

GMMP 2025 HIGHLIGHTS OF FINDINGS PROGRESS ON A PLATEAU

Gender equality in and through the world news media across 30 years of media monitoring

On Parallel Tracks: News Media and Gender Equality

The global news media ecosystem has changed profoundly since the Beijing Platform for Action was adopted 30 years ago. Technological advancements, shifts in audience behaviour, and evolving business models have driven change in how news are produced, disseminated, and consumed. Legacy media dominant in 1995 have ceded ground to digital forms, while professional production in media houses has no option but to compete with alternative and social media for audience attention.

Three decades ago, governments regulated the sector with some minimal international oversight, unlike the current considerably more complex regulatory environment. Data privacy laws, content moderation, and government reach are stricter. Audiences are transnational and international collaborations on content production are the norm, unlike three decades ago.

The evolution of women's encounters with the sector across the period has not been as dramatic. The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) ¹ reveals that in many ways, the status quo of gross underrepresentation and misrepresentation in content has persisted. (Figure 1)

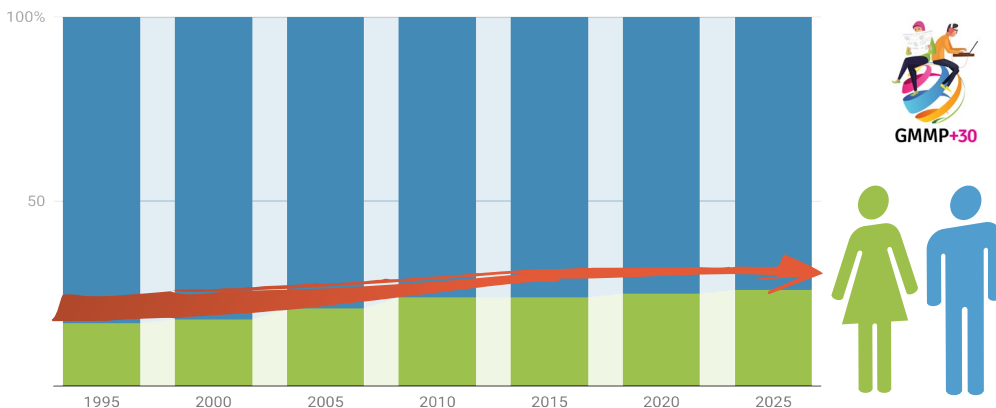


Figure 1.

Source: Global Media Monitoring Project 2025 • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

¹ The GMMP is coordinated by WACC (www.waccglobal.org; www.whomakesthenews.org), an international NGO that promotes communication rights as human rights. The media monitoring research is carried out by the GMMP network composed of women's civil society organisations, feminist groups, researchers in academia, students, associations and unions of journalists, faith-based groups, and various others working in teams in the participating countries. The methodology involves applying a standard tool to "code" news sampled from newspapers, newscasts (radio and television), and news websites. See the technical notes in the final report set for publication in November 2025 for details on the methodology and data analysis procedures.

GMMP Background

The first global monitoring was sparked by a need for empirical evidence on women’s place, role, and participation in the news in comparison to men.

“In the lead up to Beijing, feminist media activists, scholars, and communicators meeting² in Bangkok in 1994 resolved to organize one day at the start of 1995 for the monitoring of all media and to use the data as the basis for analysis of where women were and were not, a decision born from frustration with the widespread lack of respect for the dignity of women in the mainstream news media. Media monitoring was identified as one among several strategies with potential to democratize and decentralize media, as well as assist in promoting communication forms that could challenge the patriarchal nature of media.”³ (Macharia, 2023)

The GMMP grew to become the largest and longest-running research and advocacy initiative for gender equality in and through the news media. In five-year spurts since 1995, the GMMP takes a snapshot of key gender equality dimensions in the news. Across thirty years to date, the GMMP has built the data from over 160 countries, with at least one observation for each variable and country. The year 2025 marks the 7th iteration of the research.

The 7th Global Monitoring Day

On May 6, 2025, we examined news disseminated on radio, television, newspapers, and news websites. Events dominating the news in 2025 up until then included (in Asia) the 7.1 magnitude earthquake in Tibet, the impeachment of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yul and India’s Operation Sindoor in Pakistan; the Sudanese civil war (Africa); the war in Ukraine and elections in Germany (Europe); the war in Palestine (Middle East); elections in Australia (Pacific); and Donald Trump’s re-election, deportations and tariffs, and the Canadian elections (North America).

News agendas on the global monitoring day reflected shared global themes as well as distinct local concerns. Dominant narratives revolved around political instability, governance, economic struggles and election of a new Pope – the major story of the day covered across numerous countries particularly those with a large Roman Catholic population such as across Latin America.

“Politics & Government” was the main major topic analysed on the global monitoring day followed by “Social and Legal” news, “Economy” and “Crime and Violence”. (Figure 2) The sum of these four main major topics represents a little over three quarters (78%) of the news monitored.

Gender-based violence made the news to a small extent. In Australia, for example, multiple high-profile family violence cases were reported. Guatemalan news approached the violent deaths of two women – a psychologist and a TikToker – in different ways.

In other words, the global monitoring day was just another “ordinary” news day.

² The World Association for Christian Communication (WACC-UK), a communications rights organization, convened the conference in partnership with Isis International (Manila) and the International Women’s Tribune Centre (New York). Titled “Women Empowering Communication” the conference held in Bangkok in February 1994 attracted over 430 participants from 80 countries. It was preceded by a series of WACC-initiated regional and national consultations on the need for a global women’s conference to reassess communication developments and plan actions for the future.

