Gender on TV programmers:

Reports from the analysis

of gender issues

and of the portrayal of women & men in the programming concepts and content and content of the media

The Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men ( "Official Gazette" No. 6/2012), Article 17, lays down an obligation on the Broadcasting Council to produce an annual report on the manner of portrayal and representation of women and men in the programs and also to prepare on an annual basis an analysis of gender issues in the programming concepts and content of broadcasters, as a regulatory body competent to conduct supervision of electronic media programs.

In order to deliver on these obligations, the Council, through public procurement, hired professor Katerina Kolozova, PhD, to produce an analysis of both issues.

Two different samples of television shows were defined and two different instruments (questionnaires) were produced to be used in conducting content analysis and discourse analysis regarding the contents of the sample.

Samples were drawn from the programs broadcast in the course of May 2012 on the national terrestrial television, MTV 1 and MTV2 public broadcaster and TV Alsat-M TV Kanal 5, Sitel TV and Telma. These services were chosen because together, they have the largest share of viewing audience, or in other words, they have the greatest potential to have an impact on the public. The first sample consisted of shows of informative nature (news and current affairs programs) and was primarily used for the analysis of gender issues. Another sample consisted of shows of entertaining nature that were primarily used for the purpose of analysis of portrayal and representation of women and men.

In outlining the research, Professor Kolozova started from the assumption that the issue of representation and treatment of gender issues should be analyzed both in informative and in entertainment programs, and that questionnaires appropriate for both categories of programs should be drafted that would yield relevant data for both research topics. Accordingly, for the needs of both analysis, the one concerning the treatment of gender issues and the one addressing the portrayal and representation, data was drawn from both questionnaires. Some data reflect the general situation in the area of gender equality in the media, and as such, they appear in both analysis as an empirical support of the context in the situation represented in the analysis can be understood. Given the fact that one of the key findings pertinent to both research exercises is actually the absence of gender (or gender sensitization) perspective, sometimes arguments in both studies overlap.

Therefore, in order to avoid repeating the same information in both exercises, since it would create an unwarranted tautology that would dilute the reading of the reports and would have one's the attention turned away from the significance of the findings and the conclusions, the need of a single introduction arose as a necessity.

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1. **Basic information on the research**

The two simultaneous research activities which were carried out under tender no.02-3420 / 1 issued by the Broadcasting Council of the Republic of Macedonia conducted as a result of the obligations arising from the Law on Equal Opportunities, were realized on two samples.

One sample consisted of seven issues of the central news programs of each of the TV stations and the choice of their news programs. The news were drawn from different days of the four weeks of the month so that a week would be covered by putting them all together. As for information programs, this sample covered all May program features "If ..." and "Without pardon" on MTV 1 "Tears and joy" on MTV2, "The road to" and "In the center" of Alsat-M, "X / O" and "Code" on Channel 5, "Circle" Sitel and "Money market" Telma.

The second sample consisted of "Sidewalk News" MTV1, "Seven" on MTV2, "Pizzicato" Alsat-M, "Exclusive Extra" on Channel 5, "Backstage" on Sitel, and "The Sixth Day", Telma, cuts ofall their editions aired in May 2012, except in the case of "The Sixth Day" which lasts significantly longer than other programs in this sample, which is why two news programs were analyzed.

The sample of programs of informative nature was primarily used for the analysis of gender issues, focusing on ten strategic areas identified in the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2007 - 2012: human rights, decision making processes, health, social care, education, employment, violence, media, peace activities and the environment. The second sample was used primarily as a reference source of data for analysis concerning the ways of presenting a gender. Of course, the information obtained in the first and in the second sample that were relevant to each of the analysis were used respectively.

