



## **JOURNALISM & DIVERSITY**

### ***ETHICS & DEONTOLOGY UNITS***

### ***PRACTICAL SHEETS FOR JOURNALISTS & MEDIA MANAGERS***

**MARS - Media Against Racism in Sport**

Funded  
by the European Union  
and the Council of Europe



EUROPEAN UNION



COUNCIL  
OF EUROPE  
CONSEIL  
DE L'EUROPE

Implemented  
by the Council of Europe

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This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union and the Council of Europe. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union, of the Council of Europe and of the European Federation of Journalists.

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## **Introduction**

### ***Units providing a gateway for journalists from all over Europe***

The media are a mirror on which social realities are reflected; therefore they are a representation of society.

Journalists have a responsibility as citizens to ensure that this representation is as balanced and fair as possible.

The *Ethics & Deontology Units* were written with this in mind: helping media professionals to address the challenge of a media representation and expression that take into account the diversity of our European societies of today.

### ***Units: 5 national and 1 European reports Ethics & Editorial Management in relation to media, diversity, non discrimination and sport***

In 2011-12, five national encounters and one European have been organised by the joint EU/Council of Europe programme, MARS – *Media Against Racism in Sport*. These encounters focused on ethics and editorial management of media, diversity, non discrimination and sport issues.

A report has been produced after each encounter including recommendations and examples of practices. The 6 reports are downloadable at:

[www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/mars/EEM\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/mars/EEM_en.asp)

### ***Units summarising recommendations and examples of practices***

Within the framework of the MARS – *Media Against Racism in Sport* – programme, these 6 national and European reports have been redrafted in order to make recommendations and examples of practices easily accessible to media professionals.

For publication on the MARS website, five thematic units including recommendations and examples of practices were presented.

These units do not replace the national and European reports, but form an introduction, or “gateway”, to them.



## UNIT 1 **DIVERSITY: WHY SHOULD IT MATTER TO JOURNALISM?**

The mission of journalists is to cover present reality in all the events through which it unfolds, and to convey the spectrum of diversity of the societies in which they live. Indeed, media presentation of information should still more emphatically reflect ethnic, cultural and social diversity as well as diversity regarding gender, sexual orientation and disability. In sport, ethnic and cultural minorities are fairly well represented. This visibility is chiefly due to the fact that sports participation presents itself as one of society's most open and diversified spheres. However, where the handling of sports news and the media image of diversity are concerned, combating of all forms of discrimination must be carried on for at least two reasons:

***A question of professional ethics for journalism*** - Diversity reporting is in keeping with the mission of social cohesion assigned to journalists by the press councils existing in most countries of Europe

Among the Council of Europe member states, 25 countries have established a national press council. Most of these countries consider that journalists have a civic responsibility and should contribute to social cohesion, in particular by reflecting the diverse features of the society to which they belong. But these diverse features are not necessarily visible, since numerous forms of discrimination tend to minimise or mask women and many minorities.

To avoid replicating this discrimination, journalists must emphasise the prevalent lack of diversity in numerous agencies of power or, conversely, help to bring out facets of diversity which are real enough but left invisible by the mechanisms of representation.

***A question of ethics for each journalist*** - Equitable representation of society's different components is in keeping with the mission of journalistic honesty

Even in the realm of sport, certain minorities such as people with disabilities remain very minimally visible. Besides, even though the ethnic and cultural diversity of sports players is well represented in the media, the players only appear in 10% of sport items, and expertise in sport is conceded to the sole category of sport experts, journalists and analysts, generally white males over fifty years of age.