³ Read more in the full text of the Bangkok Declaration, outcome of the 1994 “Women Empowering Communication” conference at which the idea of a GMMP was birthed. <https://whomakesthenews.org/wp-content/uploads/who-makes-the-news/Imported/documents/bangkok%20declaration.pdf>

GMMP 2025. The sample. Major topics

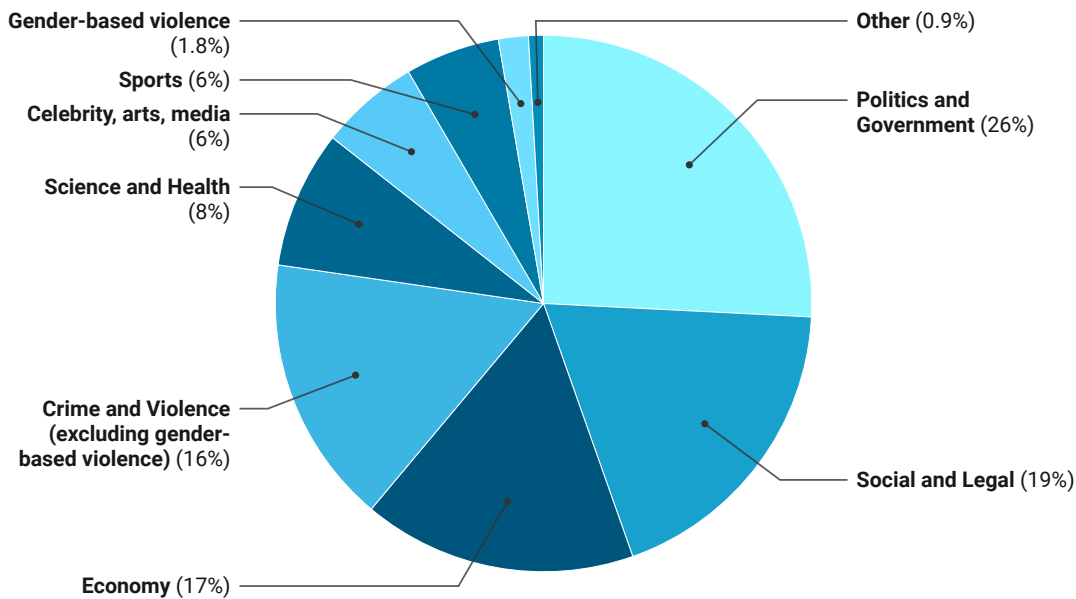


Figure 2.

Source: Global Media Monitoring Project 2025 • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

KEY FINDINGS

1. Progress towards gender equality in the news media is flatlining.

The historical findings indicate that after a slow and steady rise in women's share of visibility and voice in the news, progress began flatlining in 2010, a trend that continues to date. There has been no real positive change during this period, nor has there been notable backsliding on a majority of the gender equality dimensions monitored by the GMMP.

Of the people seen heard or spoken about in print and broadcast news, only 26% are women. (Figure 3) This statistic represents a nine-point change in 30 years, with the latter half of this period contributing a mere two-point rise in women's visibility and voice.

GMMP 1995-2025. News subjects & sources, by sex

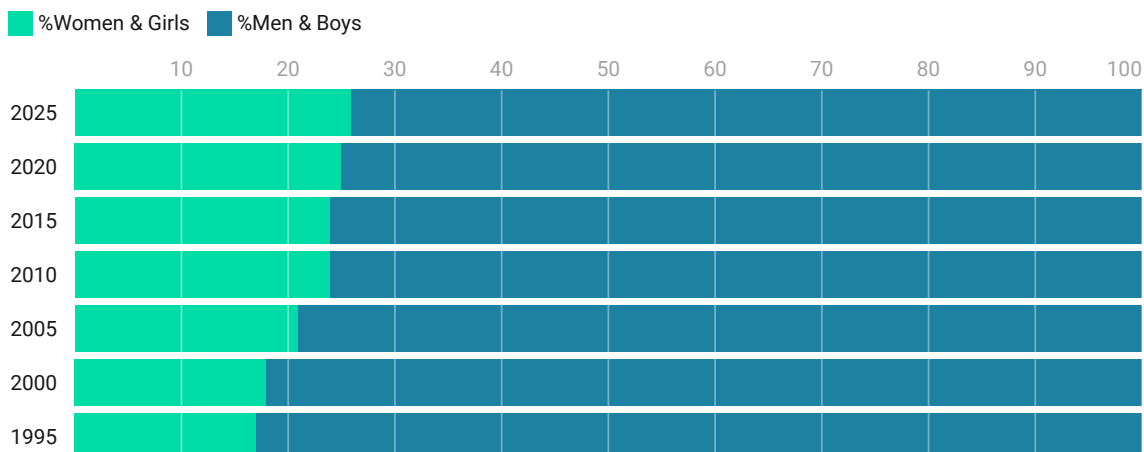


Figure 3.

Source: Global Media Monitoring Project 2025 • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Women are marginally more likely to be featured in stories published online on websites dedicated to the news.

