

# DIVERSITY IN MEDIA AND MEDIA MANAGEMENT

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## A HANDBOOK



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**“UNITY, NOT UNIFORMITY, MUST  
BE OUR AIM. WE ATTAIN UNITY  
ONLY THROUGH VARIETY.  
DIFFERENCES MUST BE  
INTEGRATED, NOT ANNIHILATED,  
NOT ABSORBED” - (MARY PARKER  
FOLLETT).**

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**“WHEN WE LOSE THE RIGHT TO BE  
DIFFERENT, WE LOSE THE  
PRIVILEGE TO BE FREE” -  
(CHARLES EVANS HUGHES).**

# EDITORIAL

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# EDITORIAL

This handbook is based on the work of eight students from the Institute of Journalism and Communication Research (IJK) Hanover, Germany. The starting point for the research and development of this handbook was a Master's class called "Diversity in Media Management". One thing we have learned in this class is that it is important to be aware of your own privilege (individually but also socially) before talking about issues of diversity. We have become aware of that privilege.

As mostly white females and one woman of color we are well-educated living in Western Europe. We spent a full semester studying and looking historically, institutionally and structurally at issues of diversity from different perspectives, as researchers and as students. With this handbook, we want to share that knowledge and draw attention to remaining diversity issues in the media industry.

The topic of diversity is important for us because there is still no equality and equity regarding gender and/or ethnicities and other marginalized groups. With this handbook we want

to make a contribution, create transparency and highlight issues in different media sectors.

## ABOUT THE AUTORS

### **Teresa Becker**

As a student in the Media and Music MA as well as a booker and project manager in the music business, I aim to include diversity matters in every point of my work. To me, it is important to increase awareness of how diverse our society is and to mirror this diversity in all fields of business to come up with change.

### **Antonia Bührig**

Besides studying Media and Communication Research, I work in the startup industry getting insights on how diverse companies can be if they strive to be. As a co-author of this handbook, I try to make diversity as accessible as possible for everyone, in particular media institutions.

### **Ashley Morais Duarte**

I am a woman of color, working in the media business. With a BA in

Media Management and currently as a MA-student at the Institute of Journalism and Communication, the topic of diversity in the media business and the lack thereof is a big deal to me. It is important to show companies that they may have to do better.

### **Elisabeth Hopfe**

Currently in the final year of the Media and Communication Research Master's program at IJK, societal change and diversity are important topics to me both in research and practice. I think we should all educate ourselves, especially being white, and we should strive for a diverse and inclusive world.

### **Inga Ludewig**

As a postgraduate student in my final year of studies, taking the diversity class and writing about the situation in the media industry was truly my favorite part of studying. There is no need to experience discrimination first hand in order to educate yourself about it. Being part of a society within which inequity is reality should be enough.

### **Marie Pavlovsky**

I am studying in the master's program Communication and Media Research at IJK. Diversity to me means opening up and taking the chance to show appreciation and learn from each other. And when did that ever hurt?

### **Alina Robben**

I am in the final year of my postgraduate studies and I am also volunteering for an organization against sexual violence. In doing so, I have learned that real and lasting change is possible only if we are all willing to listen, learn, and take action against any kind of discrimination.

### **Ilaria Scarfò**

I am a master's student in Corporate Communication with a degree in Communication Research. I speak English, Italian, Spanish and French and I am passionate about different cultures. I believe the way diversity is represented affects the way diversity feels.

**In this context, we also want to acknowledge three important and inspiring women, who have influenced and contributed to this handbook.**

The first is **Mandy Tröger**, our lecturer, who spent a semester teaching us about privilege, whiteness and the current situation in the media industry.

**Dasha Ilic** - an independent journalist and member of the Institute for Diversity - was a guest speaker in our seminar and came up with the idea of a handbook. She came to talk to us about her work,

the institute and XY. At the end, she motivated us to elaborate our findings in this handbook.

**Chloe Sesta Jacobs (CSJ)** - Global Director Inclusion & Engagement at Deputy - was a guest speaker in our seminar and talked to us about the steps she took at Deputy to increase awareness for diversity and inclusion topics and improve both at the same time.

# INTRODUCTION

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# INTRODUCTION

Today, people in every field and area are discussing issues of diversity: from the most renowned companies to the smallest schools in the neighborhood. Indeed, the whole history of life on earth teaches us that diversity is needed. This is also the case for the history of ideas, as well as the diversity of cultures, philosophies, models, strategies and inventions. They all have allowed for the birth and development of various civilizations. As stated by the Universal Declaration of Human and Citizen Rights (1948), people are all equal, that is, they all have the same rights, the right to life, health, respect, the freedom to fulfill themselves according to their wishes, the right to express their opinions, to choose their religion. From this point of view, diversity is an irreplaceable resource.

Being equal, therefore, means having the same rights. However, it does not mean to look alike, to think, to speak, to dress, to behave all in the same way. Bringing different experiences to the table helps to change the perception of ideas for the better. All humans have their own way of seeing things, which is influenced by lifestyle, family environment and the cultural and social environment of which they are part. Thus, while everyone has their own language, their own customs and their own skin color, the perception of what is recognized as “right” or “normal” is influenced by the historical, social and geopolitical context in which people grow up.

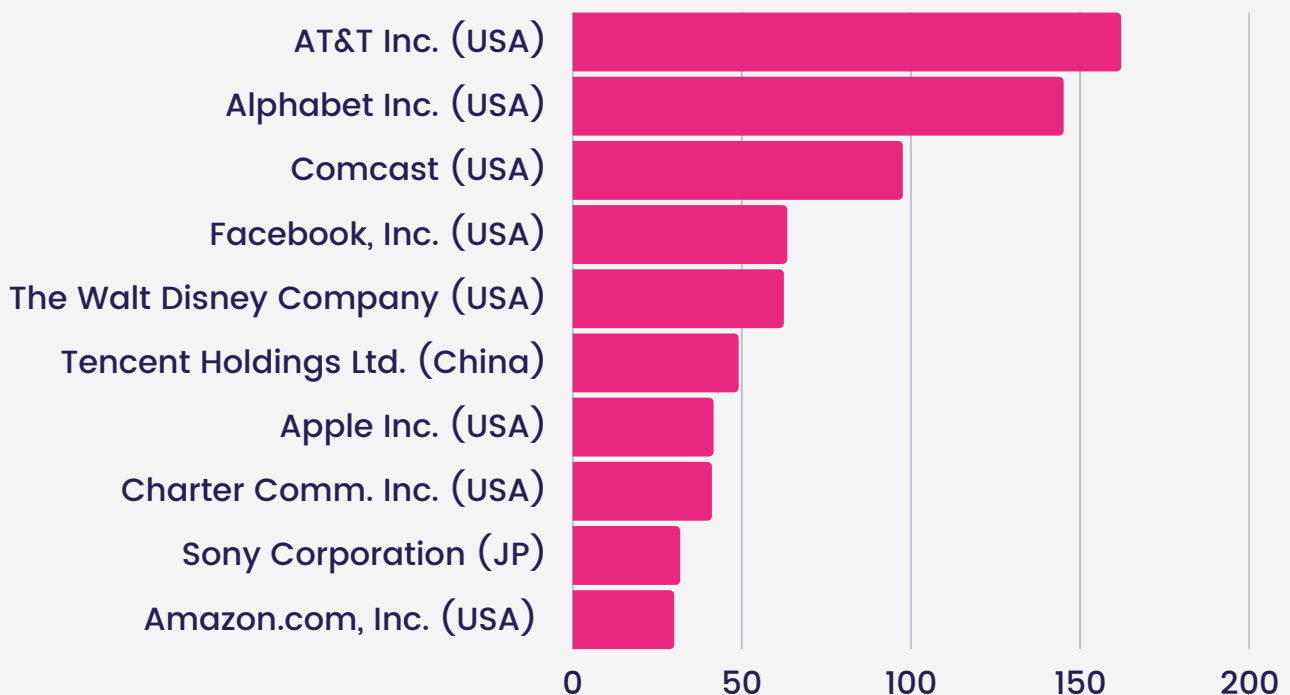
**"Diversity refers to the many ways our individual identities differ. These differences affect our perspectives about the world, how we're perceived by others, how we are included or excluded in our environments and whether we are given or denied certain benefits of membership in the society in which we are in." - Michelle Silverthorn, Authentic Diversity: How to Change the Workplace for Good**

This handbook is based on European and US-American data and research for several reasons. The first, which also justifies the other reasons, is that media production and distribution in music, film or television still are very Western-centric, in particular US-centric. This relates broadly to concepts of “Americanization”, a phenomenon understood as a long-term process through which the United States has tried to shape a whole part of the world according to its own principles (e.g. capitalism, democracy etc.) by being able to export a number of social, political and cultural principles (Fluck,1999).

