

Paris 2024

The Olympic Games in Italian TV News

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Research undertaken by C.A.R.E.S. srl - Osservatorio di Pavia and promoted by Fondazione Bracco and the International Olympic Committee

CONTEXT DATA: PARTICIPANTS AND MEDALS

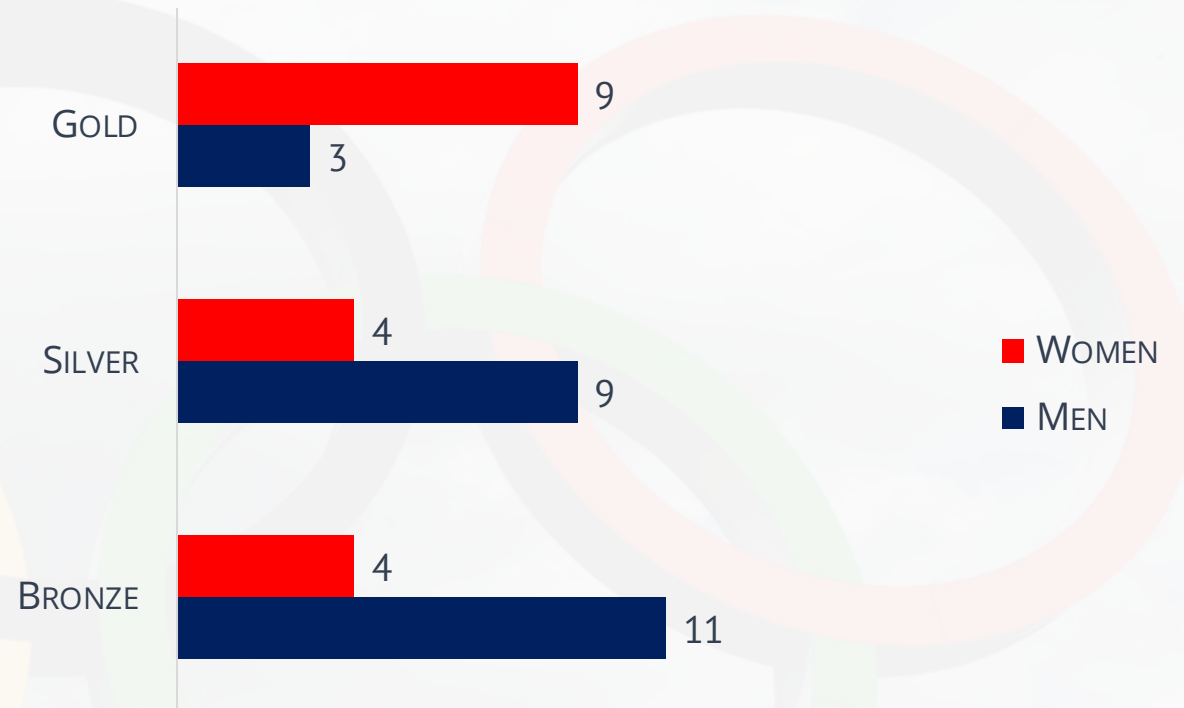
The Paris 2024 Olympic Games originally aimed for the participation of 5,250 female athletes and 5,250 male athletes, thus establishing a perfectly equal gender quota. However, the various selection mechanisms ultimately resulted in the participation of 5,300 women and 5,513 men.

49% women at the Paris Olympic Games

2024: an increase of 1 percentage point compared to Tokyo (48%), with some differences per Country.

48% Italian women at the Paris Olympic Games 2024.

Italian medals at the Paris Olympic Games, 2024



RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Verify the degree of alignment of the Italian national news with the *Guidelines on representation in sport. Gender Equality, Equity and Inclusion* (CIO, 2024) in terms of

- **Narrative:** language, images and stereotypes.
- **Gender equality:** women's and men's sports, male and female athletes, journalists.
- **Sharing of voices:** people interviewed.



PORTRAYAL GUIDELINES GENDER-EQUAL, FAIR AND INCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION IN SPORT

2024 Ed



Source: <https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Documents/Beyond-the-Games/Gender-Equality-in-Sport/IOC-Portrayal-Guidelines.pdf>

DATASET AND METHOD

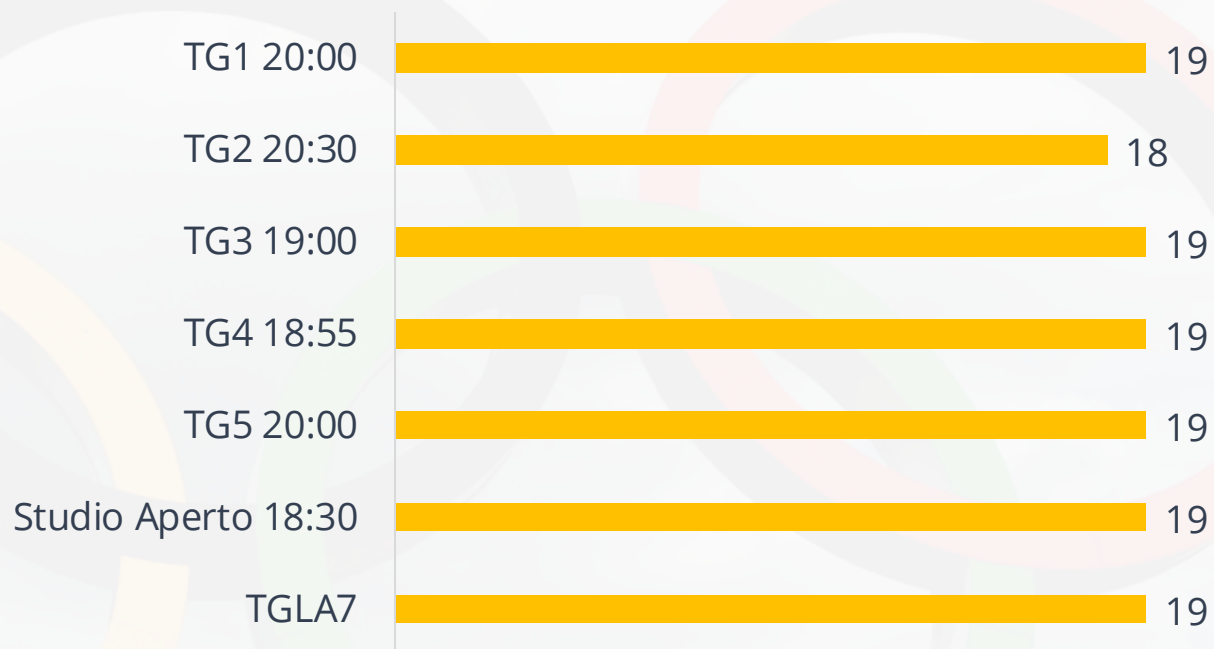
7 Italian national newscasts, broadcast from 24 July to 11 August 2024 in prime time, selected as sample.