2. Presentation of the most important aggregated data

The methodology which underpins both research activities is primarily based on qualitative analysis (ways of expression and ways of representation as methodical approach). Needless to say, certain quantitative data were necessary to establish the context in which the qualitative analysis were being developed, relevant to both. Aggregate data are related to the fundamental question of gender representation and consist a single context in which questions from both analysis can be put. The most important quantitative data show that the total number of monitored programs provides disproportionately greater presence of men as oposed to women. The total number of men shown on camera was 1733 against 682 women, or expressed in percentages: 71.8% men versus 28.2%

Presence of women as actors in the public political, cultural and social discourse speaks volumes of the central question of this research, the treatment of the core values of gender equality. Equal gender representation in public discourse is a direct picture, but also a generator of participation of women in the public sphere (which primarily includes the professional and political life and civil society). Namely, 732 men versus 165 women apear in the total of all monitored programs (in May 2012) as guests in the shows and as people who make statements in their capacities of professionals and political authorities.

For example, of the total number of monitored entertaining and informative programs shown on Sitel and MTV 1, we noted occurrences of 638 men and 271 women. In the illustrative, visual foundation there were 118 men and 80 women. In the role of experts and authorities of whatever public nature, women's appearance is profoundly asymmetrical with that with men. The ratio is 61 women versus 315 men. On Kanal 5 and Telma, of the total number of analyzed shows, 158 men and 61 women appear with their expert statements or statements from a position of authority (political, journalistic, etc.). In entertainment shows on Channel 5 and Telma, we see a stronger presence of women compared to men. Of all analyzed news programs on MTV2 and Alsat-M during May 2012, we found 208 men as opposed to only 21 women appear in the capacity of persons providing professional or political statements. Unlike the asymmetry in information programs, the ratio in entertainmentprograms is lower and in addition to women, 28 men provide statements as opposed to 21 women, while more women than men (38 vs. 27) are visually represented .

Intertwining of the essential themes of gender issues and the issue of gender representation is most clearly recognized in a unifying realization that emerged in both analysis. Namely, the increasing disappearance of the use of female suffix to nouns, especially those relating to significant social and political functions, is both a gender issue as a matter of presentation. The trend of gender sensitization of public discourse, which flourished during the second half of the first decade of 2000s, has been replaced with the opposite tendency of gender neutralization. Gender neutrality also means removing the visibility of women's participation in the public sphere as a human right of women and masculinisation of the notion of public, social and political positions. In this case, the question of representation and the human rights issue of participation of women in public life are inseparable, essentially embedded into each other. Sensitization of the public speech from a gender perspective is increasingly stronger and more pronounced trend in the languages of the European Union have gender-specific inflexions, since it ensures visibility of women's participation in the public arena and sends the message that significant social positions can and should be held by women as well. Here, although this rule was established for a certain period of time ("Minister", "Chancellor" sounded quite natural when you heard in the media), in recent times, it is being increasingly abandoned and is replaced with the neoconservative trend of masculinisation of nouns that refer to public functions. This masculinization presents itself as neutral, without having in mind that neutrality means neutrality also means neutralization of one of the genders. This question is more closely analyzed and illustrated below in the individual analysis.

Analysis

of gender issues

in the programming concepts and content

on the media - Individual findings

1. Explanation of the methodological approach and presentation of the most important quantitative data

Two common questionnaires designed to provide data both on the manner in which gender was presented in the programming concepts and content, as well as on gender issues, were used in the two parallel studies. One questionnaire was designed specifically for news programs while the other concerned the entertainment program content. Data relevant to both analyzes were collected from both, but the one designed for news programs was used primarily for the analysis of gender issues in the concepts and content, while the other was the source of most data on the analysis of the presentation in the concepts and content of television programs.