But differently, what happens inside the US affects the outside world in particular when it comes to cultural industries and communications (e.g. music, film, television etc.). The second reason why this handbook focuses on US data is due to the current situation of the global communication and media system. Nowadays, US tech-companies are the biggest players in the media and communication industry. In 2020, eight out of the ten largest media and communication companies in the world were located in the United States:

## LEADING MEDIA COMPANIES IN 2020, BY REVENUE

(in billion euros)



(Guttman, 2021)

Thus, though there is international competition, for instance from China or India, there is an undeniably strong global dominance of US media and communication corporations: search engines such as Google, social media platforms such as Facebook, giant conglomerates like The Walt Disney company or streaming services such as Netflix are just some examples. Thus, also their approaches to diversity (or the lack thereof) affect all of us. Last but not least, another reason for the US focus of this handbook relates to the data itself: US data and research on issues of diversity and inclusivity management is easily accessible. This is because US companies were among the first to discuss these issues. The question of data is much more complicated, however, when one looks at different countries in Europe or the global south. Still, with the global spread of US media and communication corporations, it can be expected that there will be greater corporate awareness for issues of diversity in the future. This makes it even more important to have a differentiated understanding of diversity issues.

Indeed, for some time now, diversity has been playing an increasing role within companies and among employers (La'Wanna Harris, 2019). Diversity management aims to promote the social diversity of employees in order to use diversity constructively for the company. Internal factors, such as gender, sexual orientation and ethnic origin

and external factors, such as marital status and parenthood, play a role. However, it is also important to emphasize that diversity can amount to more than that. Diversity within companies should help different employees with individual backgrounds come together to strengthen tolerance and also contribute to the strategic success of the company (Jacob et al., 2020).

**"To attain diversity means to develop a workforce with representatives from many different groups - for example, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, abilities and cultural background." - (La'Wanna Harris, 2019, p. 65)**

A tolerant and inclusive human resource policy should help to attract employees for whom diversity and equal opportunities as well as a multicultural and diverse corporate culture are an important part of broader societal change. However, it is not enough to hire a few women or people of color to show how diverse a company is. Simple lip service is a fallacy. Companies as well as their workforce must be open to creating a diverse and respectful environment (La'Wanna Harris, 2019)

**"Having a more diverse workforce is only the start." - (Unermann et al., 2020, p. xxv)**

Diversity of people will not automatically translate into diversity of thought and improved business performance unless organizations create the respective culture and individuals have high emotional intelligence (Jacob et al., 2020).

# WHAT IS DIVERSITY AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

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# WHAT & WHY?

In literature, diversity includes various dimensions of differences between people: ethnic and cultural origin, gender, health/disability, sexual orientation, age, and sometimes also access to resources such as educational opportunities and financial resources (Schlote & Götz, 2010). Since there is more data on gender and race than on other aspects of diversity, we focus on these topics in this handbook.

To answer the question what diversity is and why it is so important - in particular for the media sector - we will look at issues of “whiteness” and “white privilege”, “objectivity” and the “power of media” for social communities.

## WHITENESS AND WHITE PRIVILEGE

To discuss diversity, we have to acknowledge whiteness and in result, white privilege. Leek (2014) defines whiteness as “a set of practices that function to protect and maintain privilege, while others define whiteness simply as the experience of privilege” (p. 214,

**“Whiteness can be defined as hyper-visibility, which counterintuitively leads to invisibility” - (Lindner, 2018, p.44)**

quoted from Lindner, 2018, p. 44). Another definition identifies whiteness as “the production and reproduction of dominance rather than subordination, normativity rather than marginality, and privilege rather than disadvantage” (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 236). Of course, whiteness is even more complex, but these definitions highlight whiteness as something that places white people in dominant positions with privileges; privileges they are not aware of (Green et al., 2007). Moreover, being white is seen as the “norm.” It does not need specification of ethnic and cultural background nor does it require negotiating cultural identity, in contrast to black and people of color (BPoC). Put differently, white people do not need to code-switch to better fit in with their surroundings, while BPoC constantly switch to adhere to white norms (Lindner, 2018, p. 51 ff.).

Even today, “racism is identified as an individual trait or behavior rather than a structural arrangement” (Alamo-Pastrana & Hoynes, 2018, p. 71). This means that racism is often only seen as an expression of conscious and direct actions of individuals, while structural problems are rarely taken into account (Alamo-Pastrana & Hoynes, 2018, p. 71). But critiquing whiteness includes addressing exactly these issues and examining institutional practices of exclusion (Sefa-Dei, 1996), not the least because this structural understanding of racism and white privilege is a defining feature of white supremacy: That is, overt forms of racism are socially unacceptable, even if de facto forms of racism and inequality persist. While white men are the most privileged in our society, they are simultaneously the least aware of their own privilege (Linder, 2018). Thus, to reflect on whiteness and become aware of our own privilege is an important step towards more equality – especially for media professionals. Whiteness and white privilege are normalized, and to recognize and question this privileged normality is already creating a better awareness for the need of diversity.

## OBJECTIVITY

In journalism, the concept of objectivity is seen as the most important quality in reporting

**“News that is produced primarily by white journalists, focused primarily on white communities, and targeted primarily at white audiences claims the label of professional journalism.” - (Alamo-Pastrana & Hoynes, 2018, p. 78)**

(Alamo-Pastrana & Hoynes, 2018). Originating from experiences in World War II, where news was heavily used for propaganda purposes, professional journalism today focuses on reporting objectively and fact-driven instead of opinion-based. In consequence, journalists remove themselves from the reporting (Alamo-Pastrana & Hoynes, 2018). The problem with the concept of self-imposed objectivity is that there is no true objectivity.<sup>1</sup> The socio-cultural background and identity of journalists influences their reporting, from choosing news-worthy topics to the people who get interviewed. Distancing themselves from the reporting, however, leaves little room for journalists and media professionals to reflect on these influencing factors (Jenkins & Padgett, 2012), it even frees them from the responsibility to account for them (Alamo-Pastrana & Hoynes, 2018). For instance, white (heterosexual) male journalists report from the perspective of white

(heterosexual) male journalists report from the perspective of white heterosexual men while having little understanding for the realities and/or other audiences of e.g. women, BPoC or queer people. This in itself is not “good” or “bad” but it is limited in perspective, especially since white male journalists for long have claimed a universal perspective (Alamo-Pastrana & Hoynes, 2018).

More generally, white journalism is targeted at white audiences. This is, first, because whiteness as the “norm” makes for the perception of the average “white media consumer.” Second, since newspapers and broadcast media are dependent on advertising revenue, advertising customers aim at white audiences who are perceived to be more affluent (Alamo-Pastrana & Hoynes, 2018). This is what makes news media so-called “white media” (Alamo-Pastrana, 2018). Put differently: it is news by white people for a white audience. Like we already discussed, there is no true objectivity in reporting. Still, journalists oftentimes believe themselves to be objective and their reporting to be neutral. Simultaneously, they leave out structures of privilege (may it be with regard to race, gender etc.). In consequence, topics that do not concern white media consumers are more likely to be neglected or depicted with stereotypes.

## OWNERSHIP, REPRESENTATION AND POWER

“Due to [...] historic concentrations of power, much of the North American literary canon was written by white, often wealthy men who offer a largely singular perspective.” - (Lindner, 2018, p. 47)

Professional journalism in the United States has always been a largely white profession (Chideya, 2018; Wilson, et al., 2013; Alamo & Hoynes, 2018). To this day, media ownership is mostly white, and programming is aimed at white, more affluent audiences (Alamo-Pastrana & Hoynes, 2018). The same holds true for Europe. Media companies are generally owned and/or managed by affluent white people, predominantly men. This is crucial because any such structure “denies individuals from the lower strata the right to be heard and, more generally, denies the public the right to information pluralism that is required for democracy to function” (Lupien, 2013, p. 238 quoted from Artz, 2015, p. 221). In fact, a core



assumption of reformers is that “despite their claims of neutrality”, commercial media are “powerful social actors linked to the upper classes, social elites, or powerful corporations ...” (Kitzberger, 2010, p. 8 quoted from Artz, 2015, p. 221). Ideas of a radical media democracy, thus, presuppose diverse media ownership.

own physical location or social circle. “What we know about the civil war in Syria or elections in Venezuela comes mostly from media. Likewise, how and what we learn about fashion trends, music and cultural innovation, and prevailing social norms are largely drawn from media” (Artz, 2015, p. 71). This makes the media a core institution for understanding social relations as relations of power.