GMMP 1995-2025. %Women in Print, TV and Radio News, by Region

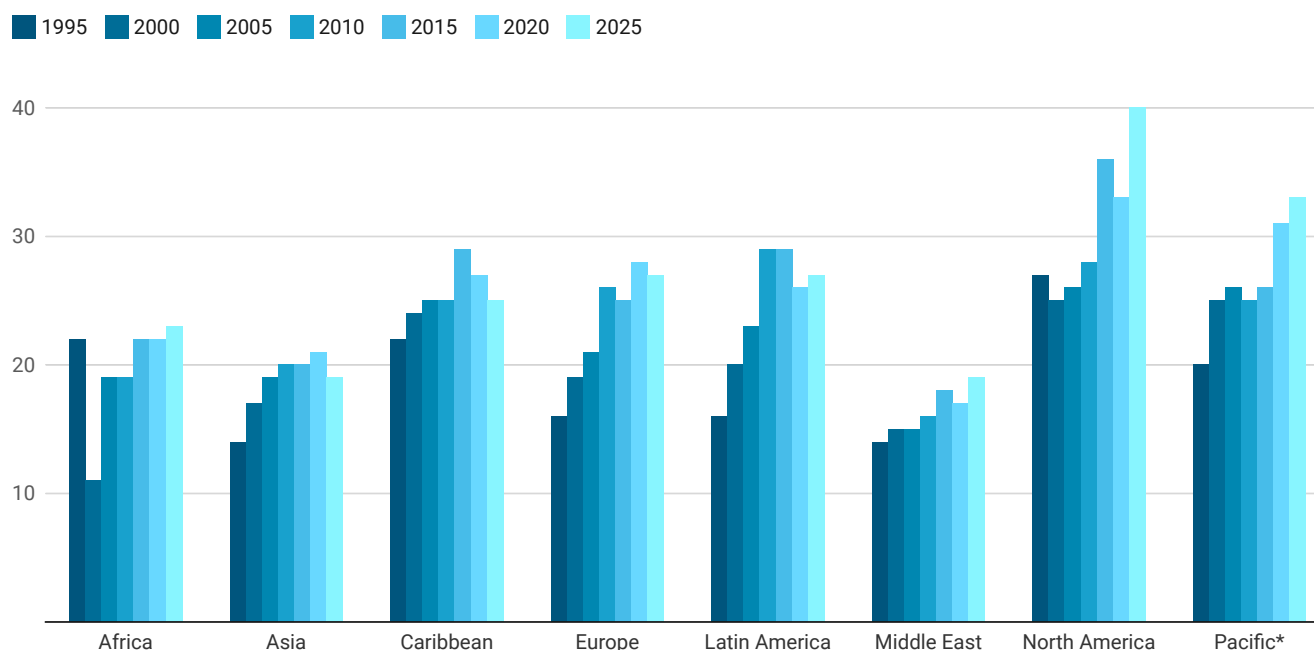


Figure 4.

Source: Global Media Monitoring Project 2025 • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

People from racial, ethnic, religious and other minority groups make up six out of every 100 persons seen, heard or spoken about across traditional and digital news worldwide. Of these, women are 38%. The likelihood that a woman in the news is likely to be from a minority group is less than one in 10.

North American news media are closest to parity, at four out of 10 subjects and sources being women. Asian and Middle Eastern media are at the tail end, with just 19% women of the persons seen, heard or spoken about in the news in both regions.

Women's comparative presence in the core topics of politics and the economy rose 2 points and 1 point respectively between 2020 and 2025, 6 points in science and health stories – a “correction” of the 2020 Covid era status when women had been displaced from prominence in this topic. In social and legal news, however, women's share of subjects and sources declined 4 points. (Figure 5)

Overall, the sluggish pace of change between 2010 and 2025 suggests that some structural transformation in the dimensions measured by the GMMP has taken place but progress has reached an impasse. Under the current conditions, remarkable change towards gender equality is unlikely.

The impact of digitalization on the news industry and on gender relations online as a whole will make advancement in securing women's rights in and through digital news more complex.

GMMP 1995-2025. % Women as news subjects & sources

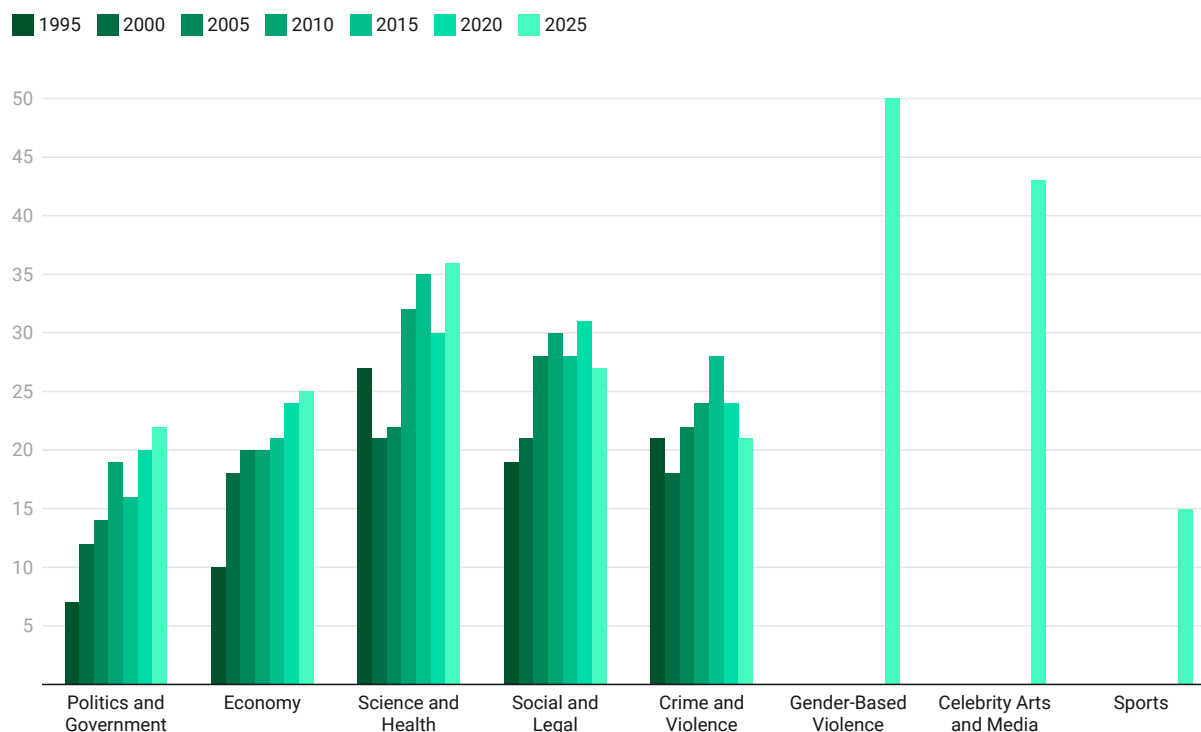


Figure 5.