The questionnaires were designed in a way that includes both quantitative and qualitative approach to research. The quantitative part of the research brings data on the total number of features in the monitored show, the number of analyzed features, as well as their duration, and the number of occurrences of women and men writers, editors, journalists, reporters, guests in the features as experts or as part of a representation ilustrative background. Because in this study we relied primarily on data from the questionnaire concerning information programs (ie, news) we will describe it in more details. In addition to the just mentioned quantitative data, the questionnaire made room for recording of all occurrences in the monitoring shows regarding the following few issues from among the gender relevant topics: human rights, health, decision-making processes, social protection, education, employment, violence, media, peace activities, environmental environment and opportunity for reporting on other topics important from a gender perspective. However, given that the analysis is discursive and representative, the focus in the questionnaire was on qualitative data. Namely, observing the speech: whether it was affirmative in terms of gender equality or whether it was sexist, whether established stereotypes were used and whether it reinforced the existing and produced new stereotypes, classification was made of the types of prevailing statements (descriptive, suggestive, prognosticating, etc.). Attention was paid to the visual portrayal: how the the body is shown, facial expression of journalists and guests in the features (eg authoritative expression of the person, with an intention to be nice and pleasant) and arrangement of male and female figures and characters in the footage of the features.

Expressed in percentage terms, the proportion of women versus men as factors in the public political and social arena on TV is as follows:

Guests in informative programs and news:

male: 67.9% female: 23.1%

Statements in informative programs and news:

male: 80.8% female: 19.2%

Men and women in the features / footage, informative programs and news:

male: 65.5% female: 34.5%

Men and women in polls in news programs and news:

men: 66, women 4% 33 6%

2. Presence and method of treatment of gender issues

The analysis of informative contents shows that even when it comes to topics which are commonly, in gender conscious journalistic approach, addressed from a gender perspective, in most cases in Macedonia it is fully absent. For example, in the news on Sitel covering topics from the field of human rights and violence, specifically reporting on the "Monster" linked to the murder in Smiljkovci and protests in support of the suspects, shown on 04.05.2012 a woman does not appear in a single shot or feature, whether actively, as someone making a statement or as part of the visual support of the feature.

On the other hand, the news which does not open a theme or a problem of any gender relevant issues listed in the questionnaire, but which portrays women in political decision-making processes, women politicians are reduced to invisibility in the visual material. Namely, in the news of Sitel presented on 07.05.2012, the first feature covers the visit to Macedonia's by EU Commissioner Stefan Fule, where not only was a statement not taken from the Deputy Prime Minister Teuta Arifi, but she did not appear for a moment as an active figure in the recorded material. For example, we see footage of the Commissioner shaking hands withmembers of the government, but not his foremost host in the country, Deputy Prime Minister Arifi.

Particularly striking is the absolute absence of women's issues, gender perspective and representation of the position of women in one of Sitel's features broadcast on 15.05.2012 relating to the issue of family and parenting. The feature addresses the International Day of Families and quite openly promotes the value of family with many children in Macedonia, withouth any statement taken from a woman, nor was there a statement on the status of women in the contemporary Macedonian society and the challenges facing the working mother. On the other hand, given that Macedonia is a country where workers' rights are conditional on parental rights (pregnant mothers are dismissed or new female workers with employment contracts are discouraged from becoming pregnant),[[1]](#footnote-2) the question of motherhood becomes even more relevant in terms of coverage. Nevertheless, in this feature, statements of only two men, i.e. a father and the Minister of Labour and Social Policy were aired.

These are just illustrations of the same exclusive gender "blind" paradigm that appears on all television stations whose programs were included in this study. Sitel is no exception in this regard, and the examples from the news of the chanel were highlighted one after the other precisely because they thus constitute a kind of a case study the in structure of which we can recognize a paradigm common to all TV stations in Macedonia. The differences come down to nuances. For example, the news feature on MTV 1 aierd on 07.05.2012, dedicated to the case of employees of OHIS, which addresses the theme pertaining to social protection and employment, did not cover even slightly gender aspects of the problems presented. When it comes to issues of social vulnerability, gender perspective is especially important to addfdress as it relates to a dual vulnerability. However, the feature failed to address the gender perspective. Another confirmation that the presented examples from Sitel are paradigmatic for all televisions channels in the country (specifically, for those covered by this study) is that an feature aired by Channel 5 dedicated to the affair "Monster" shows the same lack of gender sensitivity and „invisibility“ of women as the one shown on Sitel on the same date (04.05.2012).

