



A Review of Gender Equality Initiatives Globally and Evaluation of their Application in Scotland

Introduction

Gender inequalities in media and creative content and production persist despite the clear focus on these issues within the European policy agenda and beyond.

In the EU, although there are legal requirements on member states to prohibit gender-based discrimination, the precise mechanisms through which these outcomes are to be achieved are not in place. Scotland has an opportunity to learn from the success of initiatives in other countries and design a bespoke set of mechanisms best suited to the media and cultural landscape and its needs.

This report is in three sections. Section One summarises initiatives that have been implemented in EU member states and further afield. Countries have been reviewed alphabetically. Much of the information about individual countries has come from the Council of Europe Equality Commission paper; a meaningful evaluation of the initiatives and examples of good practice is made difficult given that evidence is put forward by policy officers in each country, designed to highlight successes rather than comprehensively evaluate and provide lessons learned. It is notable that of the member states reviewed for good practice in this paper, the UK is not one.

Section Two provides an analysis of some of the key initiatives and explores how these might be applicable to the Scottish context. The final section reviews key points for a theory of change to increase gender equality in Scotland.

This paper uses a variety of sources, including international reports, academic studies and online platforms from the countries themselves. Reports used include:

International Women’s Media Foundation Global Report on the Status of Women in the News Media¹

European Institute for Gender Equality Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations. Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Women and the Media²

Council of Europe Gender Equality Commission Gender Equality and the Media at National Level: Compilation of good practices from member states³

¹ Byerly CM (2011) Global Report on the Status of Women in the News Media. International Women’s Media Foundation. Available at: <https://www.iwmf.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/IWMF-Global-Report.pdf>.

² EIGE (2013) Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Women and the Media — Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations. European Institute for Gender Equality. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/advancing-gender-equality-decision-making-media-organisations-report>.

³ COE (2014) Gender Equality and the Media at National Level: Compilation of good practices from member states. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680590557>.

European Parliament: Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs Department/FEMM

Committee Gender Equality in the Media Sector⁴

Council of Europe Gender Equality Commission Gender Equality and Media: Analytical Report⁵

Nordicom Comparing Gender and Media Equality Across the Globe: A Cross-National Study of the Qualities, Causes, and Consequences of Gender Equality in and through the News Media⁶

Although difficult to identify the specific impact of these initiatives, a critical evaluation is included where possible in Section Two during the discussion of applicability to Scotland.

1. A Global Review of Initiatives

Austria

Austria has four initiatives designed to increase gender equality in media.

Gender Equality Plan by national public broadcaster ÖRF

In 2012 ÖRF implemented a Gender Quality Plan alongside comparatively robust self-regulation and extensive guidelines on gender equality in broadcasting content. "The plan focuses on promoting women with the organisation, eliminating discrimination, and enabling all staff – including men – to achieve a good work life balance."⁷ The plan reviews an analysis of its own workforce and sets out six essential objectives:⁸

- Implementing Equal Opportunities Standards
- Enhancing Women's Careers
- Technical – More Women in Technical Jobs
- Reconciling Work and Family Life
- Executive Competence in Equal Opportunities Management
- Permanent Prevention of Any Type of Harassment

It includes actions on each of these, e.g., the establishment of an internal Executive Women's Forum designed to support women's professional progression,⁹ an Equality Commission to review cases of discrimination, "anchoring gender mainstreaming as a guiding principle" from the top down and a "Gender Check" during essential decisions of the Management Board.¹⁰

⁴ McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen's Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

⁵ COE (2020) Gender Equality and Media. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/prems-064620-gbr-2573-gender-equality-in-media/16809f0342>.

⁶ Nordicom (2020) Comparing Gender and Media Equality Across the Globe A Cross-National Study of the Qualities, Causes, and Consequences of Gender Equality in and through the News Media. Nordicom. Available at: <https://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1502571/FULLTEXT02.pdf>.

⁷ McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen's Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

⁸ ÖRF (2012) Equal Opportunities Plan. Austrian Broadcasting Corporation ÖRF. Available at: https://zukunft.orf.at/rte/upload/texte/2013/recht_grundlagen/en_gleichstellungsplan.pdf.

⁹ Ibid, p.22.

¹⁰ Wittmann M (n.d.) Gender Equality at ÖRF: Equality Plan. Austrian Broadcasting Corporation ÖRF. Available at: <https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/5b57e7bd-0e66-406c-a761-fd2b81e144ba/AV-20150522-WG-pres-Point%204a-Gender%20Equality%20ORF-EN.pdf>.

Database

One Austrian newspaper has developed – and continues to populate – a database of women specialists on a range of subjects, from which journalists can draw interviews or quotations for articles.¹¹ Respondents to the European Parliament’s Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality review of gender equality initiatives in media “highlighted the value of having access to lists of experts from whom they can seek comments on stories, which have been created with the express intention of increasing diversity among expert commentators in news media.”¹²

Austrian Advertising Council Advisory Board

The Advisory Board to the Austrian Advertising Council was established in 2011. It involves “qualified gender experts in order to counteract gender-discriminatory advertising and to raise awareness of the advertising industry for a non-discriminatory portrayal of the sexes.”¹³

Gender Award Advertising

The initiative was established in 2012 and rewards gender-sensitive advertising productions across media industries. “The most important criteria are the promotion of equality between women and men in relation to overcoming gender stereotypes in the portrayal of persons, and that women and men are represented in atypical professions/roles.”¹⁴

Women on the Front Page

It was noted that the former Editor in Chief of one national newspaper had made a “consistent effort”¹⁵ to include at least one woman on the front page of the weekly publication. Demonstrable actions from the top such as these are integral to progress and help to counter women’s underrepresentation in prominent positions in news content.

Belgium

Belgium has instigated three initiatives which are listed as ‘good practice’ in the Gender Equality Commission’s 2014 report:

Expert Database

The database is online, freely accessible, and lists over a thousand experts belonging to target groups often underrepresented in media: women, ethnic minorities, transgender people etc. It is in both Dutch and English.¹⁶ The Flemish Association of Journalists was closely involved in the

¹¹ McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen’s Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

¹² Ibid, p.28.

¹³ COE (2014) Gender Equality and the Media at National Level: Compilation of good practices from member states. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680590557>.

¹⁴ Ibid, p.7.

¹⁵ McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen’s Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

¹⁶ Government of Flanders (2021) Expert Database. Government of Flanders. Available at: <https://www.expertendatabank.be/nl>.

construction of the database, and the promotion involved using well-known men experts as the face of the campaign, with the tagline, 'It doesn't always have to be...'.¹⁷

Policy Research Centre for Media – News Monitor

The Policy Research Centre for Media provides research on news production, coverage and literacy to the Flemish Authority. It distributes the News Monitor periodically as a single issue report to politicians, media and academics to stimulate discussion. Two such reports have focused on gender, in 2012 and 2013. It is unclear whether more have been written since. Having state-funded, policy-relevant research commissioned and disseminated regularly is an important step towards ensuring key stakeholders are kept abreast of current discourse and scientific enquiry.