Blatant racism has most fortunately been banished from the media sphere, and racist acts by players or spectators are vigorously condemned (even penalised). However, today discrimination becomes more insidious, when for example the adjectives used to describe a black athlete denote animals ("A thoroughbred", "A gazelle") while they belong more to technology for a white athlete ("A rocket")<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> See *Gender Issues – Equality in the Media – Guide for Journalists – MARS Programme – Council of Europe – 2012*  
[www.coe.int/t/dq4/cultureheritage/mars/Source/Documents/EEM/fiches-pratiques\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dq4/cultureheritage/mars/Source/Documents/EEM/fiches-pratiques_en.pdf)

**FOCUS LITHUANIA**

***Ethical code and committee ensure freedom from external pressure***

In Lithuania, when media and sports clubs have the same owners, journalists must struggle to preserve independence in the journalistic approach to sport. To guard against any external pressure, journalists may invoke the Code of Ethics, observance of which is guaranteed by an Ethics Committee:

**The Code of Ethics for journalists and broadcasters adopted in 2005 contains, in Articles 54 and 55, specific provisions on combating racism and discrimination - It thus encourages journalists to refuse to co-operate in humiliating or ridiculing persons or groups on the ground of their race, nationality, culture, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability, even where these persons have committed a crime.**

**The Ethics Committee was set up by the Lithuanian Union of Journalists in 2009 to enforce the Code of Ethics, consider complaints and issue recommendations and decisions:**

- *Its authority is invoked in editorial boards or media institutions as well as in the field so that journalistic work may be done in complete independence.*
- *Freedom from pressure brought to bear by governing circles, including those in the world of sport, especially where such pressure concerns publishing racist statements in an interview. Such statements, quite common in sports communities in Lithuania, are often disputed subsequently by the culprits, thereby casting doubt on the integrity of the journalists who received them.*
- *Refusal to account for and condemn the behaviour of a suspect or suspects by their belonging to a social or cultural group or by their sexual orientation.*



Sport is one sphere of society where diversity takes the most apparent or visible forms. The media treatment of sport should allow their portrayal, and yet here too the coverage lacks diversity. Sportsmen and sportswomen are from quite diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, but neither receives as much exposure as sport experts or analysts. In Europe, the society to which the media gives a say is overwhelmingly white, male, economically active and in the higher socio-occupational categories.

**Think "diversity" whatever the subject dealt with** - *Media balance consists in mainstreaming more diversity into journalistic treatment, whatever the subject and classification.*

This provides an answer to the ambition of the media to be a mirror of the society in which they move, while being as objective and neutral as possible. In fact this seeming neutrality, in causing over-exposure of certain categories at the cost of making others invisible, conceals actual elements of diversity.

**Explicitly target the types of diversity** - *Restoring media balance consists in larger endorsement of topics directly related to forms of diversity.*

Including features of diversity irrespective of subject and fostering equal access to the media is a goal to be complemented by a significant increase in topics that deal directly with considerations of diversity.

**Encourage critical reviews of coverage** - *Journalistic work must be constantly analysed by journalists themselves to avoid replicating or accentuating society's inequalities.*

Reporting facts is necessary but remains insufficient. Information is an already mediated, manufactured object. Built to professional and aesthetic standards, information is also interpreted by a recipient. A media world without diversity breeds legitimisation and normalisation of society's inequalities.

**MISSING DIVERSITY - Journalism can help emphasise missing features of diversity when their absence is precisely a feature of reality.**

*Example: In the major controlling bodies of European sport, the over-representation of men conforms to a certain social reality but does not reflect the diverse facets of European societies.*

**MISSED DIVERSITY - Journalism can systematically reveal the facets of diversity bypassed when this reality is eclipsed by media overexposure of other more sensational or more readily conveyed aspects.**

*Example: In France as in many European countries, a live coverage in an urban amateur football club only showing white players would be an illustration of missed diversity since these clubs have qualified football players of far more diverse ethnic and cultural origins, like the national professional teams moreover.*

## ***FOCUS SPAIN***

### ***For the advancement of equality and diversity***

To Spanish journalists, the question of diversity is closely associated with that of gender equality, especially where sports journalism is concerned. In Spain, as often happens elsewhere, sports editorships are separate from news desks and this may cause discrepancy between general-interest journalists' appreciation of equality and diversity issues and sports journalists' reproduction of numerous sexist stereotypes.

To raise awareness of equality and diversity issues, recommendations target different audiences.

#### **Recommendations regarding the press profession and enterprises**

- In colleges of journalism and universities, place more emphasis on diversity and equality, particularly in specialist studies in sports journalism.
- At editorial level, encourage the inclusion of sport sections in newsrooms, under instructions to abide by the same ethical standards.
- In the managements of press enterprises, pay more attention to diversity in recruitment and access to editorial responsibilities, particularly as regards feminisation of certain areas such as sports journalism.