1. **The problem of "gender invisibility" of women as a reflection of marginalizing the issue of gender equality**

Just like in the analysis devoted to the manner of portrayal, the analysis which relates to issues concerning the status of women in society united around the central question of gender equality, we can identify and point out to complete invisibility of a gender. This is a problem that we noticed in the analysis devoted to manner of portrayal. In news programs, it was particularly important to note the discursive invisibility or voice "neutraliziranost" of the gender. Gender insensitive speech is directly related to the issue of gender equality, the foundation of which is the presence of women in the public sphere.

Regarding the issue of the presence of women in politics, it appears the gender "neutral" speech is used in order to relativize it, and erase the fact of participation of women in politics. Namely, if the message of the speech of gender neutrality is that the gender of a politician is irrelevant, then it implicitly means that the very question of the presence of women in politics is also irrelevant.

The use of nouns to refer to universal human categories ( "tourist", "student", "doctor", etc.) exclusively in the masculine gender is form of a discursive exclusion of women.[[2]](#footnote-3) The very pretense of universality or universal representation of one gramatical gender versus the other is form of suibjugation to hierarchical relationship, and socially exclusive speech. Namely, the fact that it is understood that the masculine (but not feminine) gender can lay a claim to universal validity, and, include, and refer to the feminine as well, which is "represented" by universal = male denominated notion is already an apparent form of gender asymmetry .

The conclusion of our analysis on gender representation is confirmed here: failure to use suffixes denoting feminine in public offices ( "Director", "minister", "President", etc.) is a form of gender-insensitive speech because despite being a form of exclusion in the form of cancellation of gender differences and reducing the gender of a male / female official to an irrelevant data, it also suggests that the term contains dimension of dignity and universality only if is used in the masculine, so that it would appear that a feminine suffix would diminish the dignity of the office. It is interesting that this practice for a period (from the early 2000s until almost a year ago) disapeared in Macedonia only to come back again last year.[[3]](#footnote-4) We can ascertain certain some neo-conservative reversal and a process of reinstating the nouns that refer to social functions in "gender neutral gender", respectively - in the masculine.

Apparently, the "neutrality" of the discourse is only applicable when reference is made to the dignity of a certain hierarchically superior social function. On the other hand, when reporting on vulnerable and socially marginalized groups, gender and other specifics (especially age) become significant to the point that not only would one insist on gender denoting inflexions , but also on stereotype nouns. Namely, classic speech of "boiling down to" a gender and / or age, in is use as in insisting on "old woman" and "old man." The person of a certain age that some would classify as a senior person is and adult of a certain gender, name and surname with or without profession. This speech, which certainly is not "neutral", demonstrates arbitrariness in the discourse that is supposedly neutral with respect to certain social categories. The fact that this was not a deliberate act of an individual journalist, but it was rather resorting to some established and generally widespread practice is no reason to refrain from calling it politically incorrect. Of course, the problem is in the structure of the prevailing discourse, rather than in individuals.

1. **Conclusions and recomendations**

As are other social and cultural values, so is the commitment to gender equality implemented by means of raising public awareness. It goes without saying that the key part of the general public are the electronic media. Despite the single directedness of the message, which is the determining uniqueness of television media, however, there nonetheless forms inside the medium that allow interaction. Moreover, in the era of mass internet use, interaction with the TV media in the country is also made possible through TV channels’ internet fora. In such a dynamic exchange between the media and their audiences, the mission of constant awareness regarding gender issues can be implement in a much faster and more efficient fashion.

Undoubtedly, the media are not a passive, uninteresting mirror of reality but also it's active creators. The public speech they generate produces or excludes certain values. The precise, accurate reporting is not the only activity of the media. Media also make choices about what and how much will be reported. So, choosing to cover gender-relevant topics listed at the beginning of this analysis is a matter of conscious decision of the media. In other words, proactive involvement of television channels in promoting the values of equality between men and women, and in turn overcoming the gender asymmetry in public discourse is hihgly warrabnted.