Online Knowledge Platform on Media Literacy

Belgium's Knowledge Centre on Media Literacy is a platform of dossiers on media literacy aimed at elderly or disadvantaged people providing support on areas such as online privacy. The Flemish Department of Culture, Youth, Sport and Media has developed an inventory of best practice around gender and imaging, which will be transposed onto the online platform.¹⁸ Ensuring knowledge of gender and imagery is mainstreamed and accessible is an important step towards raising awareness amongst the general public of the harm that gender stereotypes can inflict.

Cyprus

The Cyprus Radio Television Authority is an independent body responsible for content regulation of private broadcasting companies, ensuring compliance with legislation. It also partially oversees public broadcasting. It examines media content on its own initiative or following complaints lodged by the public.¹⁹

Czech Republic

A Czech NGO has established an annual (negative) campaign called "Sexist Piggy", which awards 'prizes' for the most sexist advertisement. It has drawn the attention of significant media bodies in the Czech Republic. "It wants to cultivate media space by direct-warning the companies and organisations about sexist elements in their advertisement. Sexist advertisements are nominated for the competition exclusively by the public (this brings important information about what people perceive as sexist)."²⁰

Estonia

In 2013 Estonia's Ministry of Social Affairs released a series of seven films outlining how everyday gender stereotypes affect people's lives, with a particular focus in two of the seven on women's treatment in the media.²¹ The clips received a lot of attention on TV and online and were deemed to have a positive impact.

¹⁷ COE (2014) Gender Equality and the Media at National Level: Compilation of good practices from member states. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680590557>.

¹⁸ Ibid, p.9.

¹⁹ Ibid, p.14.

²⁰ Ibid, p.16.

²¹ Ibid, p.18.

In 2008 Estonia passed the Advertising Act, which states that advertisements “cannot disregard the principle of gender equality, belittle one sex, or present one gender as prevailing or subordinate. It also prohibits advertisements with pornographic content, advertisements for services provided for satisfaction of sexual desire, including prostitution, and advertisements referring to such services or assisting procurement.”²²

France

France’s CSA (Conseil supérieur de l’audiovisuel) has undertaken three initiatives.

Legal Articles on Gender Equality in Media

France has taken the important step of underwriting the CSA’s ability to intervene on women’s media representation into the law. As such, there is a legal basis for the CSA to monitor and indeed sanction failures to meet the law’s objectives on gender equality.²³

Surveys

The CSA has conducted various surveys to better understand women’s experiences in TV and radio broadcasting, highlighting areas in which French media are failing women.²⁴

Broadcaster Commitment

The CSA “asked TV and radio broadcasters to make a commitment for 2014 to move the media landscape towards a better gender balance,”²⁵ which resulted in several of the major TV and radio broadcasters in the countries pledging to include quantified measures to improve women’s presence in the industry and in terms of content.

Germany

Germany has overseen two initiatives dedicated to improving gender equality in media.

MINTiFF-Initiative Research

The MINTiFF Initiative and Network (2007-2013) was dedicated to examining and improving the representation of STEM characters, professional environments and careers in German entertainment.²⁶ Supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the European Social Fund, MINTiFF produced a report on STEM and Equal Opportunities in TV Drama Formats.²⁷ It included work from academics across the world and broadly covered:

- The Effects of TV Movies and Series on Socialisation and Education

²² McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen’s Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

²³ COE (2014) Gender Equality and the Media at National Level: Compilation of good practices from member states. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680590557>.

²⁴ Ibid, p.19.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ MINTiFF Network (2013) The MINTiFF Project. MINTiFF: Mathematics, Computer Science, Natural and Engineering Sciences and Equal Opportunities in Fiction Format. Available at: <https://www.mintiff.de/content/0/58/59/index.html>.

²⁷ Federal Ministry of Education and Research (2011) STEM and Equal Opportunities in TV Drama Formats. Federal Government of Germany. Available at: https://www.mintiff.de/content/0/58/59/3939/138_Publication_MINTiFF_Conference-2010-english.pdf.

- STEM and Equal Opportunities – valuable ingredients for TV-Drama-Formats
- Soaps, Telenovelas and Serials as a Stimulus for Social Change
- On the way to STEM-Entertainment Education Excellence – Best Practices
- Public Value – Will Entertainment Education be a key?

Juliane Bartel Media Award

Named after a renowned journalist of TV and radio, the annual prize (of 12,000 Euros) is awarded by the government to “TV films, documentations, features and radio segments that promote gender equality by featuring diverse role models, by describing diversity and migration with a view to gender equality or by uncovering conflicts between (gender-stereotyped) role-models and deficiencies”.²⁸

In addition, the state television broadcaster (ZDF) has a treaty governing the balance of board members of its Television Board, stating that the 60 members must include representatives from different populations across Germany so as to make it as inclusive as possible.²⁹

Italy

Italian consumption of television remains high compared to other forms of media, and yet accountability systems are weakened by a lack of shared frameworks and coherent legislation.³⁰ Women find it difficult to reach decision-making positions in media organisations in Italy,³¹ but certain measures have been put in place.

In 2013 the Italian Minister of Labour and Social policies in charge of Equal Opportunities and the Italian Advertising Self-Regulation Institute signed an MoU regarding the violent or discriminatory portrayal of women in images in the press. This includes a Joint Committee established to monitor its implementation, a non-pecuniary annual prize for the most progressive image of women and an Extraordinary Action Plan Against Sexual and Gender-based Violence.

MINDSET

Italy is a member of MINDSET, along with Romania and Sweden. The project Moving the Ideas of Non-Discrimination: Supporting an Equality Transformation aims to address “the gap between EU legislation in the field of non-discrimination based on ethnic origin and the implementation

²⁸ COE (2014) Gender Equality and the Media at National Level: Compilation of good practices from member states. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680590557>.

²⁹ European Audiovisual Observatory (2022) Governance and independence of public service media. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/iris-plus-2022en1-governance-and-independence-of-public-service-media/1680a59a76>.

³⁰ European Journalism Centre (2022) Italy: Accountability Systems. Media Landscapes Available at: <https://medialandscapes.org/country/italy/policies/accountability-systems>.

³¹ EIGE (2013) Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Women and the Media — Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations. European Institute for Gender Equality. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/advancing-gender-equality-decision-making-media-organisations-report>.

on the ground at national level.”³² It operates media training in the three countries around specific terminology use, demonstrates best practice, and raises awareness at a civil society level.

Ireland

Ireland’s focus is on the governing bodies, concentrating on a gender balance in key leadership and strategic board positions in three key steps:

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland has a statutory obligation to achieve a gender balance on all of its key decision-making bodies.

The 2009 Broadcasting Act states in relation to the 12-person board at RTE and the 11-person board at TG4, ‘not less than five of the members of the board of a corporation shall be men and not less than five of them shall be women.’