#### **Recommendations to increase distributors' responsibility towards the public**

- More marked assertion by press enterprises of their commitment to equality and diversity, expressed particularly by the appointment of a mediator able to entertain the grievances of minimised groups.
- In the programmes, it behoves the media to avoid spreading stigmatisation and stereotypes by posting SMS messages and "spontaneous" calls that may be racist, xenophobic or sexist.

#### **Recent or requisite initiatives**

The Ethics Commission recently created by the Federation of Associations of Spanish Journalists (FAPE) is regarded as a positive move that makes for greater social diversity and more responsible journalism. This body might draft and distribute a practice guide, inspired and underpinned especially by the European networks of journalists committed to diversity. Another initiative desired by Spanish journalists: creation of a European OBSERVATORY under the aegis of the European institutions for all-round monitoring of equal access to the media for all members of both sexes.

## ***FOCUS BULGARIA***

### ***Getting away from ethnocentrism***

Above and beyond the question of explicit racist discrimination, the chief difficulty identified by Bulgarian journalists is ethnocentrism. To register the different points of view and offer diversified treatment of information, journalists can:

- Avoid taking up or conveying commonly shared prejudices and stereotypes concerning minorities, for example by using considerations of an ethnic or cultural kind to account for social problems.
- Avoid approaching economic and social problems as specifically relating to a given minority, but deal with them as concerning Bulgarian society perceived as a whole.
- Diversify the choice of subjects and the handling of information through inclusion of current affairs topics that concern minorities.

#### **Observe the stipulations of the Ethical Code of the Bulgarian journalists' union which specifies in Article 2.5:**

- Respect everyone's right to live in safety and security, and do not incite hatred, violence or any form of discrimination.
- Do not mention characteristics linked with "race", colour, religion, cultural origin, sexual orientation or mental or bodily health of persons except in cases where it bears directly on the events reported.

#### **Observe the stipulations of the Ethical Code of the Bulgarian journalists' union which specifies in Article 2.6:**

- Take care not to be made the mouthpiece of people promoting, inciting or perpetrating violence;
- Only report the activity of such persons and groups if this is of major public interest.



**Update your knowledge on the subject** - *Writing and publishing an article, or producing and releasing a report on discrimination, can lead you and your fellow-journalists to adopt a more equitable approach, whatever the topic.*

Awareness of the issues involved and constant effort to learn more about them is a first step in developing one's working methods. Producing a report or writing an article on discrimination refreshes knowledge, reawakens awareness and guards against facile acceptance that the problem is disposed of or about to be settled.

**Undertake regular self-reappraisal** - *How? For example by posting up in the newsroom the list of clichés encountered and condemned, readymade phrases, hackneyed comparisons or seemingly "matter of course" expressions or methods*

There are recurrent topics among editorial staff that might be called "diversity chestnuts" whose handling smacks of cliché, not to say caricature: over-exposure for small news items of a violent kind that may take place in outlying urban neighbourhoods predominantly inhabited by migrant populations; preference for the most sensational images during events such as a Gay Pride; awaiting "dedicated days" such as each year's 8 March or disability or racism week to do one annual item about "women" or "disability"

As to the seemingly "matter of course" methods, note should be taken of the tendency in journalists when considering the same topical issue to focus their enquiries on facts or interpretations if the experts are men, whereas focus for women experts is put on "what is felt", the moral or emotional aspects, as it is considered to have more appeal. In sport, it is also "a matter of course" to comment on players' dress or private lives, information not usually divulged by the players. Still more ordinarily, the practice of designating boys by their surname and girls simply by their given name is deemed "normal" and unproblematic for most journalists, men and women alike. Understanding the need to combat stereotypes requires more advanced professional reflexivity and detailed scrutiny of notions taken for granted, of daily routines. We all have our habits; they are very hard to escape. It is as important to analyse one's own productions as it is to talk with other people to understand their perspective and take account of their comments.