Namely, what we would recommend more specifically is the following:

- Increased presence of at least 30% of women in the role of expert and political authorities, which would reflect the minimum threshold of the state ensuring women's participation in political life.

- Introduction of topics that directly affect the issues of equal gender representation in decision-making structures in the social and political spheres and the issue of overcoming gender stereotyping in culture and in public discourse.

- Introduction of topics of essential interest concerning gender equality in Macedonia: economic equality / inequality (wage differentials between men and women, from around 27% in favor of men)[[4]](#footnote-5), domestic violence against women and trafficking in under aged girls (in particular when it comes to minority comunities).[[5]](#footnote-6)

Accompanying recommendation:

In order to increase the competence of journalists and editors in terms of the topics of gender equality and to raise their awareness of the importance of these issues, we recommend that training events and public debates be organized. We recommend that the contents of these events and the methods of transmitting them be designed in such way that corresponds to the needs of the target group to which they are intended.

Analysis

of the style of portrayal and representation of women and men in the programming concept and content –

Individual findings

1. **Description of methodologicdal approach and quantitative data**

Two common questionnaire were used in the surveys carried out simultaneously in order to collect data both on the manner of portrayal of gender and on gender issues addressed in the program concepts and content. Both questionnaires provided sufficient insight both in terms of portrayal of genders as well as in terms of coverage of gender issues. Both questionnaires reflect the paradoxical picture of gender asymmetry in the representation: the female gender is often not portrayed at all, almost deleted, with minimal visibility or with visibility that leads to subordination and marginalization.

The questionnaire designed for entertainment programs brings the highest level of understanding of the style of portrayal that prevail in our country. Qualitative issues prevail, although there is a part that contains questions of a quantitative nature (such as the number of hosts and hostess, number of men and women involved in an feature, duration of airtime, etc.). However, crucial to this analysis are the qualitative issues, for example: (a) "How are gender roles shown in the appendi feature (active / passive, traditional / non-traditional, victim / perpetrator, power / powerlessness, decoration, attracting attention to physical appearance)?; (B) What is not included in the features? (Eg. Old, unattractive, with disabilities); (C) Do the themes of appearance and sexual desirability prevail and what language is used in when they are addressed (objectivizing, sexist or affirmative in terms of gender equality) ?; (D) How are bodies shown; (E) Is the portrayal of the body / overall physical appearance of women objectivizing (reduced to sexual objects) ?.

As stated above, the analysis of the observed materials confirmed that the portrayal is imbued with deep gender asymmetry, gender invisibility (insufficient and rear portrayal) of women or marginal and marginalizing visibility. The picture of women that prevails in entertainment shows is objectivizing and sexist, while the one shown on news programs is a picture of social passivity, helplessness,absence of authority and subordination. Where we come across authoritative presence of women in politics or women with specific expertise, gender is relativized, "neutralized" rather than affirmed.

Questionnaires relating to entertainment programs carry the most important qualitative data on the issue of representation of gender. Quantitatively, however, we received the following data which only confirm the picture obtained by means of qualitative analysis:

Statements of the men and women in entertainment shows:

male: 62.5% female: 37.5%

Men and women in polls in entertainment shows:

male: 59.5% female: 40.5%

Images / footage of men and women in entertainment shows:

male: 39.6% female: 60.4%

Obviously, women's appearance is reduced to decorative or to a status of a passive agent, because the visual presentation of women in percentage terms far exceeds the presentation of male faces and bodies. On the other hand, even in entertainment shows, men making statements far outnumber in percentage terms women's representation.