1.344.136 daily viewers (average by newscast).

3.314.000 maximum audience reached.

132 News editions subjected to content analysis.

Number of newscast editions broadcast from 24th July to 11th August, 2024



Note: the 8:30 PM edition of TG2 has one less edition than the other news programs, because on July 26th the Olympic Games Opening Ceremony was broadcast in its place.



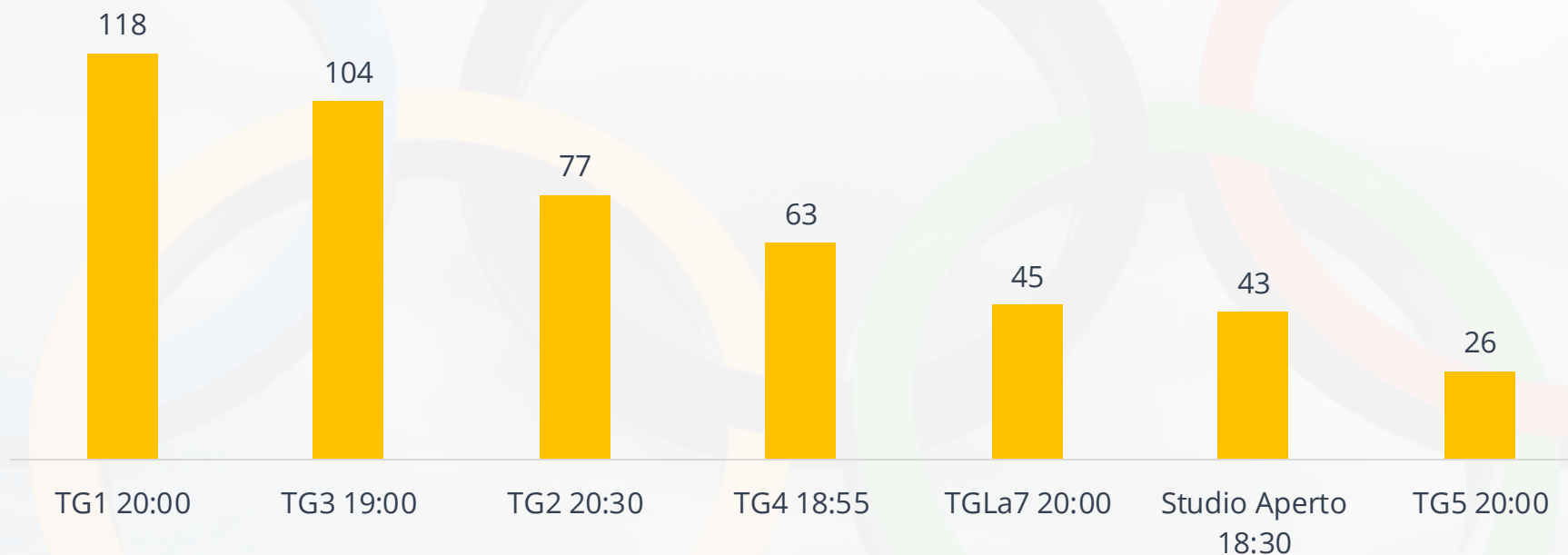
RESULTS

Coverage

Olympic Games coverage

Overall, **476 news items dedicated to the Paris 2024 Olympic Games**, of which 63% were broadcast by RAI, 28% by Mediaset, and 9% by the Cairo Editore.