Source: Global Media Monitoring Project 2025 • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

2. Despite its prominence in the lives of 50% of the population, gender-based violence barely makes the news.

Various forms of gender-based violence (GBV) offline and online are featured in less than two out of every 100 news articles worldwide. Of these, less than 2% focus on gender-based violence against men. (Figure 6)

GMMP 2025. Story focus within GBV news

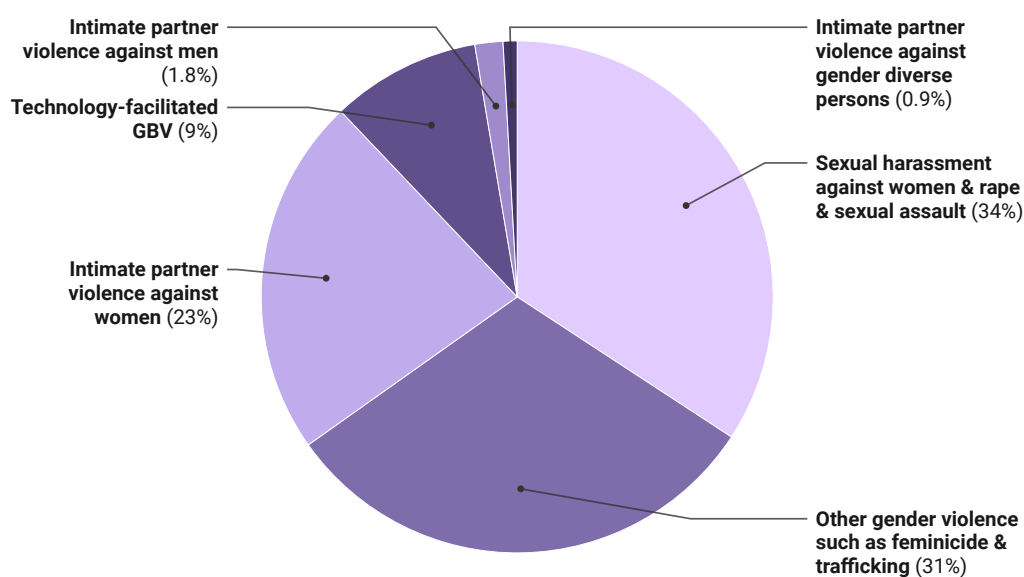


Figure 6.

Source: Global Media Monitoring Project 2025 • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

At the same time, GBV stories are more likely to make it to online news than to print, radio and TV news combined.

Gender-diverse persons are 0.4% of subjects and sources, appearing in newspapers and web-published stories on technology-facilitated GBV, sexual harassment/rape/sexual assault of women and other forms of gender violence such as femicide. (Figure 7)

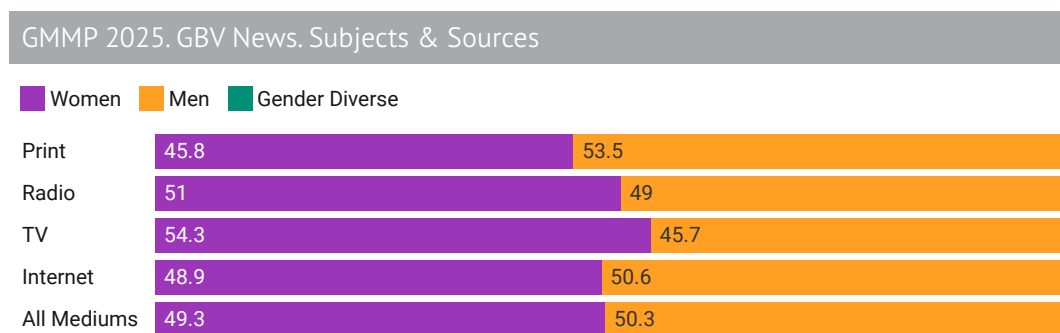
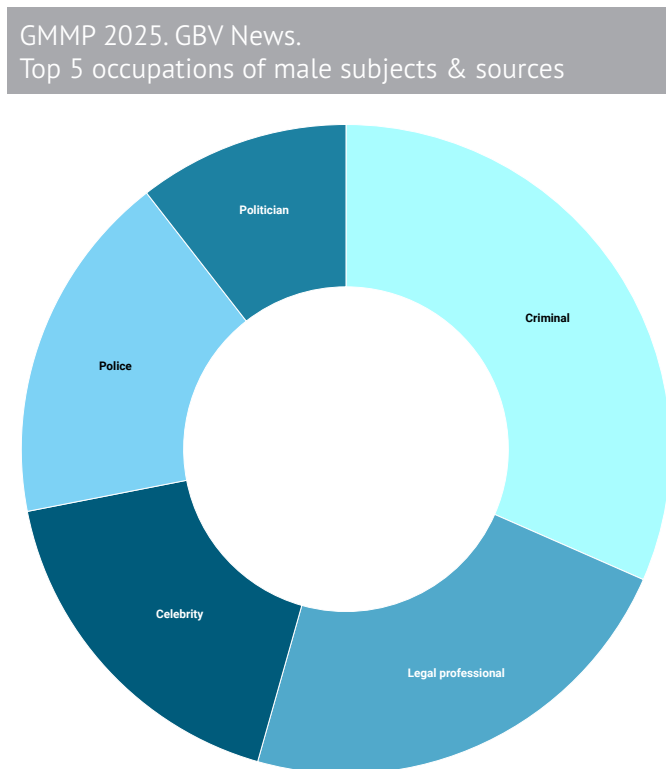


Figure 7.