**Diversify your contacts by renewing your address book** - *How? By pooling the contacts of all the journalists on the editorial staff, by analyzing them from the diversity angle, encouraging exchanges and remedying deficiencies with a purposive (possibly statistical) approach.*

Sportsmen and women may well be of diverse ethnic and cultural origins, but that does not apply to the experts and analysts of both sexes, and it is they who have the floor. A hierarchy is imperceptibly built up, where the latter "watch" and "speak of" the former who are "watched" and "speechless".

The treatment given to female Beach Volley is a good example of "objectification" of sportswomen who are usually shown without being allowed to speak whereas the interviews are set aside for their male coaches, sports commentators or club managers.





***Amplify your sources to diversify the points of view expressed in the media - How?***

*On the ground, journalists should think of making more approaches to the persons habitually least represented in the media.*

Sports journalists themselves can make the protagonists of the world of sport alert to the media treatment of their discipline, in order to spur them to vigilance, even criticism.

*On the Internet, journalists can keep a targeted watch via the social sites and networks to find new sources of information.*

By approaching representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations, sports institutions and associations, also bearers of knowledge and outlooks of a different kind, editorial teams can move away from their panel of habitual experts, cross-comparing different types of expertise so as to join together in identifying and addressing problems and solutions relating to the diversity question.

<b>RELATION TO SOURCES</b>		<b>WHO IS THE ORIGINATOR OF THE INFORMATION?</b>	
		<b>Passive journalism</b> <i>The information was passed to the editorship or journalist via a press release, dispatch or press file.</i>	<b>Active journalism</b> <i>The editorship or journalist went after the contacts or the information.</i>
<b>HOW MANY SOURCES VALIDATE THE INFORMATION?</b>	<b>Single source</b> <i>Information derives from a single source</i>	Significant risk of missing the existing points of diversity and doing an advertorial  	Risk of always seeking information from the same contact and of deficient diversity in the treatment  
	<b>Blended sources</b> <i>Information derives from several sources</i>	Possibly little diversity as minority sources do not always readily consider it allowable to court media attention.  	More diversified media treatment: by trying to diversify their sources, journalists will anticipate expressions of diversity.  

## **FOCUS FRANCE**

### **A Toolbox for convincing**

In France, questions of ethics and professional conduct are addressed in bodies such as Entretiens de l'information, Assises du journalisme, Conférence Nationale des Métiers du Journalisme, etc. But these questions raise little response in the profession since:

- on the journalists' side, any initiative resembling a charter of journalism or a press council is perceived as a bid to control information and a hindrance to freedom of the press;
- to challenge journalists concerning their practices is to overestimate their command of the editorial choices in editorial boards as well as the independence of the latter in press groups and enterprises. All the more because the professional position of journalists is insecure, an increasingly frequent situation.

A pragmatic approach is recommended in the form of tools devised by and for journalists themselves:

**Diversity barometer** (or badge) to single out the efforts and shortcomings of all media regarding diversity.

On the model of what the CSA (Higher Audiovisual Council) has done for French public audiovisual media, and on the basis of a diversity charter common to all media, the objective would be to arrive at the creation of a diversity rating agency or barometer.

**Quantitative survey** to measure the media exposure of diversity and appeal to editorships at the organisational and operational level.

In France at the MARS gathering in Lille in November 2011, three syndicates of journalists undertook to conduct a survey with all dispatch on ethnic diversities, modelled on the study carried out in Belgium on the daily French-language press and in accordance with French legislation.

The survey would provide a basis for more adequate consideration of questions of diversity, discrimination and racism.

**Qualitative study** for circulation among editorial staff to develop critical reflectivity concerning:

- (non-)diversity of sources,
- (non-)diversity of subjects treated,
- (non-)diversity of treatments,
- stereotypes with regard to angle of approach, treatment or modes of expression.





***Diversify recruitment of journalists the better to reflect audience diversity***

Inclusion of more women journalists in editorial teams.

Inclusion of more journalists originating from minorities or suffering from disability, for example.

***Favour a purposive approach upstream and critical review downstream for inclusive handling of diversity as part of media treatment***

Regular major coverage of women's sports events

Coverage of women's sports events must come with systematic advertising of their results.