2. The problem of invisibility in gender asymmetry of the representation

The general assessment of the overall content analyzed is that gender asymmetry in the representation is extremely high. Its original feature is the "invisibility" of women versus prevailing visibility, presence of men. Experts, editors, and analysts dominate in debate shows either as guests in news or in entertainment shows. Where women appear, they are usually shown in a passive or subordinate role (primarily in news programs) or as objectivized and sexualized body, beautiful face no opinion (except for the romantic-sexual issues). Invisibility is thus literal: the number of screenings (visual or verbal) of women versus men is incomparably lower in news feature. For example, even the number of respondent male citizens was significantly higher than that of respondents female citizens. The inquiries from the news programs confirm that the situation is identical in the media in both Macedonian and Albanian.

Or, let us take as an example the features relating to health: doctors, officials of institutions, directors, experts presented in the features are, with rare exceptions, almost always men, while women appear in the illustrative visual material as nurses or patients .

Discursive invisibility is achieved not only by avoiding topics relating to women, not only with their simple absence, but also through the use of supposedly gender-neutral language. The use nouns which are meant to refer to universal human categories ( "director", "professor", "doctor", etc.) are exclusively in the masculine gender, which is a form of a discursive exclusion of women.[[6]](#footnote-7) The very pretense of universality or universal representation of one gramatical gender versus the other is a form of subordinatino or hierarchical relationship, and socially exclusive speech. Not using the feminine inflexions when referring to offices ( "the Minister", "President" and so on.) Is a form of gender-insensitive speech because, despite being a form of exclusion in the form of cancellation of gender differences and reducing the gender of male / femal official to data of no irrelevance (which it certainly is not), it also suggests that the term contains dimension of dignity and universality only if used in the masculine gender. As if tne intention is to imply that female inflexion reduces the dignity of the office. Fortunately, this practice for a period entirely disappeared in Macedonia, but lately we have noted some neo-conservative tendency of a comeback of nouns pertaining to social functions in "gender neutral gender" (the contradiction is apparent in the formulation, and it is a symptom which calls for analysis.)

On the other hand, a classic speech of "boiling down to " gender and / or age, and in insisting on "old woman" and "old man.“[[7]](#footnote-8) A person of a certain age that some would classify as old age is an adult of a gender, with a name and a surname, with or without a profession. This speech whic most certainly is not "neutral" indicates arbitrariness in the use of the discourse that is supposedly neutral with respect to certain social categories. The fact that this was a deliberate act of an individual journalist, but resorting to some established and generally widespread practice is no reason not to call it politically incorrect. Of course, the problem is the structure of the prevailing discourse, not the individuals. Defending certain values of politically correct speech is addressed to the public as a whole, not to individuals. Therefore, "boiling down" speech (speech reductionism) and stereotyping that is found in the terms "old" and "old woman" should be done away with by finally starting to refer to persons of a certain age and not the "old men" and "old women". (Just as no one can speak of "blacks", nor refer to the color of a particular person, if that data is not important for the content of the article). On the other hand, gender-neutralizing discourse where that feminine inflexions are not used when denoting functions such as a minister, the chancellor and the like, should be replaced with gender-sensitive language.

1. **Stereotyping as a problem of low and marginalized visibility in the public arena of presentation and discussion**

The low visibility of gender in Macedonia is reduced to stereotyping of women as socially inferior, placed in positions with less decision making power or less authoritative professional roles. The portrayal of women in news programsas subordinated combines the discursive and representation (visual) registry: the statement "doctors" is accompanied by an illustration of primarily doctors who are men while any mention of "support staff" is visually enhanced by pictures of female nurses and cleaning staff. Low social visibility is a term that is often used in gender analysis. We conclude that low visibility in television programming content (low representation and protrayal of marginal social roles) comes down to design and / or image reflecting low social visibility of women in society.

