

Date: 28 September 2018

Region: European Union



The European Platform of Regulatory Authorities (EPRA) has released a report looking at the representation of women in the audio visual media industry. The report looks both at women's roles on-screen, as well as in more technical positions in the industry off-screen. The report covers a variety of both EU and non-EU countries, including France, Italy, the UK and Hungary. Overall, the report concludes that there is still a significant imbalance between men and women, both on and off screen. However, EPRA also sees hope for the future.

When discussing the lack of women in the industry, the report states: "Across Europe, there are disparities between the representation of men and women both on- and off-screen. Women appear less on screen across a range of genres and are typically subject to more stereotypical and degrading portrayal than men. In off-screen creative roles, women are also generally under-represented, but most significantly in senior and/or technical positions."

The mention here of stereotypes and degrading roles is significant. A distinction has to be made

between the number of roles women receive, and the type of roles women receive. If the majority of female roles are stereotypical and degrading, then this is not an improvement. The report elaborates: “In terms of portrayal, the existence of stereotypes and the related issue of a lack of women experts seemed to dominate the research and discussions. Women are confined to roles which portray them as less authoritative and less multi-faceted, which does not reflect the diversity of women which programmes and adverts seek to depict.”



Off-screen representation often translates into what we see on our televisions. If more women

get the opportunity to get involved behind the scenes in the audio visual media industry, chances are we will see more women on-screen too. The report uses the example of Macedonia to portray the gender split at the managerial levels of TV stations. In the past 5 years, there have been over double the amount of male managers as opposed to female managers. At the technical staff level, women only make up a very small amount of staff, and a similar trend can be seen in the production staff as well. This case exemplifies the clear lack of women in off-screen roles, and shows us what changes need to be made.

The report concludes with a message of hope: “Reflecting on the outcomes of the EPRA questionnaire, as well as on the deliberations in the EPRA Working Group in Luxembourg, it is evident that there is an appetite and energy among many broadcasting regulators to address issues of gender representation both on- and off-screen in the European audio visual sector.” EPRA seems optimistic that trends will change, and that we will start to see more women in all areas of the audio visual sector. For some, what seems most clear is that it is still a long road before we get there.

You can read the full report [here](#) .