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PRESS RELEASE

Public TV channels in the Mediterranean include more awareness-raising in their news items related to violence against women

- **TV3 was the broadcaster devoting most news time to violence against women: 4 hours and 24 minutes.**
- **Nine regulatory authorities in the Mediterranean area have analysed 22 public and private TV channels in the first international comparative study on this issue. The report was coordinated by the CAC.**
- **The TV channels in Catalonia, France, Croatia, Morocco and Portugal placed the most emphasis on promoting reflection and awareness than on the violence.**
- **Almost half the channels presented experts as the main voice in the news items; on 18 of the 22 channels these people were female.**
- **The 26 Mediterranean regulatory authorities have approved recommendations regarding the news coverage of violence against women.**

TV channels in the Mediterranean area devoted between 1% and 3% of their TV news programmes to covering violence against women. In general, there is a tendency to routinely use sensationalist audiovisual elements or language, although the public channels included more elements to raise awareness and were less sensational than the private channels, according to a report on 22 Mediterranean channels.

The report, the first of international scope on the news coverage of violence against women, has been carried out by the [Mediterranean Network of Regulatory Authorities](#) or MNRA (in French, Réseau des Instances de Régulation Méditerranéennes or RIRM). This platform includes 26 regulatory authorities for media in the Mediterranean area.

This report, coordinated by the Catalan Audiovisual Council (CAC), was approved yesterday, the 12th of October, at the MNRA Plenary Assembly, held from the 10th to the 12th of October in Dubrovnik (Croatia).

9 of the 26 authorities that form part of the platform were involved in carrying out the study, providing data on 22 TV channels, both public and private, in Catalonia, Croatia, France, Morocco, Greece, Andalusia, Spain, Portugal and Serbia. The total broadcast time of the various TV news programmes analysed exceeds 2,100 hours. The analysis focused on a period of three months in 2018.

To analyse **news coverage**, both relative time (the duration of the news item on violence against women compared with the total duration of the TV news programme) and absolute time were taken into account. The result is that one third of the TV channels (7), belonging to five different geographical areas (Catalonia, Spain, France, Serbia and Andalusia) covered such news items extensively.

Most of the channels in the sample devoted between 1% and 3% of their TV news programmes to items concerning violence against women. However, the absolute figures were extremely disparate, ranging from 10 minutes to over 4 hours. The maximum absolute time corresponds to the Catalan broadcaster TV3, with 4 hours and 24 minutes.

The study also analysed the **importance** given by the TV channels in the sample to news items related to violence against women. In this respect, most of the channels placed between 20% and 40% of such news items in their block of headlines.

Public TV channels: more awareness raising and less sensationalism

Regarding the **quality of the coverage**, it was analysed whether the news items merely provided information on attacks or also included content to promote reflection and awareness.

The finding was that most of the study's channels paid relatively more attention to attacks than to promoting reflection and awareness. However, one third of the sample (8 TV channels) from 5 different broadcasting areas (Catalonia, Croatia, France, Morocco and Portugal) behaved otherwise and placed more emphasis on reflection and raising awareness. In general terms, public TV channels tended to include more content to promote awareness and resorted less to sensationalism.

Regarding the **source of the information**, firstly the degree of expertise of the people talking was analysed. The report points out that 10 of the channels from 8 different broadcasting areas present experts as the main speakers while 6 channels from 3 different areas (Spain, France and Portugal) present people who have an occasional relationship to the events being reported (third parties).

On the other hand, still regarding the information source, the presence of males and females with their own voice in the news item was also quantified. The result is that most of the people appearing with their own voice in the news item were women: in 18 of the 22 channels and in all broadcasting areas. Regarding the role played by these women in the news items, expert is the main role in 9 of the channels, corresponding to 5 different broadcasting areas (Andalusia, Catalonia, Croatia, Morocco and Serbia).

In terms of how the news was reported, the study indicates that, in the information provided by the different TV channels on violence against women and in all the broadcasting areas analysed, news items are repeatedly **sensationalised** using images, audio or language. Consequently, half the channels included one or more of these elements in most of their news items; regarding the other half (11 channels from 5 different areas), sensationalism was also present but to a much smaller degree.

Finally, the most frequently used term was *gender violence*, followed by *domestic violence* or *violence in the family sphere* on the one hand and *violence against women* on the other.

The 26 Mediterranean regulatory authorities approve recommendations regarding the news coverage of violence against women

The MNRA Plenary Assembly also approved the **recommendations** drawn up by the same working group that carried out the comparative study. These recommendations, which are similar to those produced previously by the CAC, suggest that an overly sensational, dramatic or morbid approach should be avoided, as well as suggesting any cause-effect relationship between the events occurring and the geographical or socio-cultural background of the people involved.

Another recommendation is to raise awareness in society that combating gender violence is of interest to society in general, as well as respecting the dignity and right to privacy of the victims. Expert sources of information should also be used, and the information contextualised.

[Study on the news coverage of gender-based violence in the Mediterranean audiovisual area](#)

[Recommendations on media coverage of gender violence](#)

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