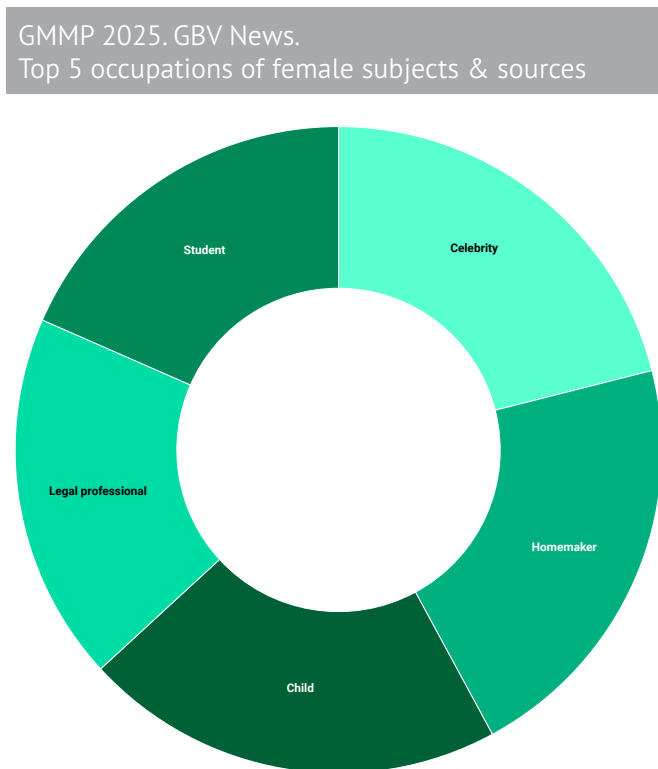
Source: Global Media Monitoring Project 2025 • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

A little over 50% of persons in GBV news are men. The position or occupation of 16% of them (and 31% of women) is not stated. For those whose vocations are given, males are most likely to be criminals, legal professionals or law enforcement personnel (Figure 9), while females are celebrities, homemakers and children. (Figure 8)



Source: Global Media Monitoring Project 2025 • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Figure 8.



Source: Global Media Monitoring Project 2025 • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Figure 9.

Men dominate as reporters across the news. However, almost 3% of female journalists report GBV news, compared to just over 2% of male reporters. Gender-based violence is more likely to have visibility in the news if the reporter is a woman.

More than 50% of female journalists in GBV news cover sexual harassment, rape, sexual assault and intimate partner violence against women. (Figure 10) Just under one half of men report on other forms of gender violence including feminicide and trafficking of women and girls.

50% of the almost one in ten stories on technology-facilitated gender-based violence are reported by women.

GMMP 2025. GBV News. Reporters by story focus

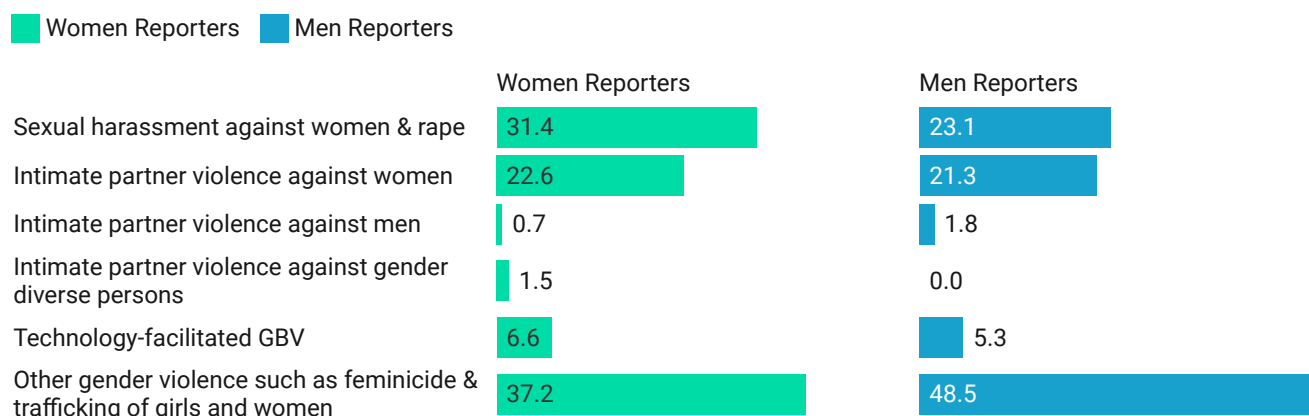


Figure 10.

Source: Global Media Monitoring Project 2025 • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

38% of GBV articles refer to gender equality and/or human rights policy or legislation.

Only 13% clearly challenge gender stereotypes.

3. Women's participation as sources continues to be primarily in ordinary roles, as popular opinion providers and interviewees giving eyewitness accounts.

Evidence of the media's recognition of women's expertise, despite the strides they have made in the professions, is still lacking three decades post Beijing. Additionally, their proportion as people who the news are about has not changed in the past five years. Media representation of women as people in unremarkable roles, speaking only based only on popular opinion, has risen sharply, by nine points in 10 years.