***Placing the question of diversity in sport on the media schedule*** - Media must take the lead in creating the event, particularly where they are the partners of sports events embodying forms of diversity or have sole rebroadcasting rights.

***Proposing and producing more articles and reports on questions relating to all forms of diversity so as to set an example*** - As well as the sports competitions and their reporting, the narrative adaptation should portray the points of diversity, particularly via presentations of amateur clubs or athletes representative of minorities.

***Extension of sports journalists' expertise*** - Besides news of competitions and clubs, investigation by sports journalists should cover all issues relating to sport: economic, social (racism, discrimination), geopolitical or medical concerns, or racism and discrimination.

***Sensitising the vocabulary used*** - Every abuse of language must be reproved, commented on, possibly penalised.

***Set up editorial surveillance mechanisms in respect of diversity:***

***Conferences of editorial boards with a stake in diversity*** - Like Västernorrlands Nyheter, a Swedish paper whose editorial conferences comprise a daily session to evaluate parity of treatment of men and women in the topics of the day before, it is worthwhile to incorporate a regular system for tallying, monitoring and analysing progress achieved as regards equal treatment in the reports, in order to make the whole editorial team diversity-conscious but also constantly illustrate the diversity in the choice and handling of subjects.

***Critical viewing of features*** - Specifically focused on the handling of diversity, critical viewing may be a means of action on editorial boards to acquaint management and journalists with the viewpoint topics receiving the least media exposure and with the information production process.

***Creation of mediator posts*** - Mediators, tasked to gather audience reactions, ensure feedback of criticisms, remarks or complaints made concerning the media treatment of subjects. They may also make representations to the legal services of the broadcaster or the head of publication who are responsible for dealing with breaches of ethics.

***Participation in existing networks*** - Whether at national or international level, active participation in journalists' networks allows sharing of practices intended to

provide coverage for expressions of diversity and/or to assign more journalists to diversity-specific projects.

***Give the least mediagenic publics a say***

**Targeted watch on the social networks** - Listening in to and/or activating a community via the social networks to make different voices heard and/or encourage certain voices to feel entitled to speak out.

**Encounters between journalists and sports stars who personify diversities** - These encounters between journalists and personalities of the sports world representing different aspects of diversity enable journalists to ascertain and express their personal and professional difficulties in broaching certain subjects, for want of knowledge or surfeit of prejudices. They also allow the discovery of an unknown wealth of diversity in sport, a discovery capable of generating novel and original reporting.

**Media courses and training.** - Journalists can organise media training sessions so that representatives of the least mediagenic associations or personalities are better equipped to express their points of view.

## ***FOCUS POLAND***

### ***Information throughout the career guarantees journalistic ethics***

Poland has adopted a Code of Ethics, but journalists rely on information and transmission to bring it to life:

- to publicise and enforce the rules of the code of journalistic ethics.
- to transmit the basic rules of journalism and, more specifically, help journalists combat discrimination and all forms of racism.

#### **Observe the basic rules of journalism:**

- Put the public's interest and right to information before the interests of journalists and broadcasters.
- Verify information to distinguish it from conjecture and rumour.
- Have errors rectified as soon as possible by a journalist, even if not the same as the perpetrator, and even if no rectification was requested.

#### **Respect persons mentioned, shown or interviewed**

- Respect personal life and privacy. An exemption can nevertheless be granted in the case of an investigation concerning public figures.
- Respect all persons whatever their differences of ideology, culture, race or sexual orientation.
- Pay special attention to the dignity of persons with physical and mental disabilities, the elderly and ill, and everyone unsuited to modern competitive society.

#### **Remain neutral in the coverage of particular events**

- Be cautious in disclosing the acts and the names of persons suspected of crime.
- Avoid any description likely to encourage crime or antisocial behaviour.

#### **Utilise resources and capabilities in an ethical fashion**

- Do not distort the sense or the significance of an information item in order to highlight its sensational or exceptional character.
- Use proper, decent language. Writers must eschew the use of coarse terms and expressions.

#### **Incorporate sanctions into ethics**

- Ensure that anyone wishing to write and communicate as a journalist knows and accepts the ethical rules.
- Be in a position to penalise any breach of the code of ethics or journalistic misconduct.