Number of news items dedicated to the Olympic Games from 24th July to 11th August, 2024, by Newscast

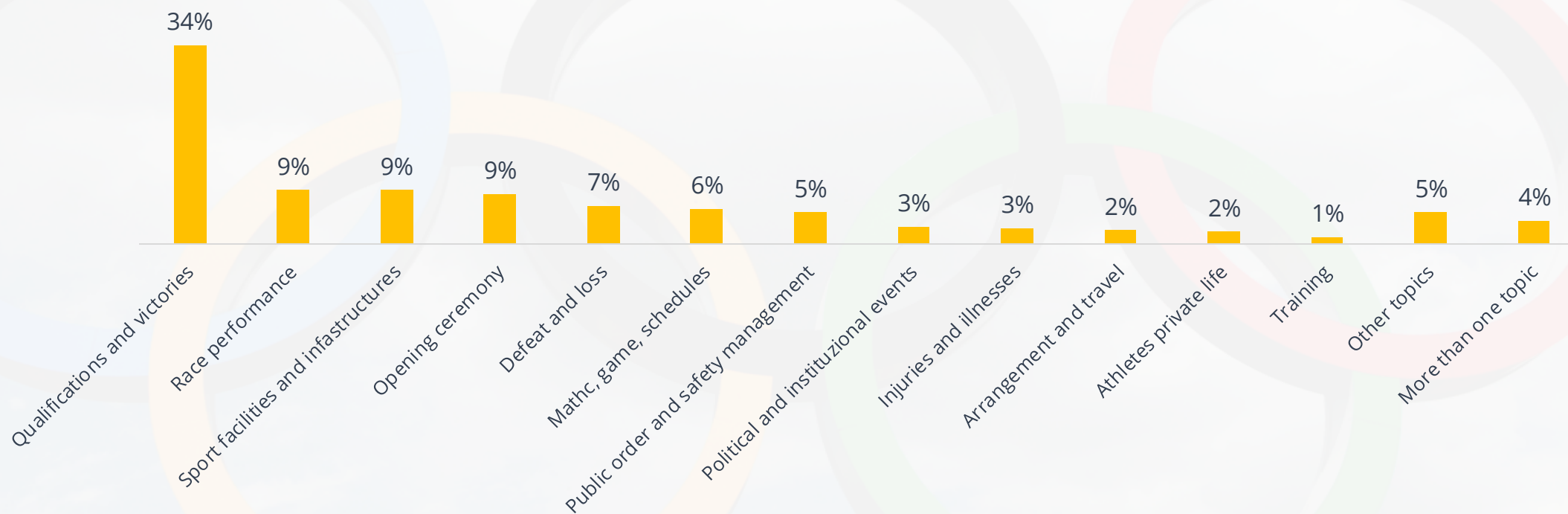


Coverage

Coverage by topic

56% of the news is dedicated to the competitions: calendars and races, sports performances, qualifications and victories, defeats and withdrawals. **The remaining 44% is dedicated to other topics,** including problems with structures dedicated to the Games, such as the condition of the waters of the Seine; problems with crucial infrastructure for accessibility to the games, such as transport and communication lines, affected by sabotage; the opening ceremony.

Distribution of news dedicated to the Olympic Games from 24th July to 11th August, 2024, by topic (Total N=476)



Narrative

News language

Sexist Language

93% of the news uses non-sexist language that respects the dignity of women and men.

7% of the news uses sexist language: in particular, forms of “benevolent sexism” were detected, often expressed with rhetorical forms and/or gender asymmetries, as in the following example, where the appellative 'queen' (a non-sports term) is used figuratively to emphasize the sporting performances of a female swimmer vs. the appellative 'record holder' (a sports term) used to emphasize the sporting performances of a male swimmer.

“The 25-year-old Roman Simona Quadarella, queen of middle-distance swimming and bronze medalist in the 800m freestyle in Tokyo three years ago, will give her all to get back on the Olympic podium. Just like the world record holder in the 100m backstroke Thomas Ceccon, Italy's most anticipated athlete in the lanes, in the hunt for gold at the 5-ring Games.”

«The limits of my world mean the limits of my language.»

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Inclusive Language

77% of the news uses inclusive language, by referring to women with feminine nouns, in order to make them visible, and avoiding the use of the unmarked or generic masculine.

17% of the news uses masculine forms to refer to women or groups of women or men, in particular the overextended masculine form is frequent, namely the use of masculine plural forms to name groups of women and men, such as the Italian Olympic team.

“Il capo dello Stato Mattarella oggi in visita a Casa Italia, quartier generale degli atleti **azzurri**”

(Today, the head of state is visiting Casa Italia, the headquarters of the **azzurri**)

6% of the news uses a mixed language.

Narrative

News images

Inclusive images

96% of the news is accompanied by inclusive images: images that show both women and men, of different ages and physical appearances, in the footage of female and male athletes, during competitions or in other contexts, such as the award ceremonies; as well as in the footage of the fans or other people, for example, interviewed as vox populi on the streets of Paris.

4% of the news is accompanied by non-inclusive images or no images at all: short news items from the studio not accompanied by images or accompanied by a still image on a limited frame.

Sexist images

97% of the news is accompanied by non-sexist images that respect the dignity of women and men.

3% of the news is accompanied by some sexist images: in particular, objectifying and sexualized shots of female athletes were detected, or, in some cases, of celebrities present at the opening ceremony of the Games

«As the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words»
ICO Guidelines

Narrative Stereotypes

7% of the news reinforce stereotypes:

73% about women

21% about men

6% about more than one gender.

However, in 7% of the news, forms of deconstruction of stereotypes were also detected:

45% about women

32% about men

23% about more than one gender.

In both cases, these are mostly stereotypes concerning women's bodies and their emotions, and these are stereotypes conveyed, or challenged, particularly in the news concerning the case of Imane Khelif.