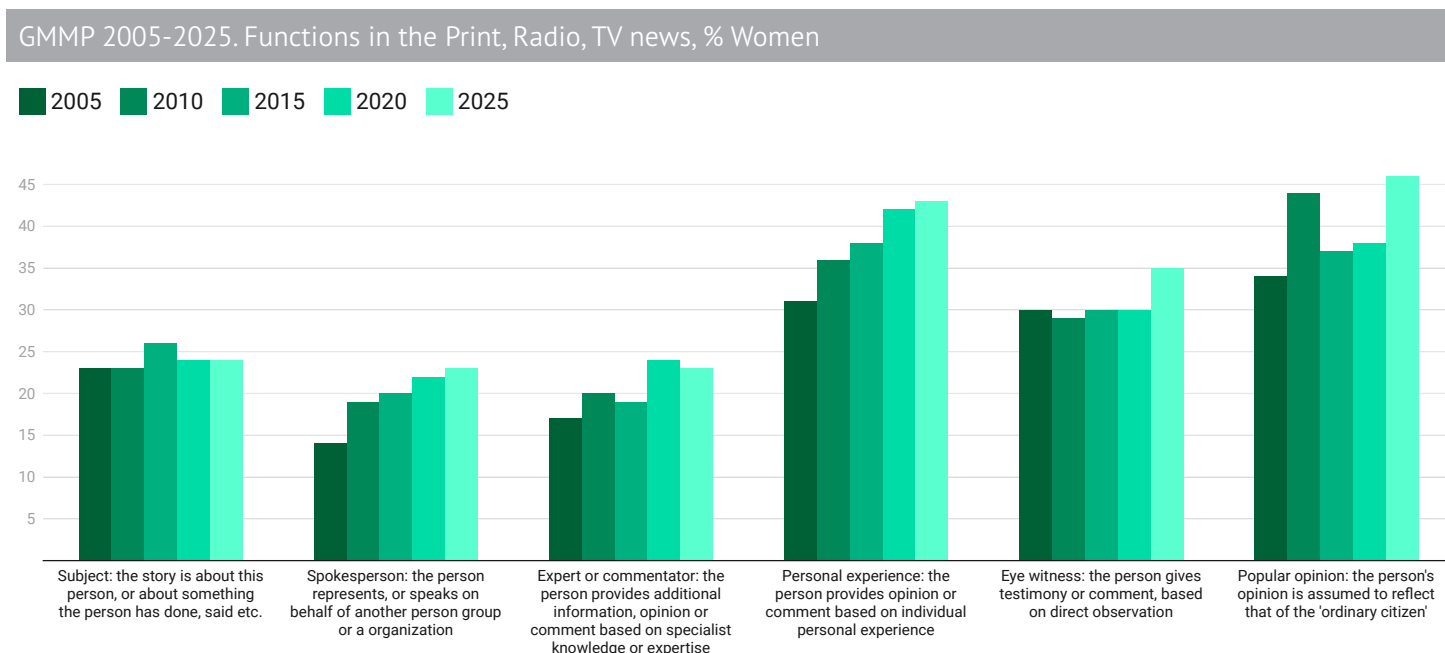


Figure 11.

Source: Global Media Monitoring Project 2025 • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

4. Strides continue to be made towards gender parity in the news reporter role.

The Beijing Platform called for women's equal access to media expression and decision-making. Three decades later, 41% of reporters in legacy news articles are women, an improvement from 1995's 28% but still not equal.

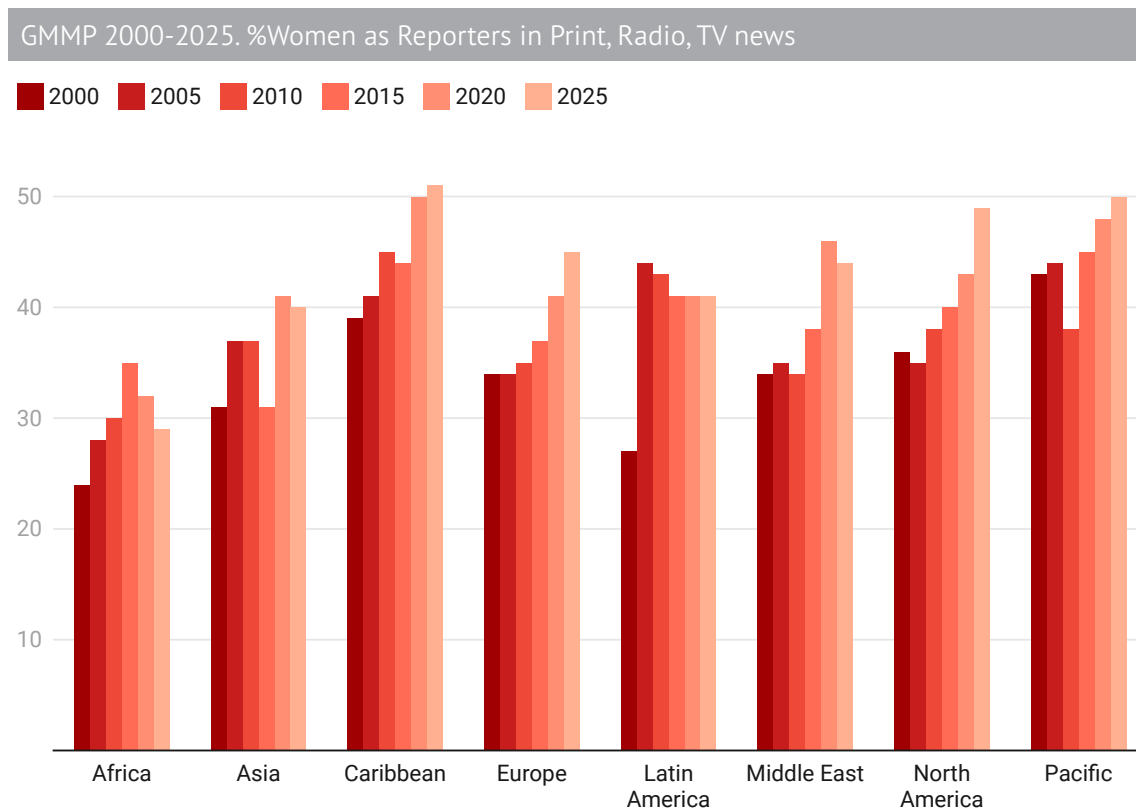


Figure 12.

Source: Global Media Monitoring Project 2025 • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Notable progress has been made in Latin America, North America and the Caribbean towards gender equality in the news reporter role in legacy news. (Figure 12) The proportion of female reporters has risen 14, 13 and 12 points respectively since the year 2000 when this indicator was included in the GMMP. The largest gender gap remains in Africa where less than three in 10 reporters on television, radio and in print news, is female.

5. Digital news seems not to be a clear pathway to greater inclusion of women as media professionals.

The Internet's importance for news delivery that peaked during the pandemic period continues today.⁴ Yet, while the proportion of female online reporters shot up from 25% in 2015 to 42% in 2020, it rose just one point in 2025 to 43%.

Currently, women are slightly overrepresented as online news reporters in North America, and almost at parity in the Pacific and the Caribbeans regions. (Figure 13) The most severe underrepresentation is in Africa where the proportion fell 4 points from 2020 to 2025. The gender gap in online news reporting widened in three regions – Africa (4-point decline), Latin America (-5 points) and the Middle East (-6 points).

