terms of gender: women’s work is subordinate, servicing, while men’s work is more typically presented as creative and leading. This leads to the consolidation of gender stereotypes.

Due to the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine and the war, the presence of women in the Ukrainian media has significantly decreased. A study conducted by the Institute of Mass Information (IMI) in Q4 of 2022 showed that on average, online media cite women experts in only 12.5% of materials.

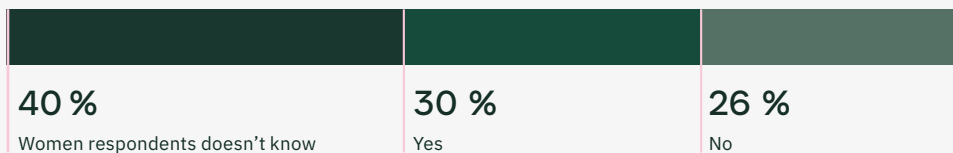


For IMI research, this is the lowest result since 2014. Women as protagonists are now mentioned in 33% of materials, while men are mentioned in 67% of online media materials. This may be due to the fact that at this time, the most popular subjects are defense and the military, where women experts are rarely represented.

Women in regional media mostly comment on education/science (45%), health, culture, social policy (41% each), and volunteer work (helping the military – 38%). On the other hand, men are invited as experts on political and military issues. These are the data of the monitoring of regional media in 24 oblasts of Ukraine, which was conducted by the Volyn Press Club in partnership with the Network of Press Clubs and Media Organizations of Ukraine from February 13 to 19, 2023. The research included analysis of over 20,000 materials in printed and online publications of oblasts and oblast centers.

According to the study “The State of Women Journalists and Other Women Media Workers in Ukraine, Considering the Experience after February 24, 2022,” conducted by the NGO “Women in Media” with the support of the Ukrainian Women’s Fund, the largest percentage of women respondents do not know whether their media has prescribed policies of equality and non-discrimination (40%). For those who were confident about their answer, more newsrooms have relevant policies (30%) than not (26%). 169 women media workers took part in the online survey.

Availability of formalized equality policies in media



Appendix 2

to the Guidelines on media coverage of gender equality, prevention of violence, manifestations of sexism and gender stereotypes

REGULATORY ACTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS THAT DEFINE THE PRINCIPLES OF NATIONAL POLICY ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GENDER EQUALITY IN THE MEDIA

Ukraine acceded to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth UN World Conference on Women on September 15, 1995, ratified key human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1980) and its Optional Protocol (1999).

The formation and improvement of public understanding of the objectives of public policy in the field of gender equality contributes to the achievement of the Global Sustainable Development Goals, proclaimed by the UN General Assembly resolution of September 25, 2015, No. 70/1 and supported by Ukraine in accordance with the Decree of the President of Ukraine of September 30, 2019, No. 722/2019 “On the Sustainable Development Goals of Ukraine for the Period up to 2030.”

Recommendation CM/Rec(2013)1 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to Member States on gender equality and the media indicates that the media occupy a central position in shaping public opinions, ideas, attitudes, and behavior. They should reflect the lives of men and women in all their diversity.



Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2019\)1](#) of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to Member States on preventing and combating sexism stresses that sexism in the media – electronic, print, visual, and audio – contributes to creating an environment in which “everyday” sexism is tolerated and presented as insignificant. Therefore, it is important for the state to promote the increasing role of the media and advertising organizations in overcoming manifestations of sexism.

[The Association Agreement](#) between Ukraine, on the one hand, and the European Union, the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, on the other hand, ratified by Ukraine in 2014, obliges to provide equal opportunities for men and women in the field of employment, education and training, economic and social activities, as well as in the decision-making process.

Equality of rights of women and men is enshrined in the Constitution of Ukraine.

A number of regulatory acts have been adopted that laid the foundation for the formation of a policy to achieve gender equality in the field of media, in particular the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” of 2005, which determines that the media, in accordance with the law, contribute to the prevention of discrimination on the basis of sex and gender-based violence, as well as the dissemination of materials that reproduce or strengthen discriminatory ideas about the social roles and responsibilities of women and men, approve or provoke discrimination on the basis of sex or gender-based violence, including sexual violence.

The Law of Ukraine “On Principles of Prevention and Counteraction to Discrimination in Ukraine” prohibits discrimination, including on the basis of gender.

The Law of Ukraine “On Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence” of 2018 indicates the need to involve the media in educational campaigns aimed at fulfilling tasks in the field of prevention of domestic violence, in particular, the formation of indifferent attitude towards survivors, especially child survivors, awareness of the need for urgent reporting of cases of domestic violence, in particular to the call center for the prevention and counteraction of domestic violence, gender-based violence, and violence against children.

Article 47, part 4 of the Electoral Code of Ukraine stipulates that the media and news agencies, when disseminating information about elections, are obliged to observe objectivity, impartiality, balance, reliability, completeness, and accuracy of information, avoid discrimination and sexism.

The Law of Ukraine “On Media” provides that the dissemination of statements in the media that incite discrimination or harassment against individuals and their groups, including on the basis of gender, is a significant violation regarding which the National Council of Television and Radio Broadcasting has the right to apply response measures.

The national strategy for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men for the period up to 2030, approved by the decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated August 12, 2022, No. 752-r, requires ensuring coverage of information by the media and Internet resources in a gender-sensitive way.

It is provided that the goal of the Concept of Communication in the Field of Gender Equality, approved by the Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated September 16, 2020, No. 1128-r, shall be accomplished by intensifying the coverage of gender equality topics by the press, television and radio broadcasting, online publications, social networks, and news agencies.

