# How to shift the gender ratio in television for children and adults

A COLLECTION OF IDEAS

Recent studies have clearly shown that television in Germany does not adequately reflect the diversity in our society, half of which is made up of women - and that goes for adult television as well as children's programs. Not only does it fail to reflect today's reality, it is also not in keeping with the public service mission. Over the past 10 years hardly any progress has been made in Germany towards a more gender-balanced representation. The question therefore arises: Where can actual change begin to take place and which strategies have proven to be successful? We collected some promising approaches for a more contemporary, diverse range of television and film programmes, brought together by means of "idea crowdsourcing".
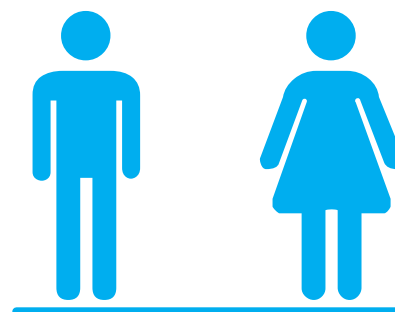
AREAS FOR ACTION

VISIBILITY

On German television, men appear twice as often on screen as women: 67% of the relevant characters are men, 33% are women. The gender gap is particularly striking with regard to experts that are featured in news and information programming: for every woman there are 4 men. Similarly, in international films, men in leading roles have more screen time and almost twice as much speaking time as women in leading roles. In children's programs, the ratio of female to male characters is 1:3, for fantasy characters the ratio goes even up to 1:9.

STEREOTYPICAL REPRESENTATION

Television and film show us almost exclusively slim women and girls, who comply with a stereotypical beauty ideal, while men are represented in a greater diversity of bodies. With increasing age women gradually disappear from television. Other diversity aspects, such as people with "immigration background", people with disabilities or a non-heterosexual orientation, remain underrepresented. The hypersexualisation of the bodies of girls is striking, particularly in children's television.

There is a lack of non-stereotypical role models such as female experts on STEM issues, girls who actively use technology, caring boys and men, queer young people, etc.

INEQUALITY IN PRODUCTION

The ratio of women to men with regard to directing and screen-writing in film and television is approximately 1:4. The film industry is rife with stereotypical assumptions about the skills and the commitment of men and women. 89% of the internationally marketed children's programs in children's television were directed by a man. The ratio of women to men among screenwriters is 1:3. And there is a considerable gender pay gap in Germany. Camerawomen, for instance, earn on average only 43% of their male colleagues, female screenwriters 59%.

Approaches for achieving gender equality

GENDER AWARENESS IN THE CREATIVE PROCESS

Broadening of perspectives and worlds of experience through **more diverse teams**

More diversity in decision-making positions within broadcasting
Examples: direction boards, management boards, film funding institutions, supervisory bodies

Acquiring series that do not contain obvious stereotypes and significant hypersexualisation

Specifically scouting for content/formats with more diversity, and enquiring about these on the markets (MIPCOM/MIPJunior etc.)

Dubbing in animation films:
Replace male voices by female voices when dubbing animals or fantasy creatures in animation

Using the NEROPA casting tool. Identify all the parts in the film where the character's gender is not relevant to the plot (i.e. "neutral") and assign and cast them alternately as women or men. http://neropa.stieve.com

Broadening the spectrum of roles on screen
Examples:
- 50-50 ratio for hosts/moderators, experts etc.
- More women over 40 years of age on screen
- Show girls and women who competently use technology, men and boys in caring roles

Avoiding hypersexualisation
Example: avoiding unnaturally thin waistlines and sexually explicit clothing for women in animation films

Aiming to challenge and counteract stereotypes; write also characters that are "non-binary", i.e. portrayed as neither explicitly masculine nor feminine

MAKING IT EASIER TO FIND FEMALE EXPERTS

Freely accessible database of female experts
(as interview partners, speakers etc.)
Examples: www.shesource.org, https://expertes.fr

Freely accessible database of women in all areas of production, from directing and screenwriting to camera, sound, lighting, composition etc.
Example: www.nordicwomeninfilm.com