We could identify an almost identical situation in the informative programs in Macedonian and Albanian. It is remarkable that in the shows "Road to" and "In the center" Alsat-M in May 2012, one in Albanian and one in Macedonian, no woman's face was presented in the show. Otherwise, women's issues appear marginally and there is no direct or indirect coverage of women specific topics. In entertainment shows on MTV2 and Alsat-M we identified a greater presence of women than in news programs, which in itself speaks of the use of women in "entertainment content". The ratio expressed in figures is as follows: 32 women in the capacity of experts or people with political authority in news programs, as opposed to 234 men; in entertainment shows, however, 86 males appear.[[8]](#footnote-9) as opposed to 81 females.

* Taking into account all obtained data, we come to the basic insight that the public media space establishes a general division (visual and discursive) that can be described as follows:
* - Informative contents are generally devoid of sensitivity in relation to gender issues, except for information on certain events (promotion of programs on gender issues)
* - In entertainment shows, presence of bodies of women (but not as active agents of action) is almost automatically expected, as are sexist statements and objkectivizing ways of displaying the female body as entertainment content.

Stereotypes cuts equally through information programs, but is more pronounced in entertainment programming content where starlets or stars whose fame is closely related to their highly sexualized appearance prevail. Portrayals of famous women as sexually objectivized, in a passive position of the body are dominant. Sometimes they appear as mothers who are struggling to get back into shape after childbirth (to be re-objectivized as they usually are) with the audience invited to take voyeuristic delights in their no longer so glowing appearance.

Sexual objectivization is not only a visual and discursive strategy of entertainment shows, but it is also so in the news. For example, in the feature on the occasion of the visit of Svetlana Ceca Raznatovic, which is part of the news on Channel 5 aired on 31.05.2012, the singer is presented in an objectivized fashion. Scenes are shown from a movie where the body of the singer prevails, accompanied by sexist speech by the author of the feature, which consists in presenting Raznatovic as a "star" that will "ignite" the audience. It is remarkable that despite the fact that the feature is about a star, a message to be sent about "her essence" is the properties of her body and the possibility for her to be reduced to a sex object. Exclusionist logic here refers not only to a displayed person but also to a large portion of the audience: female heterosexual audience is treated as non-existent because the portrayal of the star complies with phantasies of the heterosexual male part of the audience.

In the entertainment show broadcast in Albanian, "Seven" on MTV2 on 03.05.2012, the host is insistant on the question that the guest (singer of traditional songs) must be engaged in something else in her life, for example household duties as a housewife. Stereotyping by reducing the woman to her roles in her private sphere, i.e. her role in the family, is not the only one in the show. Somewhat later in the same show, the host implicitly promotes a stereotype of female occupations by asking the question: "Does the fact that you are a singer affect your authority as a (female) teacher?" Obviously the occupation in the area of entertainment is inferior to the ocupation in education. The question of the dignity of the profession, is thus associated with the question of the imaginary "morality" of of the entertainment profession. The fact that the media representation of women in this profession is so highly sexualized that a women working in the entertainment industry has been reduced to a sexual object is not recognized as a stereotype which the media produce. On the contrary, it is presented as a norm and women in this profession internalize it, and so the issue of seriousness or its absence in the two professions in which the guest of the show is simultaneously engaged becomes possible. [[9]](#footnote-10)

1. **Conclusion and recommendations**

Gender equality is a value that should be built by raising the awareness of the public, which includes the media and their audiences. The media are never a passive, uninterested mirror of reality but also its active creators. The public speech they produce includes or excludes certain values. Precise, accurate reporting is not the only activity of the media. Media also make choices about what and how they will report, how something will be shown and what perception the will create, whether through speech or visual portrayal.

Therefore, in order to promote the value of gender equality, we recommend that electronic media proactively approach the issue of gender asymmetry in representation.

Namely, our specifical recommendations would be as follows:

- Increased presence of women in the shows by way of portrayal which will be based on sensibility in terms of gender equality as a social value.

- Increased presence of women in active and authoritative role in the area of visual surface and in the capacity of persons who provide professional or politically significant statements.

- Avoidance of sexual objectification of women in the visual portrayal. Specifically, it should be completely excluded wherever a theme does not refer explicitly to issues of sexuality.