**“The influence and power of media entertainment can be debated, but it cannot be denied.” - (Artz, 2015, p. 71)**

**Media are instruments, not instigators, of other social forces. -(McQuail, 1992, p. 273 quoted according to Artz, 2015, p. 71)**

Media have become one of the most important factors in the entire socialization process (cf. Hoffmann & Mikos, 2010; Krämer, 2013; Zimmermann, P. & Niederbacher, 2011). In simple terms, socialization is a learning process. Through it, shared and established attitudes, lifestyles and values are conveyed; socialization tells us what the social reality looks like (Krämer, 2013). In this context, media take on the function of “socialization agents,” a social body that presents and demonstrates these values (Krämer, 2013). The impact of mass media varies greatly between individuals and also depends on the messages (Krämer, 2013). Nevertheless, the impact of (mass) media cannot be denied given that media are one (and in some aspects the only) way to learn about things outside one’s

Thus, media producers and practitioners hold a great deal of power. Referring back to issues of objectivity: reporting with one’s own values in mind and from one’s own social setting creates an index of order. At the same time, these factors influence, shape and create the content of mass media, which in turn influences socialization processes of individuals and groups. That is, (social) perceptions of right and wrong, of justice and injustice, of the social environment and our world as a whole, and vice versa.

Culture (and by that media) has an impact on social beliefs about gender, race etc. For example: Research shows that men are more

visible in media than women, and that white people are generally overrepresented (see chapter 3). This lack of representation is a manifestation for societal beliefs of power and differences thereof. How can one be seen as an equal and important member of society, if one is not seen in media, does not have the same opportunities to be heard or hold the power to influence and/or create media (content)? Studies show that when people “have captured their right to communication, they have simultaneously grasped political power to one degree or another” (Artz, 2015, p. 221). This means, the underrepresentation of marginalized groups in media also stands for their lack of structural power.

**Communication isn't just about listening or watching. Communication means citizens have voice. And not just voice, but access to media that can broadcast and disseminate messages to the entire society - (Artz, 2015, p. 221)**

## **ISSUES OF REPRESENTATION (IN**

## **ACADEMIA)**

**„In an ideal world, academia serves society; it provides quality education to future leaders and informs public policy and it does so by including a diverse array of scholars“ - (Dupree & Boykin, 2021)**

Though “academia often prides itself on its creativity and constant innovation, [...] it is leaving a massive driver of innovation by the wayside” (McCool & Smith, 2021) – a diverse student and research body. In the United States we can find a distinct lack of professors of color, which negatively affects student bodies, particularly minority students (McCool & Smith, 2021). According to The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education (n.d.), just over five percent of full-time faculty members at US universities and colleges are black, particularly in high-ranking universities. If hired, scholars from minority backgrounds tend to leave academia because of lacking support and inclusion (Dupree & Boykin, 2021, p. 11). “The result is an environment in which students of color often feel excluded and discriminated against on a fundamental level, leading to discouragement and

disillusionment” (McCool & Smith 2021). Racial inequality seems to be embedded in current academic institutions and practices (Dupree & Boykin, 2021, p. 11), in the United States as well as in Europe.

There is also a gender gap in academia: For instance, in Germany, there is an unequal distribution of gender across various career levels, as well as on central committees and commissions (DFG, 2020). This applies to women in higher education worldwide and especially in powerful and influential institutions (Yousaf & Schmiede, 2017). Compared to men, women earn less, take longer to get tenure, occupy fewer high ranking positions and receive fewer grants and scholarships (Ferrero, 2020).

Minorities are underrepresented not only in academic institutions but also in research itself: In the past decades, publications highlighting race have been rare (Roberts et al., 2020). Most publications with white editors have significantly fewer publications dealing with issues of race than publications with editors of color (Roberts et al., 2020). Roberts et al. (2020) further found that many publications that do highlight issues of race have been written by white authors employing significantly fewer participants of color. One can conclude that diversity on one level strongly relates to issues of diversity on all other levels. Research therefore requires diversity as well!

**“The perception of science as a ‘gender-neutral realm’ - a so-called culture of no culture - still appears to be widespread among many researchers and managers to whom academic advancement is primarily a matter of hard work, motivation and merit” - (Nielsen, 2015, p. 1)**

Research on issues of gender and race in the media industry mostly deals with issues of representation while discussions about diversity are becoming increasingly important in the media industry. This is not the least because groups that have historically been under- and misrepresented are spending more time and money on media and entertainment products. They are, thus, becoming a market audience (Li & Zafar, 2021).

**“You can’t be what you can’t see” - (Marian Wright Edelman, n.d.)**

Still, research shows that racial and ethnic minorities are underrepresented in mainstream media. When they are being

represented, they often adhere to stereotypical conceptions of dominant groups (Ferguson, 2015). While the lack of representation is harmful in itself, the misrepresentation of underrepresented groups is a significant issue with damaging consequences (Huang, 2021). Misrepresentations, like stereotypical depictions, can influence how people view their own (racial) group as well as other groups. Lacking representation of racial and ethnic groups can also reduce their visibility in the general public (Dixon et al., 2019).

Moreover research suggests that a gender-imbalance is reinforced in media content: For instance, in film, women remain locked out of leading roles (Beard et al., 2020) and are less likely than men to be seen worldwide (Rattan et al., 2019). Recent research also shows the persistence of gender stereotypes (Grau & Zotos, 2016; Stavrianea et al, 2021). Women have historically been shown as passive or vulnerable (Arnaut, 2016) while men have typically been portrayed as independent, strong and professional (Reichert & Carpenter, 2004; Arnaut, 2016). While these stereotypes persist, they simultaneously are in slow flux. There is a growing demand for the representation of empowered, active, self-confident, and sexually strong women, as well as for 'new men' and loving fathers (Tsuchi, 2020).

While the acceptance for stereotypical representations and messages is dwindling (Kreienkamp, 2007), media partly rely on such stereotypes because they allow for a fast and easy delivery of media messages (such as in the news). The use of stereotypes in media, however, might also be rooted in the unconscious bias of media practitioners. Overall mediated stereotypes (though changing) seem to remain part of the media environment (Dixon et al., 2019).

# STATUS QUO OF DIVERSITY

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# STATUS QUO

Once it is clear why dealing with diversity is important and how the problems of (white) privilege, objectivity, ownership and media monopolization may affect issues of media representation as well as diversity within media organizations, it is important to understand how diversity works. Although companies in the United States were the first to take an interest in diversity management - because the gains of the civil rights movement of the 1960s became manifest in executive orders and legislation (Holvino and Kamp, 2009) - there are also (legal) measures in Europe and the European Union (EU) worth mentioning:

First, Article 13 (Art. 13) of the European Community's Treaty allows anyone within the EU to fight against different kinds of discrimination. With Art. 13, the EU adopted two anti-discrimination directives that were signed by all member states in December 2006: First, a directive for the implementation of fair treatment irrespective of racial or ethnic origin (Council Directive 2000/43/EC) prohibiting racial discrimination in employment, education, social security and health care. This directive allows for equal access to goods and services. The second

directive establishes equal treatment in employment and occupation on the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation (Council Directive 2000/78/EC). A further example for anti-discriminatory legal steps on a national level is the Corporate Charter for Diversity in Germany. In 2006, four German companies (Deutsche Telekom AG, Deutsche BP, Deutsche Bank AG and Daimlerchrysler AG) voluntarily signed this initiative in which they committed to supporting, promoting and fostering the development of diversity in their companies (Jablonsky and Schwarzenbart, 2008).