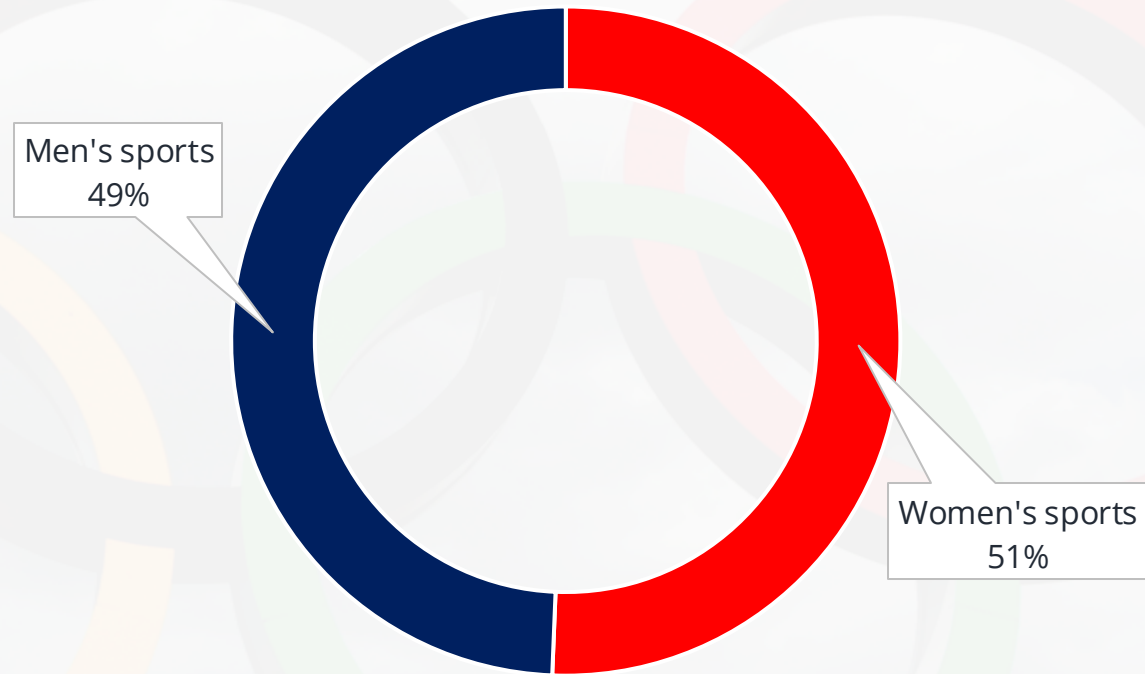
Gender balance

All sports by gender

The 476 news items about the Paris 2024 Olympic Games mentioned the various Olympic sports (TOT N=823)

- 7% without any gender specification, typically in short quotes;
- 18% with reference to both women's and men's, or mixed, races of the same Olympic discipline;
- **75% of the cases were balanced with respect to gender.**