The governing board directors of the public service broadcasters, RTE and TG4, are appointed by the Irish government for five-year terms.³³

Jordan

Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism (ARIJ) was founded in 2005 by Rana Sabbagh with support from the Danish Parliament “with the aim of supporting independent, quality and professional journalism, by offering training, media coaching, mentoring, funding and networking opportunities with local and international media outlets”.³⁴ It continues to be funded by a group of donors, including the Swedish International Centre for Journalism and UNESCO. As of 2016, it had trained over 1,600 reporters.³⁵

Republic of Moldova

Moldova’s Association of Independent Press (API), funded by the UN Women Programme in Moldova, implemented a Gender Self-Assessment Analysis of 17 mass media institutions in 2013. Those institutions that signed up (print and electronic press) were provided with specialised training by the API and undertook monthly data collection, including a justification of any gender imbalances.³⁶ The data included both quantitative workforce-related representation of women and qualitative assessment of content classified by field (politics, sport, etc.). An API project team analysed the data and submitted it to an Evaluation Council who developed recommendations “for mass-media institutions with a view to ensure gender balance in journalistic materials”.³⁷

³² Papastolopoulos T (2020) Moving the Ideas of Non-Discrimination: Supporting an Equality Transformation. Euractiv Available at: <https://www.euractiv.com/moving-the-ideas-of-non-discrimination-supporting-an-equality-transformation/>.

³³ McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen’s Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

³⁴ ARIJ (2022) About Us. Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism Available at: <https://en.arij.net/site-message/>.

³⁵ Davidson C (2016) Five strategies for creating gender equality in the media. The Guardian Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/media-network/2016/jul/20/five-strategies-creating-gender-equality-media>.

³⁶ API (2013) Mass-media institutions self-assessment through gender dimension (print and electronic press). Association for Independent Press. Available at: http://api.md/upload/editor/FINAL_REPORT_Mass-media_institutions_self-assessment_through_gender_dimension.pdf.

³⁷ COE (2014) Gender Equality and the Media at National Level: Compilation of good practices from member states. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680590557>.

The final report evaluates the self-assessment project alongside other initiatives:

“Mass-media institutions’ self-assessment through gender dimension was a useful and a rather efficient exercise. Given the previous experience of the project team, one can assert that this approach is a better one in terms of quantity, quality, as well as sustainability, as compared with other approaches in the field, such as: training mass-media representatives, awarding winners for thematic articles, conducting independent monitoring of mass-media.”³⁸

Netherlands

The Netherlands Broadcasting Corporation’s Gender Portrayal Department

The Gender Portrayal Department (GPD) sits within the Netherlands’ equivalent to the BBC, making it unusual as a critical voice based within a public service broadcaster. Founded in 1991, its success led it to become a permanent department. Its focus is on discussion and interaction, through which it brings together programme-makers, editors, commissioners, creators and audiences around a framework of ‘programme quality’. By emphasising that more representative programmes are inherently better quality and creating opportunities for consumers, communities, critics and content-makers to discuss ways forward, it has helped make its research come alive.³⁹

In 2013, the Dutch Public Broadcasting Organization (NPO) announced their intentions to have a greater female presence in news and talk shows⁴⁰ in order to ensure a more accurate representation of Dutch society on TV. Dutch law supports this, requiring public broadcasters to “broadcast programmes that reflect society”.⁴¹

In 2001, along with five other European public broadcasters, NPO released a training kit called Screening Gender. “It is rooted in the strong equality and diversity policies and legislation of northern European public broadcasting; it acknowledges the skewed representation of women and men in current media output; and it recognises the value of diverse gender representation as a quality criterion for public broadcasting”.⁴²

Norway

Norway is ranked first among 135 nations in the Press Freedom Index 2012 and is ranked second on the Global Gender Gap Index 2011. Despite this, there is still a firm gender imbalance in its powerful media elites.⁴³ Norway’s Constitution (written in 1814) protects freedom of expression,

³⁸ API (2013) Mass-media institutions self-assessment through gender dimension (print and electronic press). Association for Independent Press. Available at: http://api.md/upload/editor/FINAL_REPORT_Mass-media_institutions_self-assessment_through_gender_dimension.pdf.

³⁹ Gallagher M (2001) Gender Setting: New Agendas for Media Monitoring and Advocacy. London: Zed Books.

⁴⁰ Dekker W, Kraak H (2013) Meer vrouwen in tv-programma’s. de Volkskrant Available at: <https://www.volkskrant.nl/nieuws-achtergrond/meer-vrouwen-in-tv-programma-s~b1cd88dc/?referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F>.

⁴¹ van Dijck B (2002) Screening Gender: Gender Portrayal And Programme Making Routines. United Nations. Available at: <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/media2002/reports/EP2VanDijck.PDF>.

⁴² Aslama M (n.d.) Screening Gender Means Good Business: Fair Gender Portrayal As An Added Value and Competitive Advantage for European Public Broadcasting. University of Helsinki. Available at: <http://vintti.yle.fi/yle.fi/gender/imart.html>.

⁴³ Øvrebo T (2013) The Uncomfortable Gender Gap in News Media. In: The Palgrave International Handbook of Women and Journalism. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.

and in 2004, the Norwegian parliament modernised and extended the clause such that the government has an “obligation to promote diversity in the media and public debate”.⁴⁴

The state-owned public-service broadcasting company, NRK, is regarded as an important contributor to the diversity of the Norwegian media system.

The Equality and Anti-discrimination Act forbids advertising which discriminates on the basis of gender and has been invoked by the Consumer Ombudsman (Forbrukerombudet) to have blatantly sexualised advertisement withdrawn.

Alongside Sweden, Norway is also a member of Nordicom, a centre for Nordic media research with a scientific advisory board supporting the Nordic Council of Ministers.⁴⁵ It also claims to be a member of the Nordic Gender and Media Forum,⁴⁶ although this initiative appears to have stagnated; the last post was in 2019, at the time of writing.⁴⁷

There is now a focus on the gender balance of Nordic feature films, as this was found to be problematic in 2012,⁴⁸ and has since improved, helped by a white paper submitted to the Norwegian Parliament setting targets for women’s participation in the film sector.⁴⁹

Poland

In 2012, the “Media of Equal Opportunities” project was organised by the Chancellery of the Prime Minister and the office of the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment, which included competitions, training, thematic conferences and the final product in the form of the publication”.⁵⁰

An analysis of the application of gender equality in Polish media institutions concludes: “regarding the principles of gender mainstreaming in Polish journalism, one should, however, diagnose a visible deficit of formal and legal regulations in this area.”⁵¹

Portugal

Portugal’s state body, the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG), is responsible for overseeing three initiatives focused specifically on gender and media:

⁴⁴ European Journalism Centre (2022) Norway: Media Legislation. Media Landscapes Available at: <https://medialandscapes.org/country/norway/policies/media-legislation>.

⁴⁵ Nordicom (2022) Nordicom’s scientific advisory board. Nordicom. Available at:

<https://www.nordicom.gu.se/en/about-nordicom/nordicoms-scientific-advisory-board>.

⁴⁶ COE (2014) Gender Equality and the Media at National Level: Compilation of good practices from member states. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680590557>.

⁴⁷ Nordic Gender and Media Forum (2022) Category: Politics in Sweden. Nordic Gender and Media Forum. Available at: <http://nordicgenderandmediaforum.se/category/politik-i-sverige/>.