Today, the importance of diversity is widely recognized. Thomas and Ely (1996) explain that, at the company level, a diversity of employees strengthens the identity values within an organization and consequently leads to a better self-image. Moreover, diversity improves innovation and creativity, allows for access to new market segments and increases productivity. In short, diversity brings benefits that affect the whole enterprise. Despite this awareness, there is a common pattern within different (media) sectors. The four studies outlined in

the following chapter illustrate that diversity (and the lack thereof) is still a problem in journalism, advertising, the film and the music industry. The similarities between these studies (e.g. racialized workforce, gender gaps etc.) are impressive. One of the most outstanding similarities is the difference between managerial positions and lower-ranking jobs. Basically, diversity decreases from the lowest jobs to the highest and vice versa. In addition, in most cases, executive positions are headed by white men. While each of the original studies ended with suggestions on how to improve the situation, they (at times) proved problematic. In the words of Dowell and Jackson (2020), solutions can tend to follow patterns of "woke washing" or "diversity washing". This means, proposed solutions to promote diversity can serve little but a lip-service purpose. Thus, for the purpose of this handbook, suggestions on how to improve the situation have been changed in order to make a lasting contribution to sustainable change.

Still, the four original studies summarized here showcase what is and what is not working regarding issues of diversity in the different media industries. Thus, examining them closer can lead to new reflections and new ideas.

## AD INDUSTRY

**“Advertising is a people business, and it only gets better when we have talented people with different points of view” - (Credle, 2018)**

The advertising industry prides itself with being forward thinking and in touch with target groups and their changing values, expectations and cultural references (Clawson, 2021). However, the advertising industry has been slow in implementing structural diversity across all levels (Credle, 2018).

A global census by the World Federation of Advertisers (WFA) in 2021 found that one in seven employees in the ad industry would consider leaving their company and even the industry because of lacking diversity and inclusion. Overall, the data shows big variations between the work experiences of different groups: All minority groups (including women) report poorer work experiences on almost every metric (e.g. sense of belonging, absence of discrimination etc.). Just 35% say their company provides equal pay for equal work indicating a (predominant gender based) pay gap. The gender pay gap seems to work in favor of senior level men compared to junior level women (WFA, 2021).

# 1 in 7

## SAY THEY WOULD CONSIDER LEAVING THEIR COMPANY AND THE INDUSTRY ON THE BASIS OF A LACK OF DIVERSITY AN INCLUSION

The most reported kinds of discrimination are based on age, family status and gender while in particular younger and older women are targets of gender-based discrimination. This matches the findings of the inclusion index. Here, women score lower than men. The sense of belonging tends to be the lowest for people with disabilities and for ethnic minorities, in particular their female members. The results also indicate that people with disabilities are underrepresented in the industry while simultaneously experiencing most career obstacles compared to other minority groups. Ethnic minorities report more negative behavior in the workplace. They too are underrepresented, particularly at senior levels. Looking at sexual orientation, LGBTQ staff scored lower on the inclusion index than their heterosexual counterparts (60% vs. 65%) and reported a slightly higher presence of negative behaviour (WFA, 2021).

**“I’m just going to go out and say it: the data sucks” - (Marla Kaplowitz cited in Swant, 2020)**

A similar picture of the ad industry emerges when looking at the United States. A study of the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) (2018) shows that the proportion of female and male chief executives in marketing is fairly even (with slightly fewer women). However, the vast majority of employees (87%) identifies as white while African-Americans make up a total of just 3%. Looking at the industry more generally, there is more gender and ethnic diversity than among the chief marketing officers (CMOs). Compared to C-Level jobs, there are twice as many Asians and more women among the overall ANA members. In fact, with 67%, the majority of employees are women working mainly in low level positions



(the senior level is the only level with more men than women). This peaks on Admin/Clerical/Support level where 88% are women, compared to 12% men (ANA, 2018). Just 4% of individuals identify as LGBTQ among the overall ANA membership while only 9 out of 16 of the ANA board member companies provide an opportunity to self-identify as LGBTQ (ANA, 2018).

Generally speaking, senior level employees are less diverse than those on other levels. The number of African-Americans/Blacks and Hispanics/Latinos and Latinas gradually decreases from the lowest jobs to the highest. Asians occupy the middle range while the percentage of white employees gradually grows from lower to higher work positions (ANA, 2018). Compared to the US-population, especially African Americans/Blacks and Hispanics/Latinos and Latinas are underrepresented while the percentage of Asians in ANA overall membership and board member companies is higher than the average Asian population of the US (ANA, 2018).

Looking at Europe - the European media sector, including the ad industry, is the second largest media market in the world. It, thus, provides a significant amount of jobs (Costa, 2020). According to Zenith Media, the United Kingdom (UK) is the biggest market in advertising spending in Europe while Germany comes in second, followed by France, Italy and Spain (cited in GTAI, n.d.).

According to the Ad Associations all-in census, in the British ad industry, ethnic diversity only differs slightly from the actual ethnic mix of the wider population. Black employees make up 3% while 7% identify as Asian. Still 32% of Black staff members and 27% of Asian employees were or are planning to leave their companies because of lacking inclusion and career opportunities (Clawson, 2021). Further, just 9% of the advertising industry staff is disabled while disabled people make up 20% of the population. 22% of those identifying as disabled are likely to leave their companies because of lacking inclusion (Advertising Association, 2021).

According to the census, 28% of British advertising professionals attended fee-paying schools - the national average is 8%. People from working class backgrounds are, thus, underrepresented with just 19%, as opposed to its 39% share in the overall population (Advertising Association, 2021). Thus, social mobility is limited. Jemima Garthwaite, CEO and founder of the creative agency This Here, compares the advertising industry to big cultural outlets such as the BBC: the majority of commissioners are white and educated at Oxford University. They ultimately draw on their own networks with similar backgrounds (cited in Ormesher, 2021).

Overall, there seems to be a lack of data on diversity within companies in the ad industry. European data

(and in particular German data) is hard to find.

## JOURNALISM

**“There is plenty of evidence that more diverse and inclusive teams create work that better resonates with diverse consumer audiences” - (WFA, 2021).**

**“Without a diverse workforce made up of every part of our society [...] - the media will always fail to speak for us all.” - (de Cordova, 2020, column 831)**

There is progress being made in some areas, such as hiring (Credle, 2018). Still, the industry seems to be struggling with regard to retaining diverse talent and building an inclusive corporate culture. There seems to be too few opportunities for minorities, particularly for ethnic groups, people with disabilities and women – pretty much everyone who is not a white male.

The ad industry must make efforts to build sustainable atmospheres for all. This includes equal career opportunities and equal pay. Bringing in young people with diverse backgrounds is a good first step. However, research shows there needs to be a significant share of diverse talent for employees to feel comfortable speaking up (Credle, 2018). Put differently: „If you’re the only person of color in the room, it’s that much harder to find your voice“ (Credle, 2018). Nevertheless, the advertising industry compares favorably against other industries regarding issues of diversity (WFA, 2021).

Journalism strives to depict the world in an objective way (see chapter 2). It also has to reach new audiences and stay relevant to younger audiences. Readers pay attention to the content that speaks to them or serves their identity. “Journalism, in its truest form, should be produced for the benefit of all, not only those who wield a particular power, class or authority” (American Press Institute, n. d., para. 1). Therefore, diversity is both a business and a journalistic imperative.

**“If you yourselves are not representative of your audience or your readers, then you cannot understand and represent their interests. As society changes, if you don’t change with it, you will lose viewers, listeners and readers... If you change who defines the news agenda, you change the agenda.” - (Byrne, 2019)**

In the United States, only 41% of newsroom employees are female (compared to 51% of the overall population). At the same time, newsrooms with female leadership tend to have more women on staff. Since 2001, 32% of newsrooms have increased their gender diversity while 21% experienced a decrease. Among the bigger news companies, the newspaper Washington Post has the highest gender equality – 52% of the staff are women and 50% of the leadership positions are taken by them. On average, in newsrooms Whites are over-represented by 25% compared to the US census. However, since 2001, 40% of newsrooms have increased racial diversity (on average by 6.6 pts). Similar to gender diversity, newsrooms with a racially diverse leadership tend to have a more racially diverse staff (American Society of News Editors, 2018).