Distribution of news coverage between women's and men's sports



TOT N=618

Gender balance

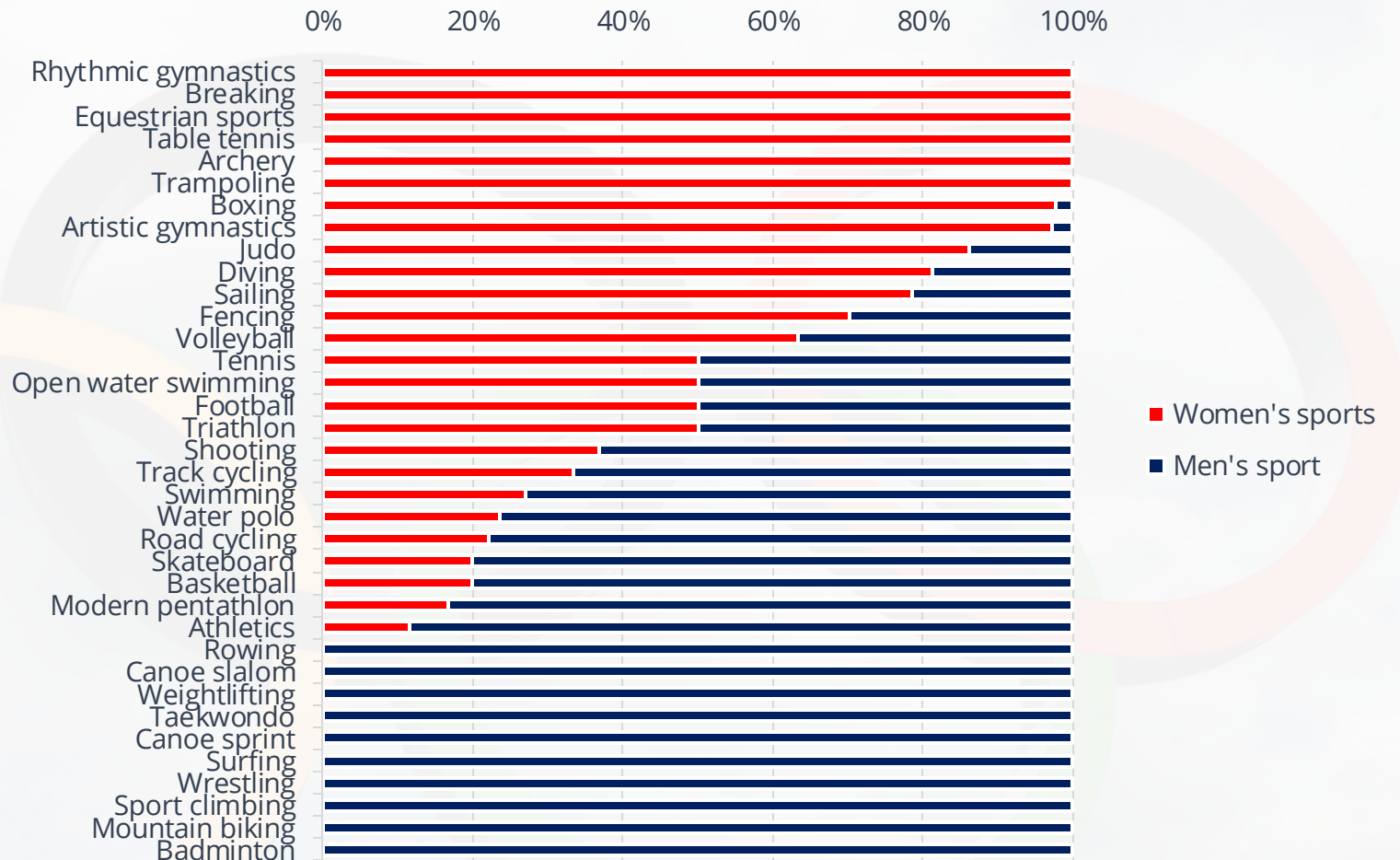
Women's and men's sports



The data disaggregated by individual Olympic disciplines highlight gender imbalances, with some sports represented predominantly by women and others predominantly represented by men.

The only sports with balanced attention with respect to gender are tennis, open water swimming, soccer and triathlon.

Distribution of news coverage between women's and men's sports for each individual Olympic discipline



Gender balance

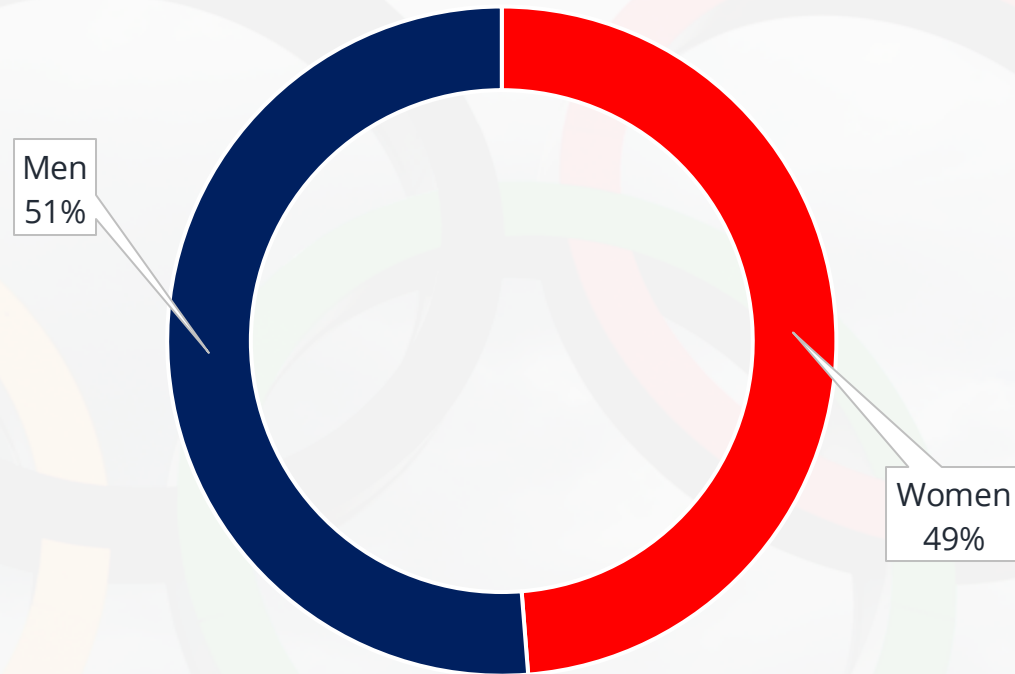
Athletes

Women and men participating in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games as athletes had almost perfectly equal visibility.

Female professionals participating in the Games in other roles, for example as coaches, had less visibility compared to their male colleagues: 13% vs. 87% (total n=52).

Just as female athletes or former athletes not participating in the games had less visibility compared to their male colleagues: 38% vs. 62% (total n=34).

Visibility of athletes participating in the 2024 Olympic Games in Italian news broadcasts, by gender