⁴⁸ Nordic Gender and Media Forum (2014) Gender Equality Fact sheet from Nordic Gender & Media Forum 2014 in the Nordic Media. Nordic Gender and Media Forum. Available at: <https://www.gu.se/sites/default/files/2020-06/2014-Factsheet-NIKK-Nordicom-Gender-Media.pdf>.

⁴⁹ COE (2014) Gender Equality and the Media at National Level: Compilation of good practices from member states. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680590557>.

⁵⁰ Głuszek-Szafranec D, Brzoza K (2019) Gender Equality in Media Legislation. Cases of Spain and Poland. Media Studies 72:173–187.

⁵¹ Ibid, p.184.

Annual Award

The ‘Parity – Women and Men in the Media’ award is bestowed annually by the CIG to “journalistic, creative or other media products, whether on paper, video, digital and audio support. It aims to raise the awareness among media professionals to the importance of journalistic work on the issue of gender equality and non-discrimination.”⁵²

“Gender and Information” training for media professionals

The CIG has partnered with the Professional Training Centre for Journalists to deliver a 12-hour training module for all media professionals, raising awareness of the gendered nature of journalism and providing the skills “to develop a gender-sensitive and gender-inclusive professional practice. Training fosters a critical-reflective attitude in participants leading to more rigorous and deeper journalistic works in the field of gender equality and non-discrimination.”⁵³

Training for journalism students

The CIG promotes a three-hour session run by a journalist renowned for her work on equality in Scotland. “Being a professional reference and a skilled communicator, the trainer involves a significant number of students and communicates in an informal way, reporting experiences, always contextualised and approached with a gender perspective.”⁵⁴

Romania

MINDSET

Romania is a member of MINDSET, along with Italy and Sweden – as discussed above.

Spain

An analysis of gender equality in Spain’s media institutions finds that “Legal regulations in Spain are very precise. The role of the state and regional authorities is interventional. Journalists are required to apply not only their own codes of ethics at the level of individual editorial offices, but also statutory obligations are imposed on them to treat men and women equally in the construction of a media message. Thanks to our media legislation, some autonomous regions actively promote the idea of gender mainstreaming in regional media.”⁵⁵ The degree of adherence to these statutory obligations and media legalisation is not discussed in the report.

Sweden

The European Institute for Gender Equality’s 2013 review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in EU Member States found that compared to the UK, Malta and Austria – as well as the EU average – Sweden fared best at ensuring women were in key decision-making

⁵² CIG (2014) Report - Beijing + 20. Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality. Available at: <https://doczz.com.br/doc/759226/report---beijing---20-portugal-april--2014>.

⁵³ Ibid, p.52.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p.53.

⁵⁵ Głuszek-Szafranec D, Brzoza K (2019) Gender Equality in Media Legislation. Cases of Spain and Poland. Media Studies 72:173–187.

roles in the media workforce.⁵⁶⁵⁷ Moreover, as of 2017, and unusually for the EU, Sweden also has the highest proportion of women decision-makers in the public broadcaster workforce.⁵⁸

Level	Role	% / Numbers	AT	MT	SE	UK	EU
Strategic level	Chief Executive Officers	Percentage of women	33%	0%	25%	25%	16%
		Total positions	3	2	4	4	
	Board Members	Percentage of women	25%	38%	54%	33%	25%
		Total positions	44	8	35	36	
Operational level	Chief Operating Officers	Percentage of women	0%	0%	50%	0%	21%
		Total positions	3	4	4	4	
	Operational Managers	Percentage of women	32%	19%	48%	30%	32%
		Total positions	22	21	27	23	
	Heads of Directorate/ Unit	Percentage of women	41%	0%	41%	22%	36%
		Total positions	27	8	70	32	
	Heads of Department	Percentage of women	33%	N/A	50%	N/A	32%
		Total positions	6	0	10	0	
Total percentage of women at all levels			30%	16%	46%	27%	30%

Source: European Institute for Gender Equality (2013) [Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States](#)

Sweden's success is due to a number of factors, including its comparatively liberal society, however, there are a number of key initiatives which have contributed to its progressive position on gender and media.

Discrimination Act and Ombudsman

Sweden's Discrimination Act (2008) aims to combat discrimination on the grounds of multiple protected characteristics.⁵⁹ The Equality Ombudsman is in place to supervise compliance with the Act, ensuring a dedicated agency to encourage voluntary compliance, with authority to bring court action if necessary.

⁵⁶ McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen's Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

⁵⁷ EIGE (2013) Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Women and the Media — Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations. European Institute for Gender Equality. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/advancing-gender-equality-decision-making-media-organisations-report>.

⁵⁸ McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen's Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

⁵⁹ Swedish Government (2008) Discrimination Act. Available at: https://www.government.se/4a788f/contentassets/6732121a2cb54ee3b21da9c628b6bdc7/oversattning-diskrimineringslagen_eng.pdf.

Broadcasting Permits

Swedish public service broadcasting permits must make reference to gender equality.

Swedish Media Council

Established by the government in 2011, the Swedish Media Council aims to empower “children and young people as conscious media users and to protect them from harmful media influences”.⁶⁰

Swedish Association of Communication Agencies

The Swedish Association of Communication Agencies has created a committee for human resources focused on creating a ‘balanced’ industry by 2020, including a gender-equal workforce.⁶¹

Communications Industry Scholarship

Alongside the Swedish Association of Communication Agencies, the Berghs School of Communication has also embedded creating an equal work environment into their charter. The two bodies have created a scholarship “to attract people who would otherwise not see a future in the sector, and create a more equal and heterogeneous sector”.⁶²

Svenska Filminstitutet

Established by the State in 2011, the Swedish Film Institute announced it would seek to fund all film productions equally by gender. By 2014 half of all Swedish films receiving funding had women directors, 55 per cent had women writers, and 65 per cent had women producers.⁶³

Bechdel Wallace Test

Run by Women in Film and Television and four Swedish cinemas, since 2013, all films are rated using the Bechdel Wallace test; those that pass receive an A-rating.⁶⁴

Equalisters

The Equalisters database was established in 2010 by Lina Thomsgård, using crowdsourcing to create lists of alternative experts. It also collates data and monitors who speaks in Swedish media and provides tools for other organisations to initiate similar work.⁶⁵

Adwatch

This campaign advocates for stronger advertising regulation in Sweden and encourages the public to report sexist marketing and adverts, uploading examples of bad practice. The Swedish

⁶⁰ McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen’s Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

⁶¹ Ibid, p.54.

⁶² Ibid, p.56.

⁶³ Ibid, p.55.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

Women’s Lobby then reports the advertisement to the Swedish Advertising Ombudsman (a self-regulatory organisation founded by the industry, not dissimilar to the ASA/CAP in the UK).

However, several Swedish respondents to the European Parliament survey of member states’ gender and media initiatives “warned of the dangers of complacency, emphasising that constant vigilance was required to ensure recent gains were not lost”.⁶⁶

MINDSET

Sweden is a member of MINDSET, along with Italy and Romania – as discussed above.