**41%**

## **OF NEWSROOM EMPLOYEES ARE FEMALE IN THE USA (COMPARED TO 51% OF THE OVERALL POPULATION)**

A similar imbalance can be witnessed in Germany. Here, in 2012, “only two per cent of all editors-in-chief of the 360 or so daily and weekly and weekly newspapers in Germany were occupied by women” (von Garmissen & Biresch, 2018, Vorwort). In 2019, ProQuote, a German association fighting for an increase of women in leading positions in journalism, looked at editorial boards of German national newspapers. Over time, the percentage of women in leading positions has grown in most newsrooms. This growth has not always been steady, however, while

in some editorial departments the share of women has fallen or fluctuated, for instance at the news outlets Die Zeit, Bild and Spiegel Online. It is especially important to think about this when making new hires or when filling management positions. Researchers found that, in Germany, more women occupy leading positions in liberal and left-leaning newspapers compared to more conservative news outlets. Further, the percentage of women is proportionally higher at the lower levels than at higher ones (von Garmissen & Biresch, 2019).

The national, left-leaning newspaper taz has the only editorial department in Germany within which the power is equally distributed between men and women. To establish this gender balance, the newspaper has implemented a consistent human resources policy. The taz also frequently covers topics such as women's rights and gender equality (von Garmissen & Biresch, 2019). This example shows that distributing power evenly between men and women is possible. According to the most recent data from ProQuote, the taz has further strengthened the standing of its female leaders, who now account for more than 60 percent of the leading positions in the newsroom (Neue Zahlen von ProQuote Medien, 2022). Positive development was visible in most of the analyzed German leading newspapers (in Neue Zahlen von ProQuote Medien (2022): "Chief executives of leading media are becoming slightly more female"). In

addition to this, in 2019, ProQuote also analyzed the editorial boards of 66 German magazines. Overall, women make up almost half of all positions in editorial rooms.

Furthermore, more than half of the members of editorial boards are women. While the same is true for deputy editors-in-chief, the majority of editors-in-chief is male. These numbers differ depending on the media group. The lowest share of women in leading positions in the editorial room was found in the Axel Springer SE – only 9% of the positions were occupied by women. In contrast, the editorial boards of magazines published by the Klambt media group are made up of all women (von Garmissen and Biresch, 2019, p. 28).

Data on ethnic or racial diversity in German journalism is sparse. A study from 2009 estimates that only 16% of German newspapers employ journalists with immigration background. At that time, ethnic and racial diversity was just starting to become a topic of general interest. Before, there was little dependable data on the racial diversity amongst the staff of German newspapers (Geißler et al., 2009).

## MUSIC INDUSTRY

According to the Global Music Report of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), the US music industry is the largest music

industry in the world. The biggest music labels (e.g. Universal Music Group, Warner Music Group, Sony Music Entertainment) are located in the United States and the US is home to many of the world's most renowned musicians (IFPI, 2021).

The Annenberg Institute looked into this important music market. The result: Music is – still – mainly made by white men. This applies to creative roles but also to important positions behind the scenes. Creative roles include jobs in the record studio: artists, songwriters and producers. The number of female performers, songwriters and producers is significantly lower than those of men: Women make up only 22% of the artists including bands or duos. Only 12 % of songwriters and 2.1% of producers are women. 43.3% of female songwriters and 23.5 % of female producers identified as not white, which leads to the fact that only 5.3% of all songwriters and only 0.4% of all producers were women of color. The data also indicates a continued exclusion of women from these positions and “no change in hiring practices related to women behind the scenes in these roles” (Smith et al., 2019, p.20).

# 22%

## ARE FEMALE ARTISTS INCLUDING BANDS OR DUOS IN THE USA

An exception in the dominantly white industry is the relatively large amount of non-white artists: In 2018, the percentage of women of color in the charts was at a seven year high, and most female artists (73%) were from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. In 2020, 46.7% of the artists in the charts were from an underrepresented ethnic group (Smith et al., 2021). Otherwise, the music business is dominantly white (and male): Smith et al. (2021) examined managers and agents associated with 242 established artists from the billboard 100 year-end-charts from 2012 until 2020. They show that the people who manage the careers of artists are mainly white and male.

**“The low percentage of women participating as songwriters and producers is the inevitable result of an industry that does not seem to believe that women are valuable assets in these roles.” - (Smith et al., 2019, p. 29-30)**

# 47%

## OF THE ARTISTS IN THE US CHARTS WERE FROM AN UNDERREPRESENTED ETHNIC GROUP

At the same time, talent and surrounding teams are influencing factors on diversity in the record studio. Underrepresented, black and female artists generally have one or more underrepresented people in their teams. Smith et al. (2021) consider this to be a decisive factor “in ensuring that Black and underrepresented agents, managers, and publicists work in music” (p. 15). The same holds true for women: Female songwriters were more common when songs featured a female artist. Smith et al. (2019) therefore identify female artists as “the key to increasing women’s access and opportunity to write in the music industry” (p. 19–20).

Moving away from artists and their talent teams, Smith et al. (2021) also looked at CEOs, chairman and presidents across 70 music

“Looking at the data by rank reveals that underrepresented and women executives were pushed out as they reached the top of organizations” - (Smith et al., 2021, p.19)

companies and major record labels. The result: top jobs in the music business are drastically tilted towards white males. 9 of the 10 top executives are men, 1 is a (white) woman. Publishing, radio and live music are “the sinkholes for representation” showing the lowest number of individuals from minority groups. While white women are represented across all areas, they only reach 26,9% in total. Combining the categories of race/ethnicity and gender shows a vast underrepresentation of black women (only 3% in total). In short: The executive ranks in the music business exclude BPoC and women, especially women of color. In contrast, the number of people with music degrees shows that 44.4% of individuals with music degrees in the US do not identify as being white (Smith et al., 2021).

Mapping the status quo of the music industry in Europe, we found data that looked into gender diversity in Germany and the United Kingdom. Issues of race appear to be less of a concern in European music industry

research – not to speak of finding industry studies comparable to those of the Annenberg Institute (e.g. Smith et al., 2019, 2020). And yet European countries are big music markets.

The German music market is ranked fourth in the global music industry – after Japan and the United Kingdom (IFPI, 2021). And just like the music industry in the US, it is dominated by men (Music Women\* Germany, 2020). Similar to the US, this applies to creative jobs as well as to the management level. An analysis of commercially successful 100 songs from 2001 to 2015 has shown: Only about 11% of the songs were written by women. The study also found that only 26% of the artists in the German Top 100 singles chart from 2000 to 2015 were female (Music Women\* Germany, 2020). The similarities to the study of Smith et al. (2019) for the US music industry were to be expected, partly because the German charts contain a large number of songs by international (US) stars.

**26%**  
**OF THE ARTISTS IN THE  
GERMAN TOP 100**

## **SINGLES CHART FROM 2000 TO 2015 WERE FEMALE**

Regarding management-level jobs in big music companies: Women are being excluded from leadership positions in both Germany and the UK (Music Women\* Germany, 2020). The German Association of Independent Music Entrepreneurs (VUT) found that in 2015 only 7.4% of more than one thousand member companies were run by women. Mixed teams made up 5.5% (Music Women\* Germany, 2020). Female presidents of music associations are an exception, ranging from 15% in 1994 to 18% in 2014. At the same time, between 1994 and 2015, the percentage of female students of music or musicology lay between 52% and 57% (Schulz et al., 2016, p. 60). UK Music, an organization representing the interests of the British commercial music industry, found that 59% of new entrants to the music business are female. Also, more than half of the employees between between 25 and 34 are female, while there are 'hardly any women' among employees aged 45 and older or at the management level (Music Women\* Germany, 2020).

Looking at the United States, Germany and the United Kingdom, women are underrepresented in the music industry.

The higher the positions, the fewer the women. In the case of the United States, data shows that this also applies to ethnic minorities and people of color. The executive ranks exclude underrepresented, black and female leaders, which leads to women of color being especially underrepresented. It can be assumed that similar patterns of white male leadership can be found also in the European music industry. So far, as mentioned, there is a lack of studies looking into dimensions of diversity other than gender.

## FILM INDUSTRY

Harry Potter, Inception, The Hobbit and The Amazing Spider Man – these are just a few blockbusters that brought in huge profits at the box office in the 2010s. It is a list that could easily be continued. Whether these films are justified box-office hits is not the issue here. What is more striking is that all of these films feature white, male actors in the leading roles. This stands representative for broader patterns, also behind the scenes.