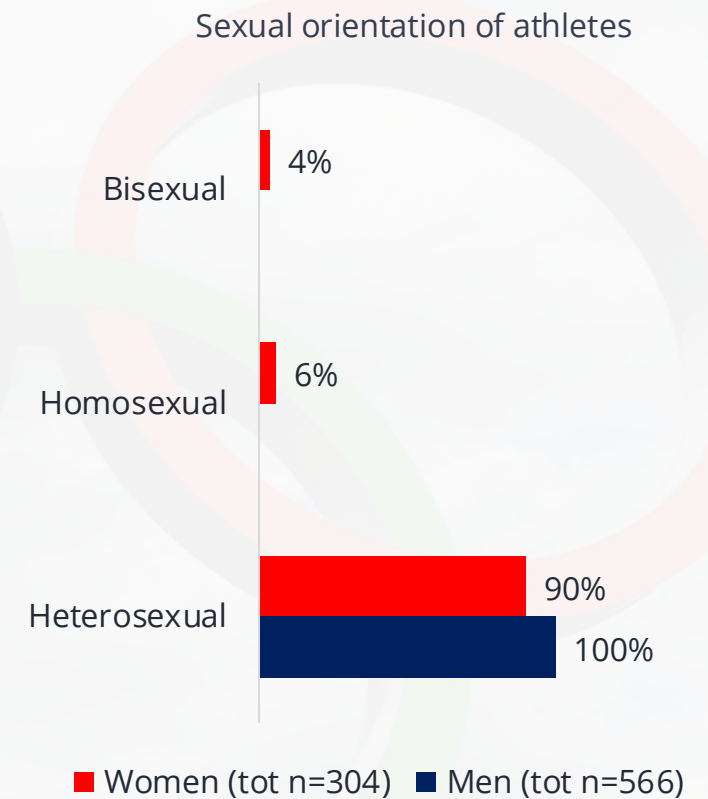
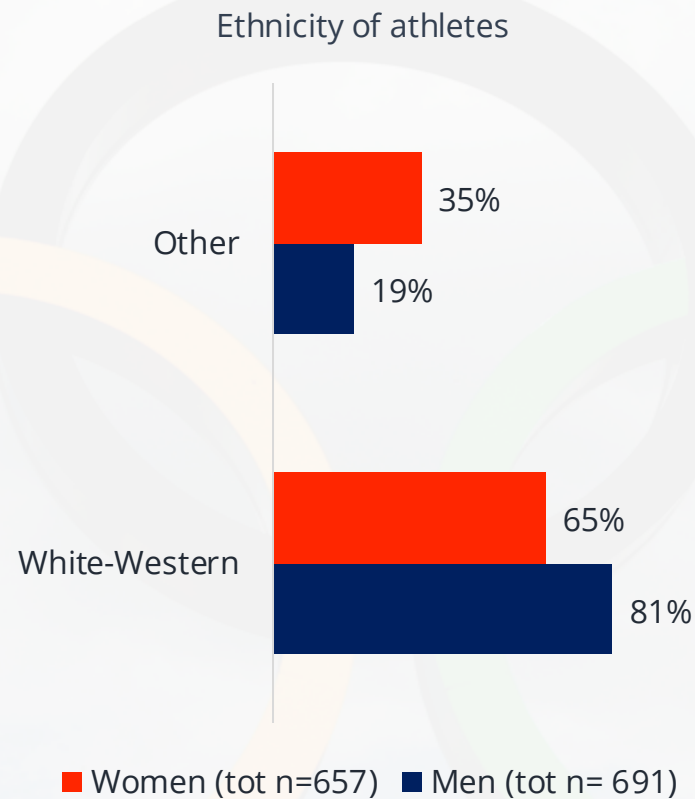
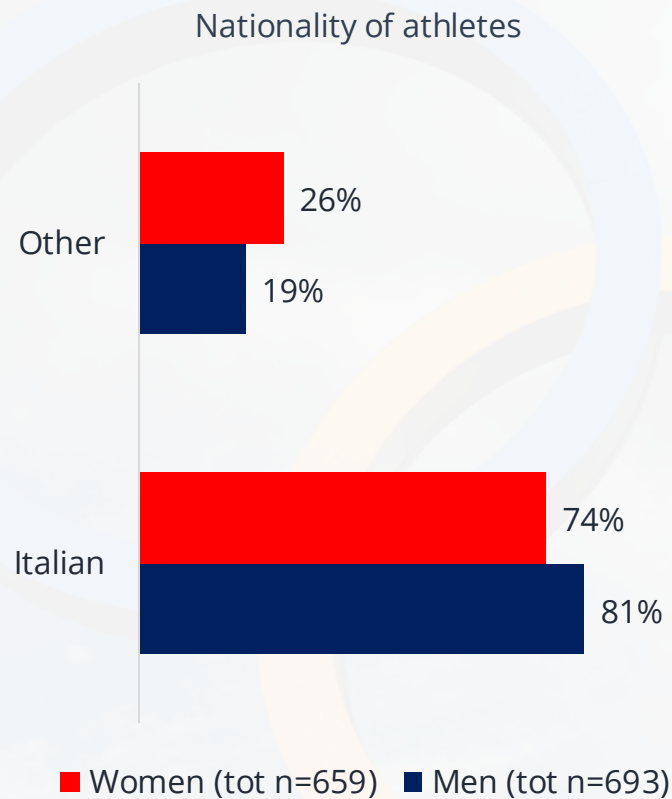


TOT N=1.352

Gender balance

Athletes by diversity

Overall, profiles of athletes of Italian nationality, white-Western ethnicity, and heterosexual orientation prevail, however, diverse profiles also emerge, represented more by women than by men