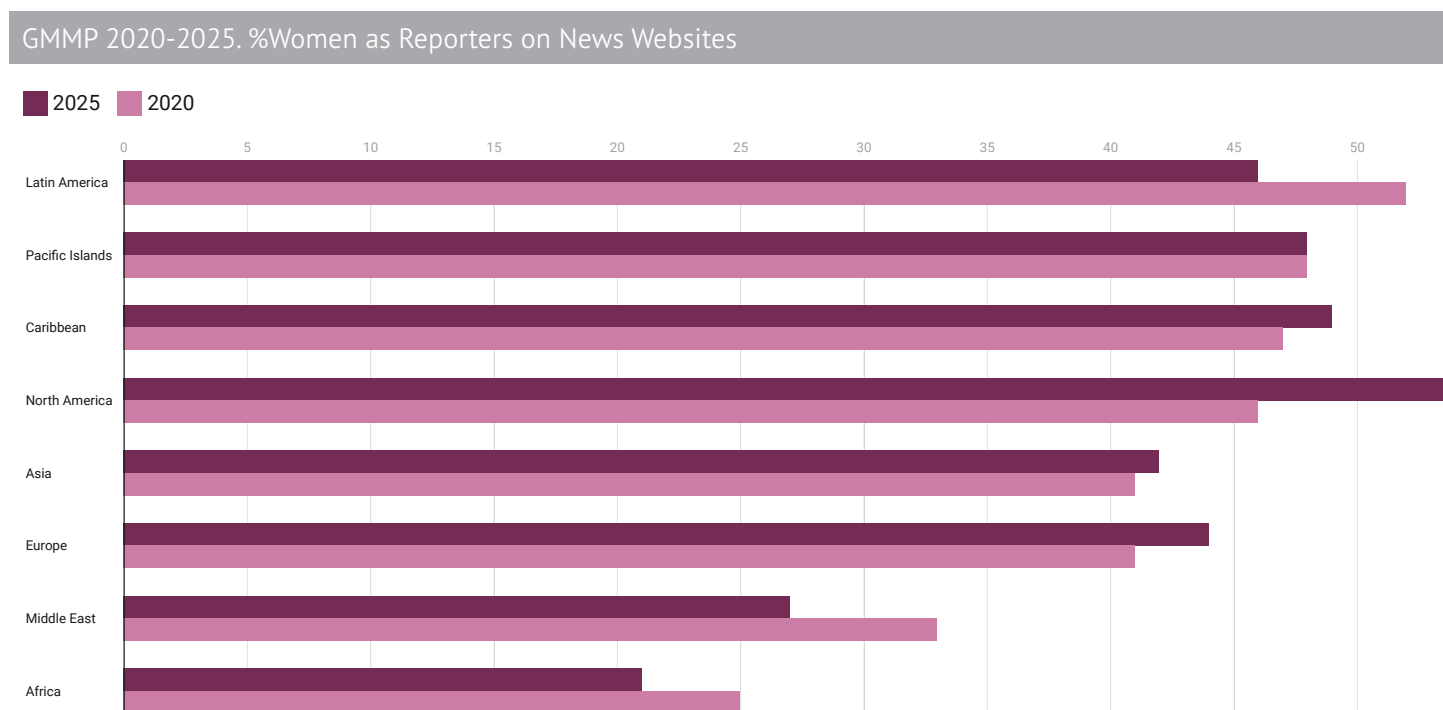


Figure 13.

Source: Global Media Monitoring Project 2025 • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

⁴ The sample available for GMMP 2025 monitoring provides fresh evidence of the death or decline of legacy media, displaced by digital channels providing content on dedicated news sites.

6. Historical patterns confirm that women reporters are much more likely to select female news subjects than their male counterparts.

Reporter gender difference in source selection has ranged between 5 to 6 points across the 30-year period, except in 2015 when it was only 3 points. (Figure 14) The gap was exceptionally wide during the Covid-19 pandemic news season. 2025 marks a return to a 5-point gap; 29% of those who appear, are heard, interviewed or discussed in stories by women journalists are women, compared to 24% in stories written by men. Women remain much more likely to be featured in stories by female reporters than in those by male journalists.

GMMP 2025. Selection of female subjects and sources by sex of reporter

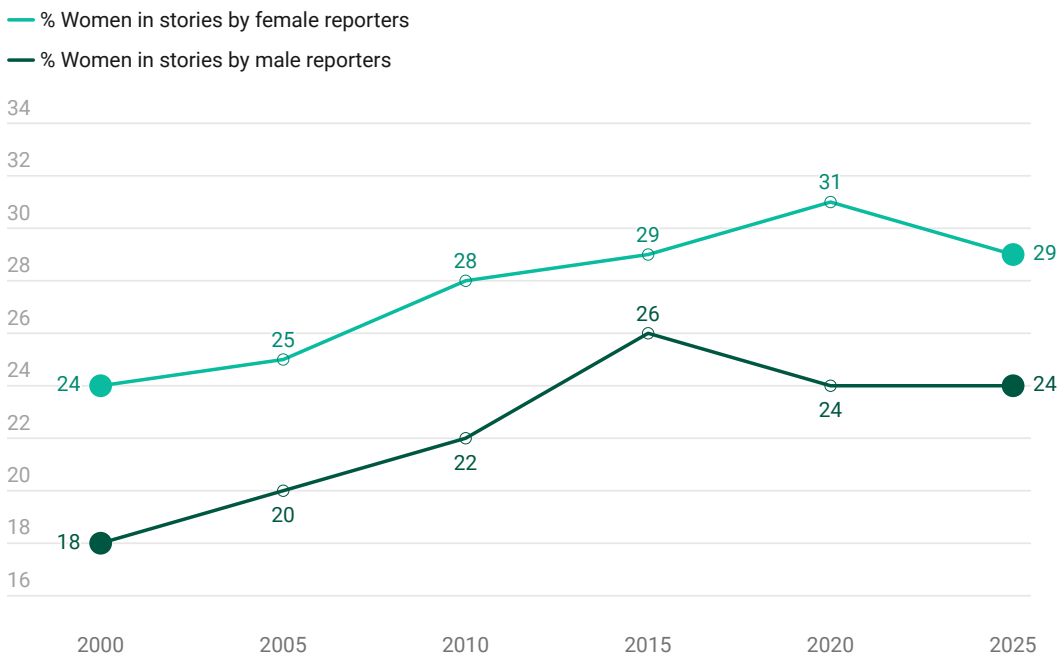


Figure 14.