Switzerland

Switzerland has three initiatives set up to improve gender equality in media:

Women and Media Prize

The French-speaking Swiss Gender Equality Offices⁶⁷ award a Women and Media prize every three to four years “to highlight and reward journalists who, out of concern for professional ethics, advance the debate on equality between women and men”.⁶⁸ It is financed by the Foundation for the Study of Female Work⁶⁹ and had a record number of entries in 2020.⁷⁰

Swiss Mass Media Union: Media and Gender Platform

The Swiss Mass Media Union (SSM) has a dedicated Media and Gender page which historically has publicised activities, provided reports on studies and included a guide to non-sexist journalism.⁷¹ It is not easy to find on the SSM website, but it still exists – although it does not appear to have been updated for some time. It now constitutes guidance and toolkits on gender representation.⁷²

Federal Commission for Women’s Issues: Election Media Monitoring

The state commission regularly publishes analyses and issues recommendations to the media during federal elections, including reviews of the presence of female candidates written about in

⁶⁶ Ibid, p.37.

⁶⁷ Federal Office for Gender Equality (2022) Federal Office for Gender Equality. Swiss Federal Council. Available at: <https://www.ebg.admin.ch/ebg/en/home.html>.

⁶⁸ Egalitech (2022) Women and Media Prize. Egalitech Available at: <https://egalite.ch/projets/prix-femmes-et-medias/>.

⁶⁹ Foundation for the Research of Women’s Work (2022) Fondation pour l’étude du travail féminin. Foundation for the Research of Women’s Work. Available at: <https://www.stiftung-frauenarbeit.ch/index.php/fr/>.

⁷⁰ Egalitech (2020) Prix Femmes et Médias 2020 et Prix DécadréE contre la culture du viol Le Temps et Le Courrier distingués. Egalitech. Available at: https://egalite.ch/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20200916_CommPresse_PrixFemmesMedias.pdf.

⁷¹ COE (2014) Gender Equality and the Media at National Level: Compilation of good practices from member states. Council of Europe. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680590557>.

⁷² Swiss Mass Media Union (2022) Media and Gender. Syndicat suisse des mass media Available at: <http://www.ssm-site.ch/fr/medias/dossiers/media-et-genre/>.

the media.⁷³ Most recently, it has published a study and accompanying commentary on gender and the media in the run-up to the 2015 federal elections.⁷⁴

International

Additional initiatives in the USA and globally are reviewed for impact in the EMCC: A Monitoring Model paper.

⁷³ Federal Commission for Women's Issues (2007) Faits et chiffres sur la présence des candidates dans les médias. Swiss Federal Council. Available at: https://www.ekf.admin.ch/dam/ekf/fr/dokumente/studie/fakten_zur_medienpraesenzvonkandidatinnen.pdf.download.pdf/faits_et_chiffressurlapresencedescandidatesdanslesmedias.pdf.

⁷⁴ Federal Commission for Women's Issues (2016) Wahlberichterstattung: Die Geschlechterstereotype verschwinden – die Kandidatinnen bleiben untervertreten. Swiss Federal Council. Available at: https://www.ekf.admin.ch/dam/ekf/de/dokumente/studien_empfehlungen/medienstudie_ekfkommentar.pdf.download.pdf/2016_EKF-Kommentar_Medienstudie_de_pdf.pdf.

Table 1: A Comparison of Initiatives Across Countries.

Countries	Initiatives																	
	Legislation	Action Plan	Advertising Guidance/Act	News/ Broadcaster Commitment	Policy/ Surveys Research Centre	Monitoring	Training/ Mentoring	Awards	Expert Database	Independent Regulator	Negative Prizes	Media Literacy Platform	Awareness Films	Board Balance	Media Education / Scholarships	Broadcasting Permits	Contingent Funding	Gender Tests for Content
Austria		Yes	Yes	Yes				Yes	Yes									
Belgium					Yes				Yes			Yes						
Cyprus										Yes								
Czech R.											Yes							
Estonia			Yes										Yes					
France	Yes			Yes	Yes													
Germany					Yes			Yes						Yes				
Italy																		
Ireland														Yes				
Jordan							Yes											
Moldova						Yes												
Netherlands						Yes	Yes											
Norway	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes												
Poland																		
Portugal							Yes	Yes							Yes			
Spain																		
Sweden	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes				Yes					Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Switzerland						Yes		Yes							Yes			

2. Evaluation and Applicability to Scotland

Legislation

This is complicated in Scotland as while sport and the arts are devolved, media law is overseen at Westminster. While some countries have legislated, as seen above, strong success has been achieved without it. The 2013 European Parliament review of gender equality in the media amongst member states found that while a minority enacted legislation, most countries relied on non-legally binding industry self-regulation and codes of conduct.⁷⁵

State/Public Sector Action Plan

The greatest successes are those member states with leadership willing to go over and above the minimum. Several countries have specific action plans or governance around equality and media, either in terms of board leadership (like Ireland or Germany) or by public sector media around content produced (such as Sweden).

There is an opportunity for the Scottish Government to work with a future Equal Media and Culture Centre (EMCC) and the wealth of expertise in the country to define targets and expectations of inclusivity of representation in the workforce, leadership and content.

- An Equal Media Action Plan for Scotland would send a clear message to public sector institutions, after which the private sector may be more likely to follow.
- Such an Action Plan would lend strength of political will to calls for equality made by the EMCC and other bodies in place of legislation.
- It would also reaffirm Scotland's expectations that media companies comply with European law around equality and diversity in media.

Advertising Guidance or Act

Scotland is subject to UK-wide advertising regulations, discussed in Section Three.

Although an interesting idea, the effort involved in establishing and popularising this campaign in Scotland might be better spent drawing up good practice and guidelines for better representation in advertising. If the EMCC were regularly publishing its complaints to Ofcom, the ASA and IPSO to its online platform, then this would suffice, with reputational risk to the media companies responsible.

Scottish advertising and marketing are subject to the same laws, regulations and codes of practice as the rest of the UK. Codes of practice are set by the Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP) and enforced by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA). While the ASA is an independent body, the CAP is made up of media industry professionals. Its website states that the: "UK advertising industry sets the standard in successful self-regulation".⁷⁶ It consists of two panels

⁷⁵ McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen's Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

⁷⁶ ASA (2022) CAP Committees, Panels and Executive. Advertising Standards Agency Available at: <https://www.asa.org.uk/about-asa-and-cap/people/cap-panels-and-committees.html>.

which set codes of practice for broadcast (e.g., TV, radio) and non-broadcast media (e.g., print, online, telesales).⁷⁷ The panels are as follows:

Committee of Advertising Practice	Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice
Television on Demand Industry Forum	Advertising Association
Advertising Association	Sky UK Ltd
Cinema Advertising Association	Channel 5 Broadcasting Ltd
Direct Marketing Association	Commercial Broadcasters Association
Direct Selling Association	Direct Marketing Association
Incorporated Society of British Advertisers	Electronic Retailing Association
Institute of Practitioners in Advertising	Incorporated Society of British Advertisers
Institute of Promotional Marketing	Institute of Practitioners in Advertising
Internet Advertising Bureau	ITV plc
Mobile UK	Radiocentre
News Media Association	BT
Outsmart Out of Home	STV
Professional Publishers Association	
Proprietary Association of Great Britain	
Royal Mail	
Scottish Newspaper Society	

The CAP code for non-broadcast media refers to gender in rule 4.1 regarding harm and offence, as follows:

“Marketing communications must not contain anything that is likely to cause serious or widespread offence. Particular care must be taken to avoid causing offence on the grounds of: age; disability; gender; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation [...] The fact that a product is offensive to some people is not grounds for finding a marketing communication in breach of the Code.”⁷⁸

The Broadcasting CAP code has two relevant sections; a similar rule for harm and offence and rule 30 on pornography, restricting the advertisement of R18-rated material.⁷⁹

In addition, both the CAP and the Broadcasting CAP introduced a new rule in June 2019 (4.9 and 4.19 respectively) regarding gender stereotypes, as follows: “Marketing communications/Advertisements must not include gender stereotypes that are likely to cause

⁷⁷ UK Government (2022) Marketing and advertising: the law. UK Government Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/marketing-advertising-law/advertising-codes-of-practice>.