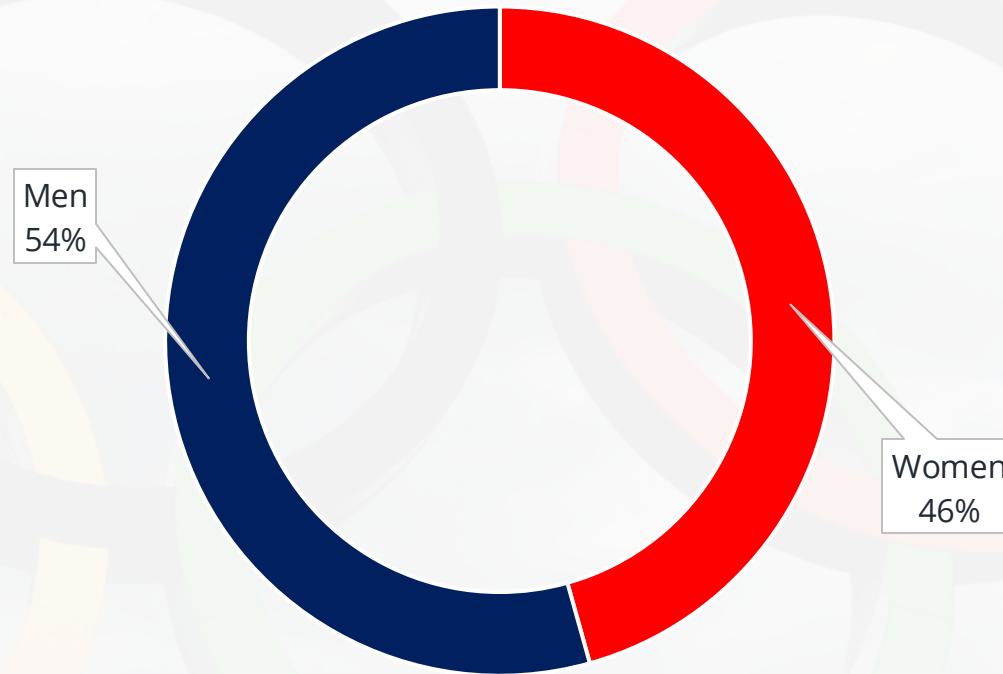
Gender balance

Journalists

The services, interviews, and news read from the studio or broadcast live from Paris or other locations where the Paris 2024 Olympic Games took place were covered by 484 journalists, of whom almost half were women.

For informational purposes, it is specified that each journalist was counted every time they covered a news item or conducted an interview.

Journalists by gender



TOT N=484

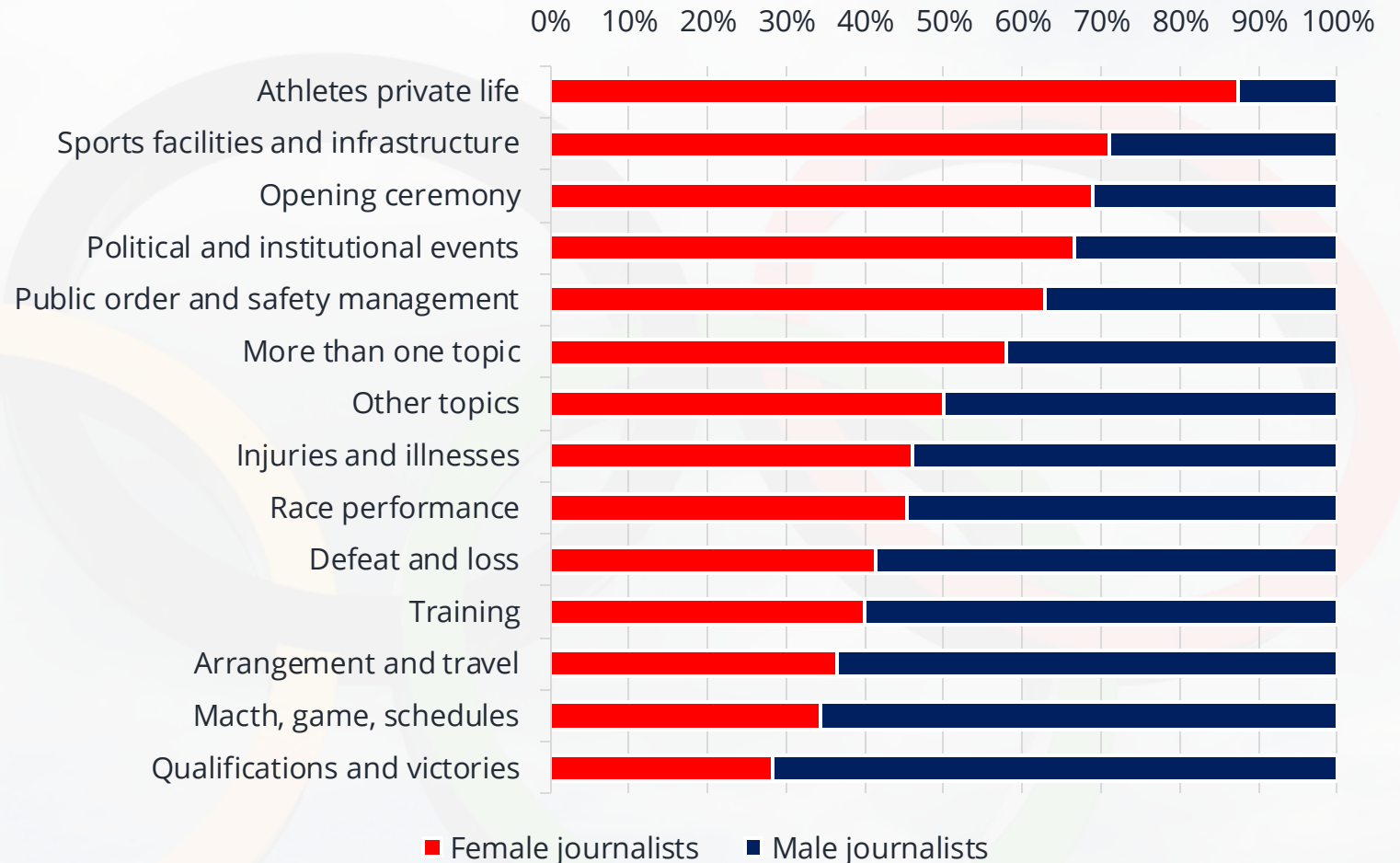
Gender balance

Journalists by topic of the news



While overall coverage of the Olympic Games appears balanced between female and male journalists, the data disaggregated by topic of the news shows that male journalists primarily covered purely sports news, dedicated to competitions, while female journalists covered mostly news of social interest, such as those about the private lives of participants in the Olympic Games or those about the opening ceremony; news about problems with facilities and infrastructure and political and institutional events.