Source: Global Media Monitoring Project 2025 • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

7. The Beijing Platform demanded non-stereotyped portrayals, reinforced by the recent Pact for the Future (2024) which requires action to dismantle barriers for women and girls. In 2025, gender stereotypes are more entrenched than they ever were over the past 30 years.

Gender stereotypes are the type of structural discrimination condemned in the Pact. Journalism that clearly challenges gender stereotypes is declining globally to levels never seen before in the GMMP monitoring. The 30-year findings suggest that news media remains a sticky barrier of inequality. Only two out of every 100 stories are likely to portray women and men in ways that debunk simplistic societal beliefs about their gender-based traits, roles, capabilities or behaviour.

The GMMP message in 2025, thirty years post-Beijing, is a global news industry whose progress towards gender equality has reached a crossroads. Proof of the successful implementation of the media recommendations in the Beijing blueprint is yet to be seen in the data. Strategic objectives J.1 (increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication) and J.2 (promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media) remain unfinished business.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The almost standstill pace of change in the past 15 years points to a need for a reset, a radical shift in strategies by all actors in the news ecosystem. Recycling old approaches is unlikely to break through an inertia that has persisted since 2010 on most of the gender in news dimensions studied by the GMMP. Worse still, the deepening crises in gender equality and women's rights in the broader environment in which news organisations are embedded call for a complete re-think of approaches, rather than more of the same, all things remaining equal.

It will be necessary to:

1. Impress upon policy makers in government that gender equality in media is an issue of national security, economic stability and democracy.
2. Move the burden of change from those outside the sector into news organisations themselves.
3. Develop a water-tight business case for gender equality in the news industry.
4. Encourage civil society and media development supporters to pivot from building alternative news systems centred on women, to opening pathways for women's participation in the mainstream news sector where the bulk of audiences are found.
5. Implement all the recommendations of the UN Pact for the Future and its Digital Compact that touch on gender equality and gender justice.

KEY FINDINGS: 1995 - 2025

	1995		2000		2005		2010		2015		2020		2025	
	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M	%F	%M
A. People in the news														
by Medium														
Newspaper, Television, Radio (NRT)	17	83	18	82	21	79	24	76	24	76	25	75	26	74
Newspapers	16	84	17	83	21	79	24	76	26	74	26	74	26	74
Television	21	79	22	78	22	78	24	76	24	76	26	74	28	72
Radio	15	85	13	87	17	83	22	78	21	79	23	77	22	78
News websites							23	77	25	75	28	72	28	72
							<i>pilot</i>	<i>pilot</i>						
By Major topic. NRT														
Science & Health	27	73	21	79	22	78	32	68	35	65	30	70	36	64
Social & Legal	19	81	21	79	28	72	30	70	28	72	31	68	27	73
Crime & Violence	21	79	18	82	22	78	24	76	28	72	24	76	21	79
Gender-based violence (1)													50	50
Celebrity, Arts, Media & Sports (2)	24	76	23	77	28	72	26	74	23	77	25	75	-	-
Celebrity, Arts & Media (3)													43	57
Sports (4)													15	85
Economy	10	90	18	82	20	80	20	80	21	79	24	76	25	75
Politics & Government	7	93	12	88	14	86	19	81	16	84	20	80	22	78
Gender & Related (5)											47	53	-	-
by Function in Story. NRT														
Personal Experience					31	69	36	64	38	62	42	58	43	57
Popular Opinion					34	66	44	56	37	63	38	62	46	54
Eye Witness					30	70	29	71	30	70	30	70	35	65
Subject					23	77	23	77	26	74	24	76	24	76
Spokesperson					14	86	19	81	20	80	22	78	23	77
Expert					17	83	20	80	19	81	24	76	23	77
B. Reporting and Presenting the News														
% Stories reported	28	72	31	69	37	63	37	63	37	63	40	60	41	59
Television			36	64	42	58	44	56	38	62	45	55	43	57
Radio			28	72	45	55	37	63	41	59	37	63	43	57
Newspapers			26	74	29	71	33	67	35	65	37	63	38	62
% Stories reported on news websites											42	58	43	57
C. News Content														
% Stories that Challenge Gender Stereotypes. NRT					3		6		4		3		2	
% Stories that Highlight Gender (In)Equality. NRT					4		6		9		7		8	

Notes

1. “Gender-based violence” was introduced in GMMP 2025 as a new major topic. Stories coded under this topic are those on sexual harassment against women, rape, sexual assault, intimate partner violence against women, intimate partner violence against men, intimate partner violence against gender diverse persons, technology-facilitated GBV and other forms of gender violence such as femicide, trafficking of girls and women and female genital mutilation (FGM).
2. “Celebrity, Arts, Media & Sports” was substituted with two new major topics in 2025: (i) Celebrity, Arts & Media; (ii) Sports
3. “Celebrity, Arts & Media” – a new major topic in GMMP 2025
4. “Sports” – a new major topic in GMMP 2025
5. “Gender & Related” introduced in 2020 captured stories on gender-based violence against women, gender pay gap and similar gender-specific news. This topic was dropped in 2025.

Consult the GMMP 2025 Highlights of Findings online at

<https://whomakesthenews.org/gmmp-2025-key-findings>

To receive the full report with extended analyses, regional and country results (November 2025), please contact gmmp@waccglobal.org.

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