⁷⁸ ASA (2022) 04 Harm and offence. Advertising Standards Agency Available at: https://www.asa.org.uk/type/non_broadcast/code_section/04.html.

⁷⁹ ASA (2022) 30 Pornography. Advertising Standards Agency Available at: https://www.asa.org.uk/type/broadcast/code_section/30.html.

harm, or serious or widespread offence.”⁸⁰ This refers readers to the CAP Advertising guidance on depicting gender stereotypes likely to cause harm or serious or widespread offence.⁸¹

While the CAP codes and guidance unsurprisingly allow for greater room for interpretation, the ASA is more rigorous.

Journalistic – Broadcaster Commitment

At present, any Gender Equality Plan BBC Scotland may have in place is not publicly available. If one were implemented and robustly self-monitored, it would have the potential to radically improve both industry practice and indeed output in terms of gender balance. Importantly, the impact on content has been observed elsewhere; in Austria, where the national broadcaster ÖRF has a GEP in place, “content broadcast by ÖRF reaches standards of gender equality unmatched by private broadcasters”.⁸²

Policy / Research Centre

“Further research of ‘what works’ in promoting equality is key to raising awareness not only of the scale of the problem (in different countries and in different parts of media industries) but also how to address it”.⁸³

Like Belgium, Germany has committed to research on media and equality, a significant and symbolic step towards the state requiring media organisations to engage in gender equality action. Scotland has already funded both a development role and a separate piece of research within that project. It would be beneficial to a future EMCC to have annual core funding budgeted for policy-relevant research into barriers and solutions to inclusive and diverse media.

An EMCC having a research arm would also allow such thematic reports to be published in Scotland by bringing together work by academics from Scotland and elsewhere.

Scotland could benefit from having a Media Research Centre which focuses on undertaking and reviewing research around media production, literacy and consumption in Scotland. The Goldsmiths Leverhulme Media Research Centre⁸⁴ is an interesting model which conducts surveys which then feed into policy decisions. Such research is already taking place in a sporadic and disjointed fashion. For example, Women In Journalism Scotland ran their own study in 2021,⁸⁵ supported by the Development Officer for GEMS. It would be possible for an EMCC to support other agencies with existing infrastructure and stakeholder networks to undertake similar

⁸⁰ ASA (2022) 04 Harm and offence. Advertising Standards Agency Available at: https://www.asa.org.uk/type/broadcast/code_section/04.html.

⁸¹ CAP (2019) Advertising guidance on depicting gender stereotypes likely to cause harm or serious or widespread offence. Committee of Advertising Practice. Available at: <https://www.asa.org.uk/static/6c98e678-8eb7-4f9f-8e5d99491382c665/guidance-on-depicting-gender-stereotypes.pdf>.

⁸² McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen’s Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

⁸³ Ibid, p.65.

⁸⁴ Goldsmiths (2022) Goldsmiths Leverhulme Media Research Centre. Goldsmiths University of London Available at: <https://www.gold.ac.uk/media-research-centre/>.

⁸⁵ WIJS (2020) Where things stand for women in the Scottish media in December 2020. Women in Journalism Scotland Available at: https://www.wijscotland.com/news/snapshot-survey-where-things-stand-for-women-in-the-scottish-media-in-december-2020?fbclid=IwAR3GjiQ9SZTKI6oazLG_AFYAs8-4bd-oCj7k1hPZ89m7HwV6AjxSsiwtq0o.

projects – such as The Scottish Games Network, Publishing Scotland and Creative Scotland. This would amass an evidence-based understanding of the current status quo for women and minorities working across the media and culture sectors in Scotland.

Monitoring

Media monitoring is done elsewhere successfully, such as in Switzerland, Malta and the Netherlands, and if accompanying commentary is designed to be policy-relevant, could be an important step in Scotland towards holding media bodies accountable for their content.

Incentivising Scottish media bodies to collate and review their own gender-disaggregated data (as opposed to doing it for them) would help to increase gender competence amongst decision-makers within the organisations.

In 2019, Rattan et al. conducted over 35 hours of interviews with more than 25 journalists, producers, presenters, and top leaders at the BBC to better understand the success of the 50:50 Project in getting TV shows to reach 50 per cent plus women contributors. They reported a significant theme:⁸⁶

“The one universal insight echoed by everyone we interviewed was the value of collecting their own data and following it over time. Data serves as an essential check on one’s gut instincts, countering overconfidence, sustaining motivation, and encouraging goal pursuit.”⁸⁷

One analysis of gender equality standards in Spanish and Polish media concludes, “constant monitoring and comparative analyses in this area seem to be fully justified”.⁸⁸

Regular scrutiny of media output from key media sectors in Scotland is missing and could be undertaken by an EMCC alongside monitoring of workforce data and leadership roles. This data could then be used as leverage to enact change in different ways including:

- Setting targets and expectations for media institutions moving forward;
- Regular complaints to Ofcom, IPSO and ASA;
- Raising public awareness and encouraging reporting;
- Working with academics and the women’s sector (e.g., Zero Tolerance) to create better codes of practice in regulatory authorities;
- Supporting media organisations keen to start self-monitoring with toolkits and resources.

Training / Mentoring

Mentoring and skills-based training is an important tool in improving gender equality in the media. In her evaluation of the BBC Mentor Project (1993-1994), aimed at encouraging underrepresented young black people into working in media, Jackee Holder comments on the needs of such a project, including sufficient administrative support given the volume of paperwork involved, and the need for simple governance and reporting structures - which are

⁸⁶ Rattan A, Chilazi S, Georgeac O, Bohnet I (2019) Tackling the Underrepresentation of Women in Media. Harvard Business Review Available at: <https://hbr.org/2019/06/tackling-the-underrepresentation-of-women-in-media>.

⁸⁷ Rattan A, Chilazi S, Georgeac O, Bohnet I (2019) Tackling the Underrepresentation of Women in Media. Harvard Business Review Available at: <https://hbr.org/2019/06/tackling-the-underrepresentation-of-women-in-media>.