Journalist by gender and topic of news

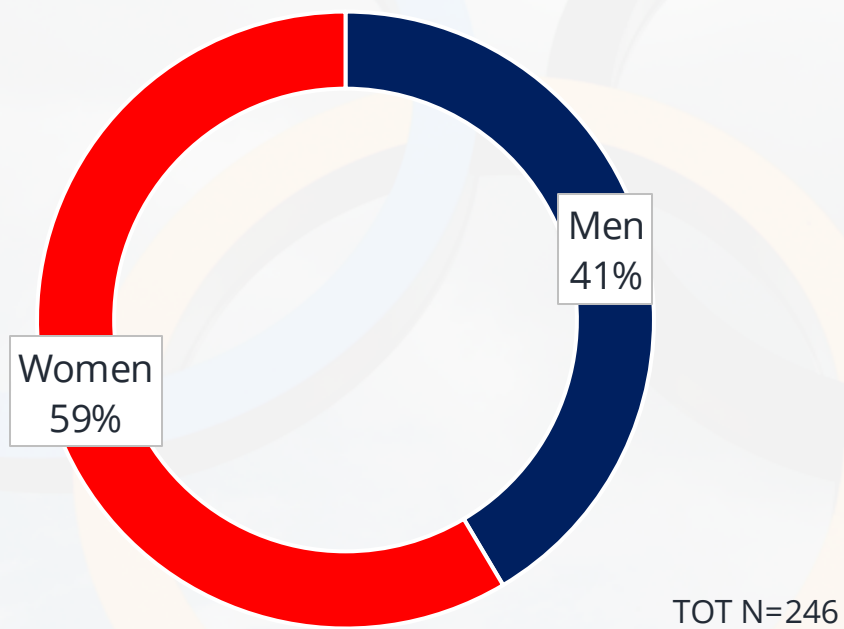


Share of voices

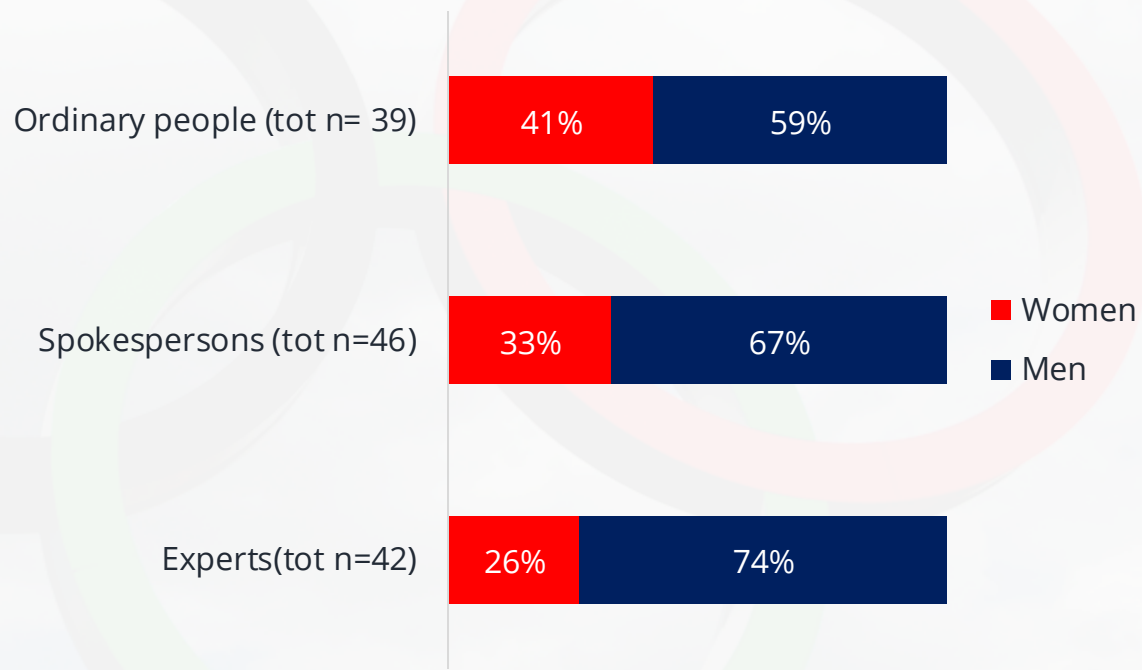
Interviews

Female athletes participating in the Olympic Games were interviewed more than male athletes. Men were asked more often than women as experts or commentators, as spokespersons and as representatives of popular opinion.

Interviews with athletes participating in the Paris Games, by gender



Interviews with experts, spokesperson and ordinary people, by gender



CONCLUSION

The 7 main Italian newscasts dedicated 25 news items per day to the Paris 2024 Olympic Games; on average 3.6 per news program.

This extensive coverage was in line with some of the recommendations contained in the CONI Guidelines, but not with others, on which it will be necessary to work, in view of the next Olympic Games in Milan Cortina 2026.

Results in line with IOC recommendations:

- deconstruction of stereotypes, both female and male;
- overall balanced coverage of Olympic sports, both female and male;
- equal visibility between female and male athletes;
- heterogeneous and inclusive representation of female athletes: although Italian female athletes, female athletes of Western ethnic origin, and heterosexual female athletes prevail, "diverse" female athletes have had visibility with percentages between 10% and 35%, greater than that of "diverse" male athletes (which ranges from a minimum of 0% for sexual orientation to a maximum of 19% for nationality and ethnic origin);
- balance between female and male journalists who signed the reports, interviews, or gave news live from Paris.

Results not in line with IOC recommendations:

- use of language not always inclusive and sometimes sexist;
- use of sexist, objectifying, and sexualized images;
- presence of stereotypes, especially female ones;
- imbalance of shared voices in interviews: women were interviewed a little more than men as participants in the Olympic Games, but significantly less than men as experts or commentators, as spokespersons and also as representatives of popular opinion.

End

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