The United States still dominates the world film market with Hollywood movies (Feigenbaum, 2007). Hollywood, however, does not just have a diversity issue, there is an actual inclusion crisis. In recent years, box office hits, such as Wonder Woman, The Hunger Games and Beauty and the Beast, have shown that films with female leads

can attract large audiences. Still, Hollywood decision-makers are hesitant to feature stories with and about girls and women. Less than one-third of the top 100 films from 2007 to 2018 had a female lead or co-lead. One reason for this lack of representation is profit and the industry myth that movies with female leads make less money. In consequence, fewer stories have been told about the adventures of girls and women in Hollywood (Smith et al., 2020).

**“Women will watch stories about men but do men watch stories about women?” - (Smith et al., 2020, p. 1)**

The study “The Ticket to Inclusion – Gender & Race/Ethnicity of leads and Financial Performance in Popular Film” from Smith et al. (2020) examined the bankability of female-driven movies and those with underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. The database examined 1,200 highest-grossing films from 2007 to 2018: It collected data on the race/ethnicity of the leads/co-leads, on gender and race/ethnicity of lead actors/actresses and co-stars, and a number of other factors. It asked how all these factors affect the return on investment. Nearly 62% of films were led by white males and 23% featured white females. Only 11% of the movies had underrepresented



men in leading roles and only 4% (or 34 films) had Women of Color (WoC) in leading roles (Smith, et al., 2020).

# 27%

## OF THE FILMS FEATURED WHITE AN UNDERREPRESENTED FEMALES IN THE CENTER

Regarding financial investments, the sample in the United States shows a big difference between male and female leads, especially for underrepresented groups. This means, more money is spent on films starring (white) men as leads/co-leads than is spent on films starring women. This is almost twice as much as the money spent on films starring WoC (Smith et al., 2020). Thus, films with female leads/co-leads and those with underrepresented leads/co-leads do not receive the same resources across production, marketing, and distribution.

The same holds true behind the

camera: fewer women work as directors, writers, producers, executive producers, editors, or cinematographers (Lauzen, 2021). The Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film has released its 24th report on the representation of women in film production. Its key findings show that in 2021, only 25% of women worked on the top 250 grossing films behind the scenes. Compared to 2016, the number of women increased by only 6% (Lauzen, 2021). For the top 100 grossing films, the number was even lower (21% in 2021 and an increase of 5% compared to 2016) (Lauzen, 2021).

# 25%

## OF WOMEN WORKED ON THE TOP 250 GROSSING FILMS BEHIND THE SCENES

Films featuring WoC receive fewer resources for domestic promotion and international marketing – nearly 70% less than those featuring white male lead actors. One long-held industry belief is that films starring individuals from underrepresented

racial/ethnic groups will face difficulties in overseas markets. Smith et al. (2020) show, however, that it is not gender and race that determine a film's success, but budgets, advertising, distribution decisions all of which films with minority leads receive less. Research further suggests that groups are likely to desire storytelling that foregrounds individuals from their own groups (Smith et al., 2020).

**“If Hollywood truly desired to serve the international market, then why would it not produce more content featuring women whose cultural heritage is aligned with the top markets it aims to serve?” - (Smith et al., 2020, p. 12)**

Not only Hollywood has a diversity problem in films but Europe does too. A study from the European Audiovisual Observatory's LUMIERE, for instance, shows that less than one out of four films was directed by a woman. On average, women working behind the camera participate in fewer films than their male counterparts. Between 2016 and 2020, the average share of female directors was just 20% with no significant increase over the years. For female screenwriters it was 25%. The lowest percentage on

It is striking, however, that diversity in the European film industry is analyzed mainly according to gender differences while other factors, such as race, ethnicity, disability etc. are left out. This finding suggests that the European film industry has yet not dealt with diversity issues on a broader level. For this reason, we are unable to provide more insightful numbers.

To sum up: not gender and race determine a film's success, but budgets, advertising and distribution. The number of films with non-white female leads reveals a lack of females and underrepresented groups in film. This is also true behind the camera.

## SUMMARY

Across all industries, women and especially BIPOC's are underrepresented while white males are overrepresented. In the US ad industry, white employees (men and women) make up the vast majority (with 87%) while BIPOC with a total of 3% are largely excluded (Association of National Advertisers, 2018). Similar patterns can be found in US journalism where white employees in the newsroom are on average overrepresented by 25% compared to the US census. Alarming and potentially representative for European journalism was the underrepresentation of people of color in German newsrooms. In 2009, only 16% of German newspapers

employed journalists who had a immigration background (Geißler et al., 2009). Looking at the US film industry, Hollywood decision-makers still are reluctant to produce feature films about girls and women. Less than one-third of the top 100 films from 2007 to 2018 featured female leads or co-leads (Smith et al., 2020). The situation is similar in the music industry. Only 22% of the singers in the US and 26% of the singers in Europe are female while the numbers for female songwriters are even lower (with 12% in the US and 11% in Europe), not to speak of female producers (2.1% in the US). Only 5.3% of all songwriters and only 0.4% of all producers are women of color (Smith et al., 2019). Also in publishing, radio and live music black women are vastly underrepresented making only 3% of people working in these sectors (Smith et al., 2021). On the positive side, in 2020, 46.7% of the artists in the charts identified as non-whites.

In sum, across all levels of different media industries, women and BIPOCs are underrepresented and/or in lower positions than their (white) male counterparts. The rule of thumb in the US ad industry is: the lower the level, the more women. Especially on the admin, clerical and support level, women make up 88% in the US and 59% in Europe compared to 12% of men. The same holds true for BIPOCs; their numbers gradually decrease from the lowest jobs to the highest ones (ANA, 2018) while the number of employees identifying as white increases from

lower to higher positions. In the field of journalism, only 42% of the employees in US newsrooms are female. Though the number of women is higher in the European context, here again, women work lower positions. For instance, only 2% of all editors-in-chief of a total of 360 daily and weekly newspapers in Germany are female. This lack of female high-ranking employees can also be seen in the US and European music industry. CEOs, chairman and presidents across 70 US record companies are mainly white men: 9 out of 10 top executives are men (1 being a (white) woman) (Smith et al., 2021), while in Europe only 7.4% of more than one thousand member companies are run by women (VUT). This leads to vast underrepresentation, particularly of black women (3% in total) (Smith et al., 2021). In sum: executive ranks exclude underrepresented, BIPOC and female leaders. The music business is predominantly white (and male) and talents with minority backgrounds are surrounded by white men (Smith et al., 2021). This also influences the cast in the US film industry. The prevailing myth that men do not watch movies with or about women has serious consequences: nearly 62% of movies were led by white men, only about 23% movies featured white females. Only 11% featured men not identifying as white and only 4% (or 34 films) had WoC in lead roles (Smith, et al., 2020). The situation is similar behind the camera: In 2021, of the people working behind the scenes on the top 250 US grossing films, only 25%

were women. Compared to 2016, this number had increased by 6% (Lauzen, 2021). In the European film industry women directed less than one in four films. Between 2016 and 2020 the average share of female directors was 20% and of female screenwriters was 25%, with no significant development over the years. The lowest percentage of women was found among cinematographers (10%) and composers (9%) (Simone, 2021).

Overall, women and in particular women of color are underrepresented in the US and European media industries. In consequence, many employees consider leaving their companies – in the Ad Industry 1 in 7 employees worldwide considers leaving their company because of lacking diversity, inclusion or career opportunities. In Europe, this includes 32% of Black staff, 27% of Asian employees as well as 22% of the 20% of disabled staff (Zenith, 2020).

# KEY FINDINGS

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# KEY FINDINGS

It seems that it is not easy for media companies to be more diverse. But it is important. A few companies are trying to appear more diverse in public but there is still much to be done. In the United States, Europe or Germany, minority groups are underrepresented throughout.

Here are some of our key findings:

## THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT LACK OF STUDIES ON DIVERSITY IN THE MEDIA INDUSTRIES BESIDES STUDIES ON GENDER DIVERSITY.