REGULAR REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION ON THE STATE OF RESEARCH

GENDER-SPECIFIC CONTENT ANALYSES

STUDIES ON GENDER-SPECIFIC ASPECTS IN TERMS OF RECEPTION AND MEDIA USAGE

Measuring change, closing knowledge gaps: Research

Applying international standards e.g. UNESCO Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media, recommendations e.g. of the Council of Europe, UN Women, Institut Zajavnu Politiku (Slovenia), BFI Diversity Standards Criteria

Measures to boost gender competence for decision-makers and at all levels of production

Awareness raising within supervisory bodies (e.g. Broadcasting Board members, supervisors for youth media protection)

Coaching of women experts in preparation for media appearances
Example: Media training of the BBC Academy

Adding gender competence as a mandatory requirement in applications and appointments of professorships, introducing gender topics in all curricula

STRENGTHENING AWARENESS AND COMPETENCE

Providing resources to improve media literacy with regard to gender stereotypes (so far hardly any reliable, validated resources are available)

Exchanging successful practices and networking Examples: networking of film schools, European Women's Audiovisual Network (EWA), Digital Media Women, Women's Media Center

Raising awareness and coaching teachers and parents on gender stereotypes in the media and their importance in the development of children's identity

More (experts') events on gender and media
Examples: IZI conference „Strong girls, strong boys?" (2017), PRIX-JEUNESSE-Gender-Suitcase, Council of Europe Baku: Conference on "Gender equality and media", Women in Media Conference Australia, International Conference on Gender and Communication (UNESCO/ National Institute of Women in Costa Rica)

Parity in appointments to professorships, editorial boards and management positions at broadcasting and film funding institutions

Competitions for more diverse representations in screenplays Examples: https://propro.filminstitut.at/; https://womenwhowriteinfilm.com, Women in Cinema International Screenplay Competition

Targeted awards for exemplary productions
Examples: Juliane Bartel Media Prize, PRIX JEUNESSE Gender Equity Prize

Support for female scriptwriters
Examples: EWA Scriptwriter Residency, Women and Hollywood Writers' Lab for Women Screenwriters over 40, https://propro.filminstitut.at/about/about-the-programme/

Quota for films and entries by women at all festivals, parity in the composition of the juries

Self-set quota for female directors etc.
Example: Studio Hamburg Production Group

SUPPORT/ CREATING INCENTIVES

Film funding: **Targets** (e.g. Swedish Film Institute, Action Plan for Gender Equality in Norwegian Film Productions) or **incentives** (e.g. The Irish Film Board (IFB), Norwegian Film Institute), where productions with gender-diverse teams receive additional financial support for content development; Austria: https://equality.filminstitut.at/de/gender-incentivee

Festivals of films made by women or with gender-sensitive themes. Example: International Women's Film Festival Dortmund-Köln; www.com/resources/film-festivals/

Mentoring for women in the audiovisual/media industry
Examples: Into the Wild, Sparx
www.intothewild-mentoring.com/ ;
www.epi.media/sparkx-leadership/

Promotion of projects on gender topics at film schools
Example: Babelsberg Film University KONRAD WOLF
www.filmuniversitaet.de/de/filmuniversitaet/ gleichstellung/projektantrag.html

REGULAR MONITORING / DATA COLLECTION ON GENDER REPRESENTATION AND DIVERSITY IN THE MEDIA

Examples:

BBC Equality Information Report (on diversity on-screen & off-screen) with concrete targets https://downloads.bbc.co.uk/ diversity/pdf/bbc-equality-information-report-2017-18.pdf

UK: Monitoring System "DIAMOND" (Diversity Analysis Monitoring Data) - Data collection by production managers, https:// creativediversitynetwork.com/ diamond/

Global Media Monitoring Project: Who makes the news? http://whomakesthenews.org/ gmmp/gmmp-reports

Regular systematic studies like "Audiovisual Diversity" (University of Rostock), "Gender and Film" (FFA) and "Gender and Television" (ARD and ZDF), "Children's Television Worldwide" (IZI)