⁸⁸ Głuszek-Szafranec D, Brzoza K (2019) Gender Equality in Media Legislation. Cases of Spain and Poland. Media Studies 72:173–187.

not necessarily tied to funding. She writes, “what is clear is that Black workers need to share their different experiences and ways of surviving in the broadcasting world, where the tables are stacked against their effective participation and contribution”.⁸⁹ Holder also recommends that the mentoring scheme should be mainstreamed across other departments.

In Scotland, excellent training and mentoring opportunities for women already exist, with no need for duplication. Such women’s professional networks also offer structures of support. Initiatives such as those run by STV, Pass the Mic, TRC Media and Women In Journalism Scotland could be supported by an EMCC through stakeholder engagement and follow-up support via database presence and events.

On the other hand, training models which target institutional leadership and practice can help support more structural change across the sectors. For example, an EMCC could work with partners to develop a training module to be delivered across the broadcasting sector in Scotland. At two to three hours, the module could fit in with CPD sessions or staff-training days, including at senior leadership levels.

Involving multiple partners in the development and delivery of such training is key. The Portuguese training model relies on the cooperation of five distinct bodies, including the Journalists Trade Union and the Cabinet for the Media. Which equivalent Scottish agencies might be interested in forming such a coalition? It would be wise to approach Zero Tolerance and Close the Gap initially, given their expertise in delivering training on gender-based violence media reporting.

Content:

- The social construction of gender
- The status of equality and diversity in Scottish media and culture
- UK legislation around media representation of women
- Gender stereotypes, assigned roles and behavioural assumptions
- Heteronormativity and the intersectionality of sexist tropes and discourses
- Emerging research in gender and media
- Gender-based violence as an expression of power asymmetries between men and women⁹⁰
- Media coverage of gender-based violence
- Tools for self-scrutiny on choices – of visuals, phrases, expressions

Trainers:

- At least two trainers a session to minimise risk.
- At least one of the trainers should be a woman journalist in Scotland who is able to ground the theory in practice and stimulate discussion around practical guidance on how to create gender-sensitive work.

⁸⁹ Itzin C, Newman J (2001) *Gender, Culture and Organizational Change: Putting Theory Into Practice*. New York: Routledge.

⁹⁰ CIG (2014) Report - Beijing + 20. Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality. Available at: <https://doczz.com.br/doc/759226/report---beijing---20-portugal-april--2014>.

- At least one trainer should be someone with expertise in gender and media research, able to communicate theory and research in an engaging manner, gaining buy-in from attendees.

Training leadership is particularly important in institutions and organisations of all sizes. The gender balance of decision-making roles in media companies remains deeply problematic, as outlined in the accompanying Women on Boards paper.

Country	% Women Chief Operating Officers in the media workforce
EU Average	21
Sweden	50
UK	0 ⁹¹

Industry decision-makers should be made aware of the business case for more gender-equal and diverse workforces. It is understood that greater gender equality in the media workforce would have a beneficial impact on the quality of media.⁹² Sweden has demonstrated the importance of leadership in embedding gender equal practices in the workplace. In time, an EMCC in Scotland could work alongside a funded partner, such as Close the Gap, with the expertise, infrastructure and resources to run training programs in media companies.

Awards

Different kinds of awards are utilised as tools for change, and there is scope here in Scotland for publicly rewarding institutions which instigate substantive change.

Given the reputational import of both the media and the cultural sectors, a degree of visibility associated with any prize will be important, and monetary reward even more so. A financial incentive for the award is an important step toward encouraging broadcasters to take action towards gender equality and other forms of inclusivity in their content.

It may be possible to engage with existing award schemes such as the Scottish Press Awards, the Scottish Football Writers Awards, Zero Tolerance’s Write to End Violence Against Women Awards, or the BAFTA Scotland Games award.

In conjunction with an EMCC, Scottish Government could bestow an annual award to a broadcaster, newspaper, radio station, department or team that promotes gender equality and demonstrates a gender equality-friendly environment. Criteria might include:

- the dissemination of balanced, non-stereotyped and diversified representations of women and men
- production of works focusing on women in leadership positions

⁹¹ McCracken K, FitzSimons Dr A, Priest Dr S, Girmstair S, Murphy Prof B (2018) Gender Equality in the Media Sector. European Parliament Policy Department for Citizen’s Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU\(2018\)596839_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf).

⁹² Ibid, p.44.

- dissemination of information aimed at increasing the awareness of the general public on women's human rights⁹³

Expert Database

Such a database already exists in Scotland for women of colour: Pass the Mic. A similar, broader database has been requested by broadcasters from any future initiative in Scotland.

There is potential for a Scottish Equal Experts Database (SEED) to be a crowd-funded project, which is populated and updated by the EMCC, in collaboration with Pass the Mic, WIJS and the women's sector. The database would include women experts and other minority voices underrepresented in Scottish media.

At first, it could be a free service for public and private broadcasters to use to seek expertise and commentators for print, online, TV and radio news. Conversations with editors in Scottish media suggest this would be well-received, as it would aid internal equality and diversity targets and simplify the search process.

Once broadcasters have recognised the database as a crucial tool in the editorial and commissioning process, a levy could be introduced, which would facilitate the long-term maintenance and development of the service.

Independent Regulators

In the UK, there are four main media regulators:

- The Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO), representing the bulk of the mainstream newspapers and magazines, controlled by national newspapers;
- The Independent Monitor for the Press (IMPRESS), which independently regulates smaller community-based outlets and new actors within the digital spectrum;
- The Office of Communication (Ofcom), created by the Communications Act 2003 and accountable to Parliament, which sets and enforces regulatory rules for TV, radio and video-on-demand sectors, fixed-line telecoms (phones), mobiles, postal services, and wireless devices;⁹⁴
- The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) is the UK's independent advertising regulator. The ASA makes sure ads across UK media stick to the advertising rules (the Advertising Codes). The Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) is the sister organisation of the ASA and is responsible for writing the Advertising Codes.⁹⁵

EIGE research has found that public service broadcasters tend to comply more fully with both industry codes and national legislation on gender equality than private organisations.⁹⁶ From the

⁹³ CIG (2014) Report - Beijing + 20. Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality. Available at:

<https://doczz.com.br/doc/759226/report---beijing---20-portugal-april--2014>.

⁹⁴ European Journalism Centre (2022) United Kingdom: Regulatory Authorities. Media Landscapes Available at:

<https://medialandscapes.org/country/united-kingdom/policies/regulatory-authorities>.

⁹⁵ ASA (2022) About the ASA and CAP. Advertising Standards Agency Available at: [https://www.asa.org.uk/about-asa-and-cap/about-regulation/about-the-asa-and-cap.html#:~:text=The%20Advertising%20Standards%20Authority%20\(ASA,for%20writing%20the%20Advertising%20Codes](https://www.asa.org.uk/about-asa-and-cap/about-regulation/about-the-asa-and-cap.html#:~:text=The%20Advertising%20Standards%20Authority%20(ASA,for%20writing%20the%20Advertising%20Codes).

⁹⁶ EIGE (2013) Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States: Women and the Media — Advancing gender equality in decision-making in media organisations. European

Gathering Attitudes report, it is clear that industry regulation in Scotland is insufficient to make lasting change around equality in the media and cultural sectors. With limited sanctions for transgressions of codes, change is slow.

An EMCC which shines a spotlight on media content, providing analysis, consultation responses, toolkits and regular complaints to regulators could ensure that gender-related content holds up under scrutiny. Zero Tolerance is already doing some important work in this arena from a VAWG perspective, and collaboration will be key to future success in this area.

Broadcasting Permits

In Sweden, broadcasting permits require reference to a commitment to gender equality, and there is certainly more that, say, Ofcom could do around granting licenses to public and private broadcasters. It may be possible for an EMCC to lobby such regulators to embed requirements in renewal applications, acting as an incentive for companies to change their internal policies quickly.

Negative Prizes

Generally, it is understood in change mechanisms that reward works better than shame. Constructive scrutiny and pressure to address structural issues in Scottish media and culture industry workforces will have a greater effect on media content.

Awareness Films / Campaigns

Such an undertaking in Scotland would certainly raise awareness amongst the general population but would require funding and resourcing – and have to wait until close contact could be resumed. In addition, it would be preferable if the clips focused more clearly on gender and media rather than more general societal stereotypes. This is a campaign that could be run in conjunction with other women’s organisations in Scotland and alongside the University of Strathclyde’s Gender Representation in the Media MOOC.

Board Balance

There is an urgent need to scrutinise and track appointments at leadership, board and editorial committee level in institutions in Scotland. Engender’s Sex and Power report⁹⁷ is an example of how such longitudinal scrutiny allows for analysis of progress – or lack thereof. As part of a monitoring program, an EMCC for Scotland could, for the first time, follow gendered leadership in public and private bodies across the media and cultural sectors, encouraging greater balance and diversity amongst decision-makers. Please see the Women On Boards report for an up-to-date gender analysis of boards in the media and culture sectors in Scotland.

Media Education / Student Scholarships

As part of a later phase in the EMCC’s activities, a training session could be designed and delivered to both media and journalism students across higher education in Scotland. Providing this free module would be an attractive offer. The session would aim to “raise awareness among

Institute for Gender Equality. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/advancing-gender-equality-decision-making-media-organisations-report>.

⁹⁷ Engender (2020) Sex & Power in Scotland 2020. Engender. Available at: <https://www.engender.org.uk/content/publications/Engenders-Sex-and-Power-2020.pdf>.

students regarding the importance of the production of media content about gender equality and non-discrimination.”⁹⁸

The following areas could be covered in the training, altered depending on the audience:

- The social construction of gender
- Gender stereotypes, assigned roles and behavioural assumptions
- Heteronormativity and the intersectionality of sexist tropes and discourses
- Gender-based violence as an expression of power asymmetries between men and women⁹⁹
- Media coverage of gender-based violence
- Tools for self-scrutiny on choices – of visuals, phrases, expressions

There is also scope for greater engagement with media and journalism students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels through media monitoring research, placements, projects such as a Scottish version of the F-rated IMDB Feminist scoring of films,¹⁰⁰ developing an app for public monitoring and regulator complaints, and publication of reports.

Charter/Chartermark

Media organisations could sign up to a Chartermark Scheme to receive accreditation and potentially a financial reward for progress. There are a number of reasons to be cautious of this initiative:

1. The process of applying for a Chartermark is intensive and laborious. It would require enormous galvanisation to encourage institutions to take part. Moreover, creating new EDI ventures which require additional administrative resources and strategic oversight may not be wise, given the pressures institutions are already operating under.
2. There is a danger of such a scheme becoming an additional tick-box exercise as opposed to creating meaningful change. Institutions can remain at the lowest level of the scheme for many years by citing intention to change, without acting substantively.
3. The work and consequent funding required to develop and activate such a scheme would be substantial. Similar impact can be made using fewer resources.
4. There is greater risk of failure with an ostentatious new scheme. Starting smaller and building impact incrementally and cumulatively will have greater success.

Champions

Change projects benefit by having someone well-known as a champion and spokesperson. Sandi Toksvig undertook this role for the Women’s Equality Party, Geena Davis put her name and face on the Institute in the US, and Lenny Henry has done the same for the new Centre for Diversity at Birmingham University.¹⁰¹ It would prove beneficial to have one, or possibly two, famous

⁹⁸ CIG (2014) Report - Beijing + 20. Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality. Available at: <https://doczz.com.br/doc/759226/report--beijing--20-portugal-april--2014>.

⁹⁹ Ibid, p.52.

¹⁰⁰ Mumford G (2017) F-rated: IMDb introduces classification system to highlight work by women. The Guardian Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2017/mar/07/f-rated-imdb-introduces-classification-system-to-highlight-work-by-women>.

¹⁰¹ Birmingham City Institute of Media and English (2022) Sir Lenny Henry Centre for Media Diversity. Birmingham City University Available at: <https://www.bcu.ac.uk/media/research/sir-lenny-henry-centre-for-media-diversity>.

Scottish women interested in equality as patrons. This would raise the profile of the project from the outset, facilitating buy-in from industry leaders, media and cultural professionals and academics.

3. Key Points for a Theory of Change for Scotland

Several of these initiatives, upon further investigation, appear to have stagnated or fallen by the wayside. The sustainability of an Equal Media and Culture Centre for Scotland is central to its success. Any initiative which relies on interested personnel to prioritise equality on the agenda risks stagnation or change. The Centre should have dedicated funding and resources which, as far as possible, exist outwith the whims of individual decision-makers. Seeking multiple sources of funding, possibly subject-specific, may be one way forward.

A judicious and cost-effective solution is to 'nest' the new change project initially within an established host organisation. Relying on a host's infrastructure, governance and expertise lowers the risk of failure, makes use of existing resources and facilitates the new project creating a stable foundation for future success. Given the project's pre-existing relationship with Engender, a founding member of GEMS, and its support of work in the media and cultural sphere, a continuation of the project hosted by Engender would be well-advised.

There is clear worth in employing more than one intervention simultaneously to affect change. Countries like Sweden, which support several approaches, appear to demonstrate more equal representation in their boards, workforces and content.

There is also specific need for explicit state support of any Equal Media and Culture Centre moving forward, and where legislation and regulation may not be appropriate, there are multiple ways, as demonstrated above, that Scottish Government can be involved in gender change in Scotland's media and cultural sectors. Institutions do not change without multiple forms of pressure being exerted in different ways, and internal processes, working conditions, leadership expectations, and representative media and cultural output will require support and accountability.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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ABOUT ENGENDER

Engender is Scotland's feminist policy and advocacy organisation, working to increase women's social, political and economic equality, enable women's rights, and make visible the impact of sexism on women and wider society. We work at Scottish, UK and international level to produce research, analysis, and recommendations for intersectional feminist legislation and programmes.

ABOUT GENDER EQUAL MEDIA SCOTLAND

Gender Equal Media Scotland is a coalition of journalists, organisations and academics working to bring about women's equality in Scotland's media. The post of Development Officer is hosted by Engender, Scotland's feminist policy and advocacy organisation, on behalf of GEMS.