In Europe, studies and company reports are most often concerned with gender when talking about diversity, thereby often referring to a binary idea of gender. However, in countries with a more diverse population, one frequently finds

studies concerned with issues of ethnicity or racial diversity. Still, there are a lot of other contributing factors that should be considered when talking about diversity that are under-researched worldwide. This includes people from the working class, old people, people who identify as LGBTQIA+ and people with disabilities. Fewer studies look into diversity issues within media companies, especially on the level of decision makers. In comparison, the number of studies looking at issues of representation in media content is relatively high. Presumably this is because data on issues of representation in media is easily accessible (e.g. via content analysis), whereas most companies do not share their data on their employees.

## THE DISTRIBUTION OF MONEY IN THE MEDIA INDUSTRY IS BIASED.

The media industry seems to struggle with equal pay for equal work. The data indicates a pay gap, especially a gender pay gap.

While many female employees work in lower positions and are unhappy with their salary, the gender pay gap works in favor of white men working at the senior level. Also, money spent on media productions seems to be in favor of featuring (white) men rather than (black) women: more money is spent on films starring men, which includes resources across productions, marketing and distribution.

## THE MEDIA INDUSTRY IS LACKING BIPOC AND WOMEN.

Due to the underrepresentation of women and (women of) BIPOC in the media industry, there is a lack of opportunities for them. Women and BIPOC's are outnumbered in media companies and many positions are filled by white men. This gives a false impression for younger generations: if there is no equal representation within media companies or in media content, there is a lack of role models and more diverse perspectives. The importance of representation and diverse role models is shown in research and cannot be stressed enough. Therefore, again, there are only studies on gender and race/ethnicity, while people with disabilities, LGBTQ+, or other categories are absent. This makes it all the more important that diverse

representation can influence people's thinking and promote change.

## WHITE MALES ARE DEFINING THE MEDIA INDUSTRIES.

Gender and race/ethnicity are important categories according to which one can analyze power relations in media companies and in media content. Regarding the latter, women are still often shown in domestic roles (e.g. homemaker, mother) or, if in the paid workforce, in clerical and other office jobs. Though this is not a god-given situation, it holds true in reality for reasons that have little to do with gender but with manifest interests of the people in power: In all media industries, women and BIPOC's are underrepresented on the managing level while being overrepresented in lower positions. Thus, executive ranks exclude underrepresented, black and female leaders, which leads to women of color being especially underrepresented. Thus, media industries are dominated by white males. It is a system reproducing itself.

# THERE NEEDS TO BE DIVERSITY IN MANAGEMENT BEFORE THERE CAN BE DIVERSITY IN CONTENT.

Research suggests that minorities in decision-making roles have an effect on the diversity of their teams. Underrepresented groups in higher positions are more likely to give jobs to other underrepresented people. Thus, underrepresented black and female artists, employees and journalists tend to have more diverse teams, which in return might bring about change, for instance, in content and perspectives.



# RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

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# ACTIONS

## TALK ABOUT DIVERSITY

Talking about diversity can increase the awareness of the topics related to diversity at all levels and groups. As you already might have experienced, communication itself is a powerful instrument. Concerning diversity matters, it helps to increase the discourse in your social (business) environment. It also reassures underrepresented people that they are being valued, seen and wanted in the company's team and society.

A simple takeaway of Chloe Sesta Jacobs is the message "Talk is cheap". However, you can achieve change by including a culture of conversation about diversity to empower your colleagues regarding diversity matters. Turning your business into an open-minded, open-hearted and inclusive workplace requires such conversation.

Hence, talk about diversity and talk to diverse people about all facets of diversity. Spread information on how to respectfully approach diversity

matters in your company, your business partners and your social environment.

### Following suggestions may inspire you to start talking about diversity:

- Establish a diversity network or committee to discuss, promote and encourage diversity matters;
- Empower underrepresented individuals to apply for jobs at higher business levels;
- Take some time to solely focus on diversity within the company and pause casual business;
- Change your language (maybe have workshops for the whole company);

- Generate a platform for all employees of your company to stay in touch especially if people are on parental or other types of extended leave;
- Adjust all position descriptions to ensure they contain gender-neutral language;
- Ask for pronoun preferences during onboarding;
- Ask your colleagues about their cultural or social background.

## PLAN WITH DIVERSITY

Even if your company is not diverse yet, it is up to you to get there. If you have any influence in hiring-processes or team-management you can create hiring- and business-plans to increase diversity within the company. As we have seen, there is a lack of diversity especially at leadership positions. Ask yourself and your team, if there are significant differences between e.g. a woman of color and a white guy with reference to their qualification etc.

But also in this case: Be careful not to hire people only because of their

matters in your company, your business partners and your social environment. race, gender or disability. It is important to consider social dominance but also professional skills. This means, a candidate should fit in socially while also having the skills for the job (Smith et al., 2021, p. 17).

### Therefore you could:

- Measure and monitor the diversity statistics of your company and use them to develop hiring-plans;
- Set goals for your organization (not only lip service, commit to actions) → you commit to goals to achieve and check the progress being made;
- Allow employees to enter custom pronouns displayed for everyone to see + give the opportunity to self-identify as part of an underrepresented group (e.g. LGBTQIA);

- Help mothers with support and child care programs, establish parental leave for dads;
- Create a diversity team within the organization, hire a Diversity Chief Officer;
- To promote women within the companies, create a female network and training dedicated to women;
- Offer home office options especially for parents and for employees with physical disabilities;
- Offer underrepresented talents to fast track the career ladder for more diversity in management.

## REFLECT ON YOUR THOUGHTS REGARDING DIVERSITY

To establish a diverse environment and a meaningful level of conversation, it is important to have a mindset that enables you to achieve a credible voice for diversity. White supremacy is still a structural issue in Europe and around the world. Even if not intended “we frequently uphold white supremacy” says Janice Gassam Asare (2021), Senior Contributor for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion of Forbes Magazine. Questions your own thoughts on the matter and be aware of discriminating, stereotyping or color-blinding aspects.

### This could be your inspiration:

- Make everyone on your team do unconscious bias training;
- Acknowledge your individual social background and become aware of your own privilege;
- Offer a hiring application process without names and photos;
- Start a program on unconscious bias (in order to make it conscious) aimed at highlighting the added value that comes from diversity in all its forms.

## SHARE DIVERSITY

As we have seen, films with underrepresented main actors/actresses receive less financial and promotional support. In journalism a lack of diversity in editorial offices leads to articles that are predominantly written out of (white) privileged perspectives. We, thus, need more diversity in all media industries to represent topics and issues from a different perspective.

- Start a column to represent different perspectives within your team, provided they exist.

## COOPERATE WITH DIVERSITY EXPERTS

From Chloe Sesta Jacobs, Global Director, Inclusion & Engagement at Deputy in Sydney, Australia, we learnt, there are diversity experts who work for companies to ensure a diverse and open-minded company-atmosphere. Thus, you too can develop individual (company) strategies with diversity-professionals to support diversity at all levels.

The field of diversity is a complex one and it takes lots of time to know all the aspects thoroughly. Ask for cooperating with diversity experts. They will bring all their knowledge and experience into your company.

### This is what you could do:

- Promote diversity matters e.g. like journalist Dasha Ilic and the Media Diversity Institute (<https://www.media-diversity.org/>)
- Claim for proper (international) marketing support for diverse media productions;
- For media companies: Change narratives - show a human side of the story and report about people as individuals (also avoid “othering”);

### **For example, you could:**

- Ask for experts to help you understand and truly represent stories of underrepresented people and/or colleagues and their everyday life challenges for your media production

## **DEMAND DIVERSITY**

While diversity is a structural issue, it is up to all of us to demand for an increased diversity and equity in our environment. The more people demand for diversity and universal equal treatment, the more likely structures will change and nobody will be forced to accept discrimination. Hence, we should ask for diversity and show solidarity, especially when discriminatory acts do not concern us individually.

### **For example, you could:**

- Ask for equal pay at your company e.g. via the works council;

- Have someone in HR solely taking care of hiring diverse talents. Alternative: Ensure a minimum of two ethnically diverse candidates on all hiring processes;
- If possible, refuse to collaborate with companies or speak at conferences that do not care about diversity.

## **TEACH DIVERSITY**

After talking and thinking a lot about diversity you might want to share your knowledge in the aim of spreading awareness for diversity issues. Here, an explicit responsibility lies with company leaders. It is up to decision-makers to offer an open environment for action to achieve structural change. Also here, it is important to keep all issues relating to diversity in mind (and if you are in a privileged position, be aware of it and make it a topic of conversation)!