***Train continuously***

**Encounters between journalists and personalities from the sports world to compare perspectives of diversity** - *Sportsmen/women, regularly faced with questions of discrimination, are acutely alert to them and willing to come to newsrooms and give accounts of their day-to-day experience. This proves to be a productive confrontation for the journalists who, unused to meeting dissenters, are ready to reconsider their media practices. These encounters really bring out diversities, appreciably altering the media treatment of sports topics and sometimes even other subjects addressed by journalists.*

**Reference glossary for informed choice of vocabulary concerning minorities** - *A non-prescriptive glossary of terms recommended by minorities, their associations or the institutions that champion them could be circulated in colleges of journalism and vocational training centres as part of an instructional module to be introduced on diversity and equality as well as questions of usage. This glossary should include the sources of the different recommendations.*

**Documentary resource site to help journalists gain insight into the question of diversity and help editorial staff to diversify the choice of subjects to cover** - *Design for a dedicated site comprising articles, reports, theses and documentary or fiction films on expressions of diversity in the media, measurements of discrimination and the viewpoint of minorities (particularly regarding their media coverage). This site could be consulted by all professionals.*

***Confer via dedicated tools***

**Training sessions dedicated to diversity** - *Journalists, particularly those holding decision-making posts in editorial teams, must be able to acquire training to apprehend the question of handling diversity and be encouraged to equip themselves to raise their colleagues' awareness of this question, building on practices and examples from other teams whether in their own or other countries.*

**Specialised training sessions on sensitive subjects** - *Journalists can gain in assurance regarding subjects which are sensitive or complex, even taboo in editorial teams, by participating in specific courses on questions of ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, etc.*

**Meetings between senior and trainee journalists for intergenerational transmission** - *These occasional or regular meetings may lead to the establishment of tutoring programmes during which senior journalists recognised by the profession provide role models and set standards for young journalists, less experienced writers or novice editors.*

**Inter-occupational and international encounters for a broader editorial outlook** - *Collaborations with academics specialising in journalism and media handling of diversity in order to train newcomers to the profession. International exchanges for journalists to discover new ways of handling information and original angles for the coverage and presentation of news topics.*

### ***Raising awareness of journalism students on diversity issue***

**Via enrolment in colleges of journalism** - *Some colleges of journalism are careful to diversify their enrolment, and publicise statistics bearing witness to the diversity of their student intake.*

Via courses taught in initial training - ***Compulsory teaching of the code of journalistic ethics from journalists' training period onwards.*** *Courses in professional conduct and ethics on the curriculum for students of journalism should include a component explaining the issues and the interests at stake in combating discrimination and racism. Furthermore, all training and especially application exercises should favour a diversity mainstreaming approach, from diversification of sources to the sociology of audiences.*

### ***Media education at school from the earliest age***

**Actions in schools to raise pupils' awareness of the media treatment of sport** - *Sports journalists should harness their prestige among young people to actions with the declared aim of demystifying the making of stars, giving models more breadth by proposing diversified portraits, and instilling wariness of clichés and prejudices.*

**Participation in all information campaigns** - *Sports journalists should foster relations and encounters between sport federations or bodies able to provide study grants and the audiences or readerships representing ethnic and cultural, social and gender diversity, sexual orientation as well as disability.*

## **FOCUS EUROPE**

### **Concrete measures to encourage the media coverage of diversity**

**France - The "diversity" component of the Professional Passport** - This training, recently initiated by the National Commission of Journalism professions, is intended for working journalists and those who did not graduate from journalism schools that are recognized by the industry. It aims at sensitizing journalists who learned the profession "on the job" and to help them overcome stereotypes, social constructs and standardization. The program is spread over three weeks and includes a component of diversity awareness. This training is fully financed by mandatory funds collected from the press and for the training of freelance journalists: [www.afdas.com/piqistes/passeport-professionnel-journalistes](http://www.afdas.com/piqistes/passeport-professionnel-journalistes)

**Italy / UK - Guidelines for the fight against discrimination** - The National Union of Journalists (NUJ) and the Union of Italian journalists (FNSI) have developed guidelines for the fight against racism and to address issues related to immigrants, migration, refugees and discrimination.