Accompanying recommendation:

To achieve the commitments underlined in the recommendations, it is necessary to organize training events for journalists, but also, public debates, such as sympozia, panels, conferences and the like where there will be discussions about the value of gender equality and the need for promotion of the associated rights.

1. Marija Tasev and Ljubica Balaban „It is difficult to be pregnant,“ News (24.09.2012) <http://www.dnevnik.com.mk/default.asp?ItemID=BFBB9A059B440249B7F9DBA640812B6D> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. For example, the show "If it is..." with Alexander Chomovski as the host (shown on MTV 1 on 24.05.2012, in which, incidentally, only one of 5 interlocutors (including Chomovski) was a woman, mention was made of the following "universal" concepts used only in the masculine: disciple, student, key players, citizens, Macedonian minority, Serbs, Croats, Bulgarians, Greeks, politicians, politician, Macedonians, Prime friends, sacrifice, Greeks, enemies, leaders, partners, constituents, colleagues, Albanians , actors, citizens, allies, neo-fascists, fascists, Americans, Turks, columnist, Macedonians, people, official, man, aliens, Director, MP, readers, etc.. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Needles to say, we can talk about these processes in relative rather than absolute terms. For example, in the coverage of the protests on the occasion of the action "Monster" shown on 12.05.2012, Telma TV announced that a photoreporter was attacked and it uses the feminine suffix: "In Skopje, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia today held protests in response to yesterday's demonstrations that resulted in violence in which a cameraman of TV Telma was injured, as well as members of MoI. Our channel, as we announced yesterday, as a sign of protest did not attend these protests where today a photo reporterf was attacked, and as a sign of protest, the other cameramen withdrew from recording the event. Telma will not report in the future on such cases which are not duly announced with a clearly designated organizer who will be responsible for any incidents. We demand that competent authorities clear yesterday's incident and find the perpetrators as soon as possible "(presenter's statement at the beginning of the item).. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. # Milka Kazandziska, Marija Risteska and Verena Schmidt, The gender pay gap in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Budapest: ILO), 2012

   [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Katerina Kolozova et al. “Intercultural gendered violence in SEE,” достапно на <http://www.gemic.eu/?cat=18>, пристапено во јули 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. For example, the show "If it is..." with Alexander Chomovski as the host (shown on MTV 1 on 24.05.2012, in which, incidentally, only one of 5 interlocutors (including Chomovski) was a woman, mention was made of the following "universal" concepts used only in the masculine: disciple, student, key players, citizens, Macedonian minority, Serbs, Croats, Bulgarians, Greeks, politicians, politician, Macedonians, Prime friends, sacrifice, Greeks, enemies, leaders, partners, constituents, colleagues, Albanians , actors, citizens, allies, neo-fascists, fascists, Americans, Turks, columnist, Macedonians, people, official, man, aliens, Director, MP, readers, etc.. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. In the news on Channel 5 aired on 12.05.2012 the item begins with the following announcement: "He served a prison sentence for raping an old woman, and escaped from prison to repeat the offense," while the caption reads: "fled again to rape an old woman." Then, just when stating the age of the woman, the expression "old woman" is needlesly repeated: "The arrest was preceded by a police pursuit in which on same day at noon in Stip settlement Jakupino a juvenile committed a rape of a seventy-old woman who lived alone in one of the retreat homes. After the filthy act the juvenile fled, and the case was reported to police by the doctors from the Stip Clinical Hospital after examination of the old woman confirmed that it was a case of rape..“ [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. By „total “ we mean both in tems of a capacity of a person making statements and in terms of presence in visual portraytal. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. In the entertainment show "Pizzicato" shown on Alsat M 09.05.2012, although the topic is from the field of fashion and addresses the issue of using red lipstick, the visual backround is filled with half-naked objectivizing representations of a female body which obviously, remains unrelated to the topic of styling of the face, or more specificly, the lips.. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)