## Concrete actions could be:

- Offer workshops to increase knowledge and awareness for diversity amongst employees;
- Offer an international food, book or icon day to talk about and get in touch with different cultures. Be creative!

## LIVE DIVERSITY

As Chloe Sesta Jacobs told us, you can consider diversity matters every moment in your everyday life: It is about learning to listen and listen to learn from underrepresented individuals and groups. It is also about leading and living with integrity.

## Therefore you could:

- Organize diversity workshops or talks in your immediate environment;

- Open your eyes and ears, even if it becomes unpleasant. Learn to listen, learn from mistakes and act in the interests of underrepresented employees. Engage in dialog and open your eyes to new perspectives;
- Initiate a workshops where people with different backgrounds (race, age, gender etc.) can participate as a way to increase collaboration and solidarity between them;
- Watch documentaries or read books and articles to stay up-to-date - have a look at our list of recommended literature (Chapter 8).

# WHAT ABOUT...A QUOTA?

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# A QUOTA?

The question of quotas in diversity matters is a complex one. In general, diversity quotas are defined as “a means to achieve equality through the principle of proportional representation” (Tagaki & Gröschl, 2016, p. 1). Thus, quotas in business environments aim at broadening diversity within companies: everyone is supposed to get a chance in the hiring process and decisions are supposed to be taken according to someone’s general ability, not because of their gender, skin-color, race or physical disabilities. On the other hand, quotas are being criticized for being discriminating. That is, people of underrepresented groups are chosen for a job because of a quota not because of their skills. Positioning ourselves in this complex discourse, we think that quotas are an important baseline. Looking into the past, voluntary measures never changed a whole lot in favor of diversity and a fair treatment of job candidates.

There cannot be diversity of content without diversity of media producers. Different topics from manifold perspectives may increase an awareness for diversity issues, such as discrimination and racism. Regarding journalism, media professionals report and create

media (content) with their own experiences, values, norms etc. in mind (Alamo-Pastrana et al., 2018). And while objectivity is not necessarily the goal when creating other media content, such as film, television or music, similar problems loom: The world is presented, evaluated, and communicated from a specific (subjective) point of view. Certain groups of people, their realities of life and experiences are left out. We argue that structural diversity must be achieved before we can look at the content level of our media. At the same time, however, a certain quota does not automatically lead to equality or diversity of media content. Both need to be monitored. Only in this way can we transform media in a lasting way.

# CRITICAL REFLECTION OF GIVEN RECOMMENDAT IONS

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# CRITICAL REFLECTION

As with every topic, also the above given recommendations for diversity matters need to be reflected critically. Even if one reads about racism, discrimination and diversity matters, the recommendations contain our subjecte (privileged) perspectives. During our work, we have come to realize that there are too many recommendations to name them all, we needed to choose. Maybe we would have chosen differently or would have changed priorities if we had different ethnical/racial or social backgrounds, nationalities, gender, age and/or physical disabilities. We chose what we thought made most sense. This list, however, is neither exclusive nor complete. Nevertheless, our recommendations are a start – they need time to be implemented and they can always be completed by other measures.

# LIST OF RECOMMENDED LITERATURE

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# RECOMMENDED LITERATURE

## Diversity management and how to improve it:

- Making Differences Matter: A New Paradigm for Managing Diversity written by David A. Thomas and Robin J. Ely (1996) is an article to get a picture of Diversity Management evolution.
- The book Managing Diversity (2009), published by the Harvard Business Review, teaches managers how companies have to recruit a diverse team and to handle diversity-related conflict.
- The article The Key to Inclusive Leadership by Juliet Bourke and Andrea Titus (2020) describes organizational practices that can help leaders become more inclusive and enhance the performance of their teams.
- DEI Consultant Lily Zheng explains How to Show White Men That Diversity and Inclusion Efforts Need Them (2019). In her text, the strategist shows two practices that help to increase D&I (to frame identity and to appeal to a sense of fairness).
- Another good collection of workshop activities is described in 50 Activities for Diversity Training by Jonamay Lambert and Selma Myers (1994).
- With the article Why You Need a Supplier-Diversity Program, Alexis Bateman, Ashley Barrington and Katie Date (2020) show that diversity programs are an important way to combat social injustice in the United States. They discuss the socio economic contributions such programs can make and the ways they can benefit businesses.

- After analyzing data from hundreds of employers, across dozens of years, to assess how different equity measures work, authors Alexandra Kalev and Frank Dobbin report that the typical diversity training program does not just fail to promote diversity, it actually leads to declines in management diversity. Companies Need to Think Bigger Than Diversity Training (2020) is a perfect example to understand that simple managerial measures are more effective at opening opportunities to people of color. simple managerial measures are more effective at opening opportunities to people of color.
  - Do You Know Why Your Company Needs a Chief Diversity Officer? (2020) is an interesting article by Mita Mallick explaining how it is important for every organization to hire a Chief Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Officer in the US racial justice context nowadays.
  - After a three-years-work, 5 Things We Learned About Creating a Successful Workplace Diversity Program, the researchers Allison-Scott Pruitt, Carolyn Brinkworth, Joshua Young and Kristen Luna Aponte learned five key practices to implement the program.
  - Not less important is the work of the European Commission, The Business Case for Diversity (2005). It contains a list of good practices in the European workplace.
- Other interesting readings, more focused on racial diversity, are:**
- The angry black woman stereotype still exists in the US workplace. With The “Angry Black Woman” Stereotype at Work (2022) researchers Daphna Motro, Jonathan B. Evans, Aleksander P.J. Ellis and Lehman Benson III suggest that when black women outwardly express anger at work, their leadership and potential are called into question.
  - Moreover, the study 20% of White Employees Have Sponsors. Only 5% of Black Employees Do (2022) by Sylvia Ann Hewlett and Kennedy Ihezue shows how only 5% of up-and-coming Black employees succeed in winning sponsorship and that black managers cannot look to senior Black colleagues for sponsorship.

## Diversity in media:

- The research Demographic diversity on cable: Have the new cable channels made a difference in the representation of gender, race, and age? (2009) by Robert Kubey, Mark Shifflet, Niranjala Weerakkody and Stephen Ukeiley examines the issue of diversity and cable television. It focuses on the question whether the growth in channels has changed the representative diversity of those who appear on TV in terms of race, gender and age.
- The piece Tackling the Underrepresentation of Women in Media (2019) by Anetta Rattan, Siri Chilazi, Oriane Georgeac, and Iris Bohnet discusses the importance of facing a gender-imbalanced picture of society that can reinforce and perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes.
- The Codes of Gender: Identity & Performance in Popular Culture (2010) is a documentary featuring Sut Jhally in which the scholar argues about gender stereotypes representation in advertising.
- In the article 'In the old days there were no gays': democracy, social change and media representation of sexual diversity (2016), Ana Cristina Santos explore the political and social history of homosexuality throughout the twentieth century in way to examine issues of impact and change in relation to the cultural representation of lesbians and gay men in the public sphere.
- From fade-out into spotlight: An audio-visual character analysis (ACIS) on the diversity of media representation and production culture (2021) is a work made by Linke Christine and Prommer Elizabeth focused on gender portrayal in audio-visual media and discusses the visibility and participation of diverse people in German television.
- With Your Rainbow Logo Doesn't Make You an Ally (2021) Lily Zheng discusses why companies have to reconsider how they approach marketing and branding during Pride month. Rainbow marketing is not enough and companies need to demonstrate a real commitment to LGBTQ+ community.

- The study *Representing race: the race spectrum subjectivity of diversity in film* (2019) by Jesse King, Sohuyn Lee Ribeiro, Clark Callahan and Tom Robinson used Q methodology to assess the motivations, attitudes, and opinions of individuals in order to understand how people from all major racial groups in the United States feel about racial representation in film.
- *Media Content Diversity: Conceptual Issues and Future Directions for Communication Research* is a study made by Patrick Roessler in 2016 in which the notion of diversity is discussed because it is crucial for people's view of mass media as part of a pluralistic society. The diversity of opinions and actors seems to be a prerequisite for a pluralistic society
- In the article *Diversity in gender and visual representation: a commentary* written by Adrienne Evans in 2015 diversity in gender and visual representation is discussed. Also, she focuses on questioning the costs, limitations and possibilities of being represented in today's visually mediated societies.



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