**Belgium - Vigilance and early media literacy** - Associations such as Media Animation, encourage journalists to spend time with students from primary or secondary level to make them sensible to the media and train them in decrypting it. In addition, the CSA, the Belgian Audiovisual Council each year distributes, since 2010, a barometer of diversity:

[www.csa.be/diversite/ressources/2006](http://www.csa.be/diversite/ressources/2006)

It also offers a "Review of Good Practices for equality and diversity in the audiovisual media of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation (March 2013)," a fairly comprehensive overview of the measures taken both in Europe and in Canada, for instance:

[www.csa.be/diversite/ressources/1999](http://www.csa.be/diversite/ressources/1999)

**United Kingdom - A database to diversify contacts** - The BBC has undertaken to develop a database of highly diverse contacts to encourage journalists to increase their contacts, cross their sources and to open up to minorities or groups that are not represented or insufficiently represented in the media. Note the action plan implemented by the BBC entitled "Everyone Has a Story" to develop diversity by 2015:

[www.bbc.co.uk/diversity/strategy/documents.html](http://www.bbc.co.uk/diversity/strategy/documents.html)

**France - "Diversity breakfast" of France Televisions** - "Diversity breakfasts" are regularly organized by France Télévisions to offer informal meetings between journalists, editors, assistant editors and editing staff and representatives of minorities. It is a series of meetings between stakeholders of 'diversity' and the TV personnel: Information managers, editors, presenters and field reporters. The aim is to promote direct contacts and to create links, clarify any misunderstandings and principally to allow teams to open their eyes to the world and soak up different views on the news. One should note that France Télévisions is a candidate for the "Diversity Label" a French award given by an independent research entity, which was already given to TF1, the competing private channel of France Televisions, the main French public channels.





## Media, Diversity & Sport - Key Figures!

In Europe, only a quarter of news subjects are women, even though they account for over half of the European population (GMMP, 2010)! While immigrants represent around 10% of the EU population (*Eurostat, 2011*) migrants and ethnic minorities represent less than 5% of the main actors in the news in Europe (*Ter Wal, 2004*). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people represent roughly 6% of the population of the United Kingdom but account for less than 1% of the population seen on TV. 20% of the British population is disabled but less than 1% is represented in British TV (*CDN 2009-10 Progress Report*).

Through the sources they use, the subjects they select and the treatment they choose, the media influence the agenda (what to think about) and public perception (how to think) of contemporary debates. This is why the Council of Europe considers truly inclusive information - where everyone can participate as witnesses, players, producers etc. - to be crucial for social cohesion and democratic participation. But today, too many people are still excluded from public debates!

The MARS - Media Against Racism in Sport – EU / CoE joint programme chooses to focus, though not exclusively, on sport because it is considered as an important area for building social cohesion as it is also a major sector of investment in the media industry. However, sport media coverage does not reflect social and cultural diversity and does not ensure equity for all. Only 5% of press articles cover cultural and social aspects of sport; 40% of all sport articles refer to only one source and 20% refer to no sources at all; female athletes have four times more chances of being covered by a female journalist rather than a male one but less than 5% of sport news and stories are made by female journalists (Play the Game, 2005)!

Building upon standards set by various Council of Europe bodies on media pluralism, expression of diversity and non discrimination and the outcome of the 2008-10 CoE's antidiscrimination Campaign, the MARS – Media Against Racism in Sport – EU / CoE joint programme aims at considering non discrimination and expression of diversity as an ongoing angle of media coverage.

Through this approach applied to sport coverage, MARS wants to encourage innovative modes of media content production that could be reproduced in all media sectors and used by any form of media coverage. By stimulating media cross-practices in the field of training, ethics and production, MARS aims at implementing an inclusive and intercultural approach to media content production. To achieve these outcomes, the MARS programme offers media professionals (journalism students and trainers, journalists, media managers, etc.) to participate in National and European Media Encounters and Media Work Exchanges conceived as first steps towards a European media network against racism and for intercultural dialogue.

**More – [www.coe.int/mars!!](http://www.coe.int/mars!!)**