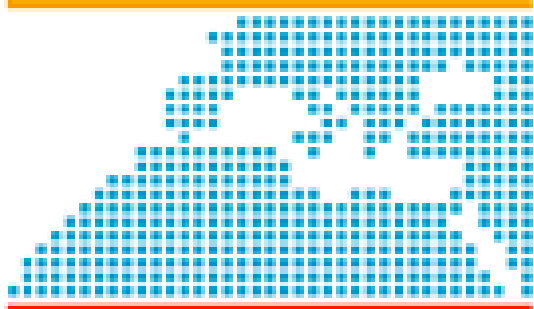


2013

Towards the implementation of the “Declaration of Lisbon in favour of the promotion of gender equality and the fight against gender stereotyping”

**MEDITERRANEAN
NETWORK
OF REGULATORY
AUTHORITIES**



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Towards the implementation of the “Declaration of the MNRA in favour of the promotion of gender equality and the fight against gender stereotyping” of 23 November 2012

Platform

Coordinated by the Audiovisual Council of Andalusia (CAA) and the High Authority for Audiovisual Communication of Morocco (HACA)

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First Part: Context

I. The issue in question and the role of regulators

The media play a critical role in the socialisation of individuals. This is a long-established truth which has, for decades, nourished an entire branch of sociology devoted to the issue. The idea that media influence the perceptions of what constitutes male and female identities and the manner they are constructed has also come a long way. Today, it is generally uncontested that media – and in particular audiovisual media – contribute to the establishment of a stereotyped and reductive role of women, as well as to the reproduction of discriminatory attitudes and behaviours towards them, as long as they promote representations based on a submission/domination frame. Sociologists underline, however, that this influence is not exerted in an explicit manner, but is rather “an invisible violence exercised in the purely symbolic ways of communication and knowledge”, which “insidiously infiltrates discourses, (...), films, television programmes or advertising”.¹ Stereotypes finally become “unconsciously embedded in the mind”, reinforcing mental resistance to the evolution of the status and real-life experiences of women across the world.

This situation has raised concerns amongst human rights activists. Indeed, if mass media, and audiovisual media in particular, constitute, “after the law, morals and politics, the last frontier of inequality”², the impact they can have on audiences goes either way. They may, on the one hand, entrench inequalities but, on the other hand, they may also contribute to fight them. Mobilising the media to establish individual and collective rights, through their educational power and enlarged social impact, is the very foundation of the public service mandate held by audiovisual broadcasters.

National laws and international recommendations have confirmed this assumption and legitimate the principle according to which the audiovisual media have a role to play in consolidating a culture of law and equality. As “guardians of the temple”, regulatory authorities also share a responsibility in implementing these provisions effectively. Issues concerning gender equality are also related to their obligations to guarantee the freedom of expression and the general principles of respect for human dignity and fight against all forms of discrimination or violence. In order to achieve this goal, regulatory authorities in the Mediterranean region share a broad range of common missions and a forum for dialogue and joint action: the Mediterranean Network Regulatory Authorities.

Given that Mediterranean regulatory authorities³ share a foundation of common values, which allow them to act both in agreement and homogeneously across the Network,⁴ what kind of actions can they undertake to promote equality, in line with their institutional standing and

¹ Pierre Bourdieu, *La domination masculine*.

² Report on the image of women in the media. Michèle REISER, Brigitte GRESY, Sep.2008, p: 7.

³ <http://www.rirm.org/en/instance-liste>

⁴ <http://www.rirm.org/en/presentation-rirm>

mandate? To answer this question, this document provides an overview of the advantages of the Network, the process followed to this day, the conceptual and legal framework, and finally the working tools which have been developed in view of implementing the Declaration of the MNRA in favour of the promotion of gender equality and the fight against gender stereotyping adopted in Lisbon on 23rd November 2012.

II. The advantages of the MNRA

The MNRA is primarily a forum of reflection, which aims to develop a basic frame on different themes, with a view to establishing an integrated regulatory approach in the Mediterranean audiovisual landscape. Regulators are faced with numerous and varying challenges, both at individual and collective level. They follow the developments in the audiovisual sector itself and the constant upheavals brought about by the advent of all-digital technology: elimination of borders, globalisation of markets, sharp increase in audiences, proliferation of services, uniformity of content, etc.. Moreover, they are confronted with the compound effects of globalisation and the crisis in the audiovisual sector in particular, which stem from the necessity to guarantee, for all citizens on either side of the Mediterranean, the right of access to entertainment, to their own cultural expression, both collective and universal, and to a credible and factual interpretation of the world we live in at local, national and global level, whilst complying with the requirements of free competition and competitiveness.

The regulatory authorities share the concern of promoting diversity and pluralism in audiovisual communication and content and implementing the universal human rights standards. Reinforcing morality and ethics and promoting the rights which are the very foundation of the regulatory mission are therefore seen in the light of the issues they raise, individual contexts and different experiences, to the extent that these can be smoothly transposed across contexts, without prejudice to basic national and cultural reference frames.

❖ Their main advantages are:

1. Their institutional standing (autonomy).
2. Their powers (conferred by the principles on which they are established and their national constitutions as well as the Charter of the MNRA⁵), which allow them, within the scope of their respective duties, to:
 - Regulate and control the audiovisual landscape, through normative mechanisms, according to the double approach of *ex officio* investigations and the handling of complaints;
 - Take measures and address recommendations;
 - Call on and warn audiovisual operators to comply with their legal obligations;

Comment [cm1]: The link apparently doesn't work

⁵ http://www.rirm.org/medias/_documents/en/56.2.The%20Charter.doc

- Take decisions which are binding for public and private enterprises and impose sanctions, when necessary;
- Propose legal amendments and normative adjustments and establish relevant procedural rules for enforcement;
- Promote self-regulation and co-regulation mechanisms;
- Put in place promotional quota mechanisms aimed to ensure the protection of rights;
- Exercise control over media enterprises management (human resource management, training, career plans, etc.);
- Consult with other authorities, at national, regional or even international level;
- Promote the conduct of studies;
- Initiate or encourage public awareness actions.

3. The networking action:

- Either within the MNRA, namely through the Declaration on audiovisual content regulation⁶, adopted in Reggio in October 2008, which states that Mediterranean regulatory authorities are committed to raising awareness amongst audiovisual media service editors – whilst respecting the common values, principles and fundamental rights associated with human dignity and diversity – on issues such as the preservation of the rule of law, the protection of childhood and adolescence and the education of minors on human rights, as well as the accuracy of information and respect for plurality of opinions and expressions;
- Or through complementary actions with other networks with which the members are associated, either individually or in the framework of partnerships established by the MNRA. In this respect, the MNRA signed in 2010 with the Permanent Conference of the Mediterranean Audiovisual Operators (COPEAM)⁷ a memorandum of understanding⁸, to promote the establishment of a common legal framework aiming to broadcast, product and protect radio and audiovisual programmes and to encourage the development of a harmonised regulatory framework in compliance with the MNRA's Declaration on the regulation of audiovisual content.

4. The very action carried out:

By virtue of the powers conferred upon them and the commitments stated hereabove, the members have taken immediate action towards implementing the shared fundamental principles which reflect MNRA common values , namely through:

- The adoption of common declarations⁹, and in particular:

⁶http://www.rirm.org/en/document?id=25&id_document=143

⁷ The COPEAM is committed to implementing the indicators developed by IPDC (International Programme for the Development of Communication) on the promotion of gender equality in the audiovisual media. http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/IPDC/ipdc28_gsmi_paper_rev.pdf

⁸ Cf, <http://www.rirm.org/medias/documents/fr/179.1.Protocole%20Entente%20RIRM-COPEAM%20FINAL.pdf>

⁹ Cf, <http://www.rirm.org/en/document>

- The Declaration of Intent concerning the protection of young publics and the fight against the violence in the media, in October 2009¹⁰;
- The Declaration related to reality shows, in November 2011¹¹;
- The adoption of the Declaration on the promotion of gender equality and the fight against gender stereotyping in the audiovisual media, on 23 November 2012¹².

III. Background to the process in favour of equality in the audiovisual media

The adoption of the “Declaration in favour of the promotion of gender equality and the fight against gender stereotyping” marked the end of a process initiated with the inscription of this issue at the core of the work undertaken during the MNRA’s plenary meetings:

1. Istanbul , 12th Plenary Assembly, October 2010¹³: Launch of the debate

During the 12th plenary meeting, held in Istanbul on 30 September and 1 October 2010, the Network devoted one of its sessions to the theme of the “Representation of women in the media”. The conclusions drawn from the national experiences presented at the session and the discussions that followed have allowed to stress the importance of this matter and to identify the need to develop a common reflection on the role which regulatory authorities play or can play in this matter.

2. Lisbon 1: Meeting of the Technical Commission, June 2012 : Elaboration of the analysis report

As part of the exchanges on issues of common interest, within the Network’s objectives, a second session devoted to the theme “Regulation and gender stereotyping” was included in the agenda of the 14th plenary meeting, aimed to encourage an exchange of experiences between national regulatory authorities, and reinforce the Network’s action in this field.

During the preparatory technical committee to the plenary meeting in June 2012, the development of this work was entrusted jointly to the Presidents of the HACA (Morocco) and the CAA (Andalusia, Spain). The two parties considered that it would be useful to launch this debate by taking stock of the situation at the level of the Network, drawing on the experience and the points of view of each member in order to identify future lines of thought.

¹⁰ http://www.rirm.org/en/document?id=25&id_document=186

¹¹ http://www.rirm.org/en/document?id=25&id_document=187

¹² Cf,

http://www.rirm.org/medias/_documents/en/209.2.Declaration%20on%20the%20fight%20against%20gender%20stereotypes_Lisbon_%2023%20November%202012.pdf

¹³ http://www.rirm.org/medias/_documents/en/183.2.Press%20Release%20Istanbul%202010%20_EN%20-Final.pdf

To this end, a series of guiding questions were formulated around five or six important elements:

- The existence, nature and scope of legal provisions pertaining specifically to gender equality in the audiovisual sector;
- The current reflection and action on this theme within each authority;
- The specific legal provisions on advertising which involves sexual and/or erotic elements;
- The main constraints to eliminating sexist stereotypes in the audiovisual media and the principal advantages of regulatory authorities towards acting in this direction.
- The recommendations, if any, aimed to provide a structure for the involvement of the MNRA in this matter.

A questionnaire was addressed to the twenty-two regulatory authorities, members of the Network¹⁴, representing nineteen States of the Mediterranean basin: Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Cyprus, Spain¹⁵, France, Greece, Israel¹⁶, Jordan, Lebanon, Macedonia, Malta, Morocco, Mauritania, Portugal, Serbia and Turkey, as well as Croatia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Gibraltar, which were admitted as members of the Network on that date.

The analysis of the answers that were collected has allowed to consider both the pitfalls and difficulties faced by each authority, as well as the advantages which may be put forward at national level, and from which it would be wise to benefit in the framework of their action in the Network. Following that, it was legitimate to develop a common set of arguments, in order to conceive a joint and effective plan of action. The results of this work were presented at the opening of the plenary meeting in Lisbon.

3. Lisbon 2, 14th Plenary Assembly, November 2012 : Unanimous adoption of the Declaration in favour of the promotion of gender equality and the fight against gender stereotyping

The presentation of the results of the study undertaken led to the unanimous adoption, on 23 November 2012 in Lisbon, of a declaration jointly submitted by the Moroccan and Spanish authorities, in favour of promoting gender equality and the fight against gender stereotyping¹⁷.

Following the discussions on that presentation and the proposals put forward by the members, both during the meeting and through the questionnaires, **it was decided to set up a working group with a mandate to implement the provisions of the Declaration**. The presidents of HACA and CAA were therefore entrusted with the task of coordinating the reflections on the development of a joint, structured and proactive action, with the following objectives:

- To adopt indicators and evaluation tools which allow to identify sexism and the dissemination of discriminatory stereotypes in the audiovisual media, notably in information, fiction and entertainment programmes and advertising contents;

¹⁴ The five founding members of the Network are the French, Catalan, Greek, Italian and Portuguese regulatory authorities.

¹⁵ With the three regulatory authorities: Spanish, Catalan and Andalusian.

¹⁶ With two distinct authorities.

¹⁷ http://www.rirm.org/medias/_documents/en/209.2.Declaration%20on%20the%20fight%20against%20gender%20stereotypes_Lisbon_%2023%20November%202012.pdf

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- To conduct, on the basis of a concerted approach, studies or research which enable a homogeneous assessment of gender discrimination in audiovisual content;
- To pursue active and proactive collaboration with the audiovisual media through co-regulation, in order to efficiently fight the dissemination of sexist stereotypes in audiovisual programmes.

4. Rabat, preliminary meeting to launch the work, January 2013 : First steps towards implementation

On the invitation of HACA (Morocco), a preliminary working meeting to discuss the means of implementing the Lisbon Declaration was held on 22 January 2013 in Rabat. The parties present at the meeting - the presidents of HACA (Morocco) and CAA (Spain) entrusted with this project, and the acting presidency of MNRA (ERC – Portugal) - adopted the following:

- In line with the recommendations¹⁸ of the members during the plenary meeting, the final analysis report titled *“Regulation faced with sexist stereotypes – a comparative study of regulatory policies within the MNRA”*¹⁹.
- Guidelines for the Network’s 1st draft action plan:
- Call upon the members of the MNRA to set up the working group;
- To prepare a platform to serve as a basis for the elaboration of the MNRA’s action plan for fighting sexist stereotypes in the audiovisual media;
- To send the platform to all the members of the Network;
- To organise a workshop to discuss and adopt the MNRA’s action plan for fighting sexist stereotypes in the audiovisual media.

5. Seville, technical meeting, June 2013 : Preparatory work in view of the setting up of the working group on the fight against gender stereotyping in media

In order to pursue the process, by decision of the Network’s presidency held by Mr. Carlos Magno, President of the Portuguese regulatory authority, a new meeting was scheduled in Seville, on 14 June 2013, with the following agenda:

- To formally establish the working group responsible for the fight against gender stereotyping in the media, amongst the MNRA’s members represented at that meeting: ERC-Portugal, HACA-Morocco, AGCOM-Italy, HAPA-Mauritania, NCRT-Albania), as well as the Spanish regional authorities (CAA-Andalusia and CAC-Catalonia) and the national authority of Spain (CMT);

¹⁸ http://www.rirm.org/medias/documents/fr/205.13.14th%20Plenary%20Assembly%202012_minutes..pdf

¹⁹ Cf, main conclusions, Chapter IV et seq.

- To examine a working document presented by CAA (Spain), in view of the implementation of the first strategic axis of the MNRA's Declaration pertaining to the elaboration of indicators to monitor gender stereotypes in the audiovisual media.
 - This platform, established on the basis of the indicators elaborated and tested by the Andalusian regulatory authority at the national level as well as the UNESCO indicators, was addressed to the other members of the working group for comments and potential additions;
 - It was decided to submit the platform for approval to all members during the 15th plenary meeting in Cyprus, on 25 and 26 October 2013.

IV. Summary of the survey on sexist stereotypes in the audiovisual media:

Despite national specificities, the review of the Statutes of the regulatory authorities in the Mediterranean Basin²⁰ allowed to identify several similarities:

❖ **Regarding the mission and functioning of the regulatory authorities:**

- Overall, the regulatory authorities' mission is based on audiovisual legislation and on a vision which is both protectionist and liberal, aiming to ensure the respect of competition and anti-trust rules, whilst protecting the public and fostering fundamental rights, such as principles of political and social pluralism, human dignity, equality, the fight against discrimination, etc.
- Generally speaking, regulatory authorities have the power to grant licences for the management of frequencies. This allows them to adopt instructions which are binding on the operators in view of compliance with the existing legislation and, if necessary, to advise supreme authorities in their country on matters related to their mandate or the audiovisual sector.
- They may promote the adoption of self-regulation rules in the audiovisual sector and obtain from audiovisual operators all necessary information to carry out their surveillance function. These powers are accompanied by arbitration and mediation functions but also, most often, by a power to impose sanctions, either on their own or through recourse to competent authorities.
- The regulatory authorities of the MNRA generally have a twofold composition, consisting of a decision-making body and a technical structure entrusted with implementing the decisions and carrying out the control function. The latter is based on either internal monitoring (examples: Morocco, Spain) or external (example: Italy) and on the handling of complaints.
- The scope of regulation varies only slightly and generally extends to the audiovisual landscape, covering TV and/or radio operators. Convergence is timidly making its appearance (only Croatia and Italy have converged authorities responsible for the regulation of both the audiovisual media and the Internet, without yet covering the regulation of content). Very few

²⁰ For more details, see study referred to hereabove http://www.rirm.org/fr/actus?id=8&id_document=213

regulators have a say in print media and/or outdoor advertising (Portugal, for example). In most countries, a distinction is made between the regulation of operators and that of content. Some countries, such as France, have a regulator for advertising.

❖ **Regarding the measures taken towards gender equality:**

- The fact that measures have recently been taken to address this issue in countries where they were established marks a recent awakening, which is probably the result of a number of factors: the increasing inconsistency between the discourse and the images conveyed in respect of women and their position in society, the growing demands of women's rights associations, the impact of international commitments following the Conference of Beijing or even internal pressure within regulators, who are faced with increasingly stronger complaints and claims on this matter.
- Recent though it may be, this level of awareness is strong in almost all regulatory authorities, even if legal and regulatory provisions have not kept pace. This imbalance is explained by a less generalised will on the part of public authorities to act in this direction, in spite of international commitments undertaken in this respect by all the members, regardless of cultural differences on either side of the Mediterranean.
- In most cases, the action undertaken by regulators draws its validity from the regulatory provisions of audiovisual legislation, while certain countries (such as Spain) have very precise national laws. In the absence of precise rules, other authorities have laid down specific provisions either in their internal by-laws (e.g. Malta) or in their service contracts with operators, namely public ones (Italy), or in the charters adopted by operators on a voluntary basis (Morocco). In other instances, the two practices are combined (France and Spain in particular). These laws are reflected in the regulations adopted for their implementation.
- Certain normative frameworks explicitly impose both quantitative and qualitative monitoring of the visibility of women in television and radio programmes/shows (Spain)²¹ or take into account their access to decision-making and media ownership (France).
- In all cases, even in the absence of clear and explicit reference to the question of gender equality or the fight against gender stereotyping, the legal or statutory provisions which frame the activity of the regulator or of the sector, or even those provided for in the country's constitutional laws, contain ethical obligations for addressing the issue. These provisions refer to the principle of respect for human dignity, coupled with the obligation to combat violence and/or discrimination, *inter alia* on the grounds of sex, or the duty to promote diversity and social cohesion, and even respect the rules on equality and professional ethics.

²¹ Despite the absence of explicit legal provisions, Morocco introduced the gender dimension in its quantitative monitoring of pluralism, with regard, in particular, to its working groups.

❖ **Regarding the framework of measures adopted to promote gender equality:**

- The measures adopted in view of the implementation of these principles range from the explicit prohibition of discrimination, stereotypes and prejudice on the grounds of sex (France, Spain, Turkey, Cyprus, Croatia and Macedonia), to the adoption of additional proactive measures in favour of a balanced representation and the promotion of diversity. Moreover, certain regulatory frameworks are inclined towards the establishment of self-regulation in the media, whilst others reinforce collective social responsibility in the fight against violence and discrimination against women, or combine the two. These provisions are accompanied by the obligation to report to Parliament.
- Despite their differences, regulatory frameworks are comparable. This is also true for the measures taken to implement them. In general, experiences are comparable, even similar, with some countries having progressed more than others, through the monitoring tools and procedures developed, scientific production and the action of partnerships in the fight against stereotypes:
 - The issue appears to be part of the programme monitoring and supervision activity of all regulators whereby, in general, contravening operators are either called to provide explanations or receive reminders of their obligation to respect the dignity of women.
 - The absence of a specific legal framework does not seem to be an obstacle for authorities wishing to take proactive measures.
 - The approaches adopted reinforce, in an either selective or combined manner, the ruling (Turkey) and supervising power of the regulator and that of vigilance in society.
 - The measures taken follow the same reasoning. They are founded on the complaints and the possibility to refer the matter to the regulator (Portugal) and on the Council's monitoring capacity and ability to carry out *ex officio* investigations.
 - The regulators' action is aided or reinforced by the existence of an Ombudsman or of national structures dedicated to gender equality or a network of active and organised associations.²²
 - The obligation to report to Parliament reinforces the monitoring framework and the implementation of a proactive policy in the fight against stereotypes. It allows, to say the least, the provision of information pertaining to the current situation, incites interest and even the engagement of public bodies and the vigilance from society.

²² The Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies and the Cyprus Sociological Association, the Agency for Gender Equality in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality in Portugal, the new Institution for Equality in Morocco and similar structures in France, Spain, etc.

V. Towards an action plan: Concepts, regulatory framework and mechanisms

1. Concepts:

1.1. Sex and gender

The word “sex” signifies the biological and physiological distinction between the male and female component of the “human gender”. The relation between them is “a relation of apparent natural complementarity, since it is associated with reproduction”²³. The word “gender”, on the other hand, is a social construction used to refer to the roles, attitudes, activities and attributes that a society considers appropriate for men and women.

1.2. Stereotypes

Stereotypes project a caricatural way of perceiving individuals, *a priori* in a simplistic manner, on the basis of specific traits such as sex, race, etc. Stereotypes are expressed in politics, laws and practices. They are often maintained by powerful vectors of socialisation such as the media and the educational system. Prejudice on the grounds of gender is the basis of discrimination between men and women and contributes towards justifying such discrimination and perpetuating historical and structural “models” of inequality between men and women.

1.3. Discrimination

According to Article 1 of the CEDAW Convention, the discrimination against women means “any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex **which has the effect or the purpose** of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.”

1.4. Image of the woman

The expression “image of the woman” refers to all presentations and representations, whether visual or verbal, of the female component in society. The widely used concept “to improve the image of the woman in the media” therefore refers to vague and imprecise notions, not founded on the normative framework stemming from international and human rights law. Hence the importance to cast a critical eye over such types of formulations which may, themselves, lead to a stereotyped image and a reductive approach in the fight against gender inequality. The expressions “fight against gender stereotyping” and “promotion of gender equality” in and across the media appear, in our view, to be more appropriate.

²³ Hurtig, M.C., Kail, M., Rouch, H. (1991) *Sexe et genre, De la hiérarchie entre les sexes, introduction*, Paris, CNRS publications, p 11-20.

2. Regulatory framework

The fight against gender or sexist stereotypes and in favour of promoting equality of men and women in and across the audiovisual media draws its validity from the underlying principles of human rights: freedom of expression and the right to search for and obtain information, both necessary to ensure the participation in public life, and the respect for human dignity in a democratic system. The media are an indispensable tool in the practical implementation of these freedoms. They must ensure that individuals, irrespective of their sex, colour, location or education, are given the possibility to exercise their right to search for and obtain information of a political, economic, scientific, artistic or social nature. The expression of the population's diverse needs and expectations contributes towards enriching creativity, social and intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding.

With these considerations in mind, the debate on the benefit of efficiently protecting the rights of women in and across the media and their content has engaged the international community for several years, resulting in the production of a broad spectrum of agreements and recommendations. Even though not all of them are legally binding, they nevertheless offer an interesting range of references to enrich the arguments in favour of promoting active and proactive measures to this end.

The main direct and indirect international references to human rights in general and the human rights of women are as follows:

2.1 The UN framework in favour of the general principles of human rights:

- In addition to the legal instruments which pertain to human rights in general and, in particular, their fundamental principles of equality and non discrimination, on the grounds *inter alia* of sex, and the guarantee of the freedom of information and expression:
 - the **Charter of the United Nations** of 1945
 - **and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights** of 1948,
 - **as well as the** International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted on 16 November 1966. In this text, Article 2 refers to the principle of non discrimination on the grounds of sex, Article 3 to the equality of men and women and Article 25 to the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs of one's country.
 - **And** the Covenant on **Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, adopted on the same date, which provides that the States parties undertake, *inter alia*, to guarantee that the rights enunciated therein will be exercised without discrimination of any kind, as to race, colour, sex, (...) or other status. They also undertake to ensure, under Article 3, the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights set forth in the Covenant.

2.2 The UN framework in favour of women's rights:

- **The United Nations Convention on the Political Rights of Women, adopted on 20 December 1952:**

This first international normative instrument elaborated by the United Nations with the sole objective of promoting women's rights provides that women shall, on equal terms with men and without discrimination, be entitled to vote in all elections, be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies and be entitled to exercise all public functions.

- **The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDEF/CEDAW)²⁴, adopted on 18 December 1979:** The Convention requires the States parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all areas. Articles 7 and 8 provide for equal participation in the political and public life, both at national and international level. Article 5 stipulates that "States parties must modify the social and cultural patterns and models of conduct of men and women with a view to promoting gender equality, by examining the combined roles of culture, and legal and social institutions as vectors of inequality". To this date, 185 States have ratified the Convention.
- **The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women²⁵, adopted on 6 October 1999, by the General Assembly of the United Nations** reaffirms the determination of States parties to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by women, in conditions of equality, of all their fundamental rights and freedoms and to take effective measures to prevent the violations of these rights and freedoms, gives individuals and groups of women the right of petition or to submit complaints to the Committee²⁶ in respect of violations of the Convention, and enables the Committee to conduct investigations on serious or systematic violations of the human rights of women in those countries which are parties to the Optional Protocol.
- **The Vienna Platform (1993)²⁷** (paragraph 82): insists on "the responsibility of States to modify the social and cultural patterns and models of conduct of men and women with a view to promoting gender equality, by examining the combined roles of culture and legal and social institutions as vectors of inequality".
- **The four international United Nations Conferences on Women, 1975-1995,²⁸** and in particular the fourth one, the Conference of Beijing in 1995, which reaffirms that gender equality is a universal question, the consideration of which is of benefit to everyone and touches on the principle of a profound restructuring of society and institutions, so that women may occupy the place they deserve, as equal to men, in all aspects of life. On that occasion, the international community identified the following twelve strategic objectives:

²⁴ <http://www.acerwc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/French-ACERWC-Convention-on-the-Elimination-of-all-Forms-of-Discrimination-against-Women.pdf>

²⁵ Mechanism which provides for procedures in respect of a Treaty or a question associated with it.

²⁶ http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/OP_CEDAW_fr.pdf

²⁶ The Committee for the elimination of discrimination against women, formally set up in 1981 with the entry into effect of the aforesaid Convention, following its ratification by 20 countries. The Committee's role is to monitor the implementation of the Convention by the States Parties.

²⁷ Outcome of the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in June 1993.

²⁸ **Mexico 1975** which launches the debate at global level, **Copenhagen 1980** which marks the beginning of the evaluation procedure, **Nairobi 1985** where the movement for gender equality is universally acknowledged.

- Actively promote the non-discriminatory participation of all individuals in society, in particular by supporting the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- To reinforce the legislation on violence, sexual harassment and the exploitation of women for sexual purposes;
- To support the measures aimed to enhance the role of Non Governmental Organisations which give women more responsibilities;
- To encourage and accelerate, through supporting actions, the participation of women in the decision-making process in all public and political bodies;
- To make sure that women across the world have the right to decide, as free and responsible persons, on the number of children they desire to have, the interval between two births and the timing of their pregnancy, and that the necessary information and means to this end are made available to them;
- To adopt measures aimed to remedy horizontal and vertical discrimination at the workplace;
- To encourage changes in the organisation of work such as to ensure a balanced share of professional and family responsibilities, take measures to reconcile private, social and professional responsibilities;
- To integrate equal opportunities into all policies and actions (mainstreaming).

2.3 The UN framework in favour of the consideration of the image of women in the media by the media:

- **The Beijing Platform²⁹ (1995):** proposes, in the area of intervention regarding “The place of women in the media” (one of twelve areas of concern),³⁰ a double strategic objective which consists of promoting a balanced and non stereotyped image of women in the media by means of working out and implementing a strategy of information, awareness and communication; and of increasing the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication (ICT);
- **The UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (2011)³¹** strongly calls out to the media as vectors for the promotion of a human rights culture. In Article 5, the Declaration calls for human rights education and training, whether provided by public or private actors, to be based on the principles of equality, of human dignity, of inclusion and non-discrimination, in particular the equality between girls and boys and between men and women. Article 6 adds that “Human rights education and training should capitalise on new information and communication technologies, as well as the media, and make use of them in order to promote all human rights and fundamental freedoms”.

²⁹ Declaration and Action Plan <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPFA%20F.pdf>

³⁰ Section J, paragraphs 234-245.

³¹ Declaration adopted by the General Assembly of the UN in December 2011

The European framework:

▪ General principles:

- **European Convention on Human Rights:** international treaty signed by the Member-States of the Council of Europe on 7 November 1950;

▪ Specific instruments :

a. Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe:

In particular:

- **Resolution 1557³² (2007)** and **Recommendation 1799 (2007)** on “The image of women in advertising”³³;
- **Recommendation 1555 (2002)**³⁴ on “The image of women in the media” (2007);
- **Recommendation 1751 (2010) of the Council of Europe**³⁵ on “Combating sexist stereotypes in the media” (2010), which particularly states that “The sexist stereotypes conveyed vary from humour and clichés in the traditional media, to incitement to gender-based hatred and violence on the Internet. Sexist stereotypes are too frequently trivialized and tolerated under the banner of freedom of expression. Furthermore, these stereotypes are often subtly conveyed by the media which reproduce the attitudes and opinions seen as the norm in societies where equality of the sexes is far from reality. Accordingly, all too often, court action cannot be taken against sexist stereotypes nor can they be penalised by regulatory or self-regulatory authorities, except in cases of the most serious violations of human dignity”.

b. Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe:

Specifically:

- **Recommendations on the equality between women and men in the media:** Those of 25 September 1984, [Rec\(84\)17](#)³⁶, and the very recent CM/Rec(2013)1 of 10 July 2013 on “gender equality and the media” with the appended “Guidelines”, appealing simultaneously to “Member States”, “Media Organisations”, including regulators, and calling for “Measures of implementation” such as :
 - Review and evaluation of gender equality legislation and policy
 - Adoption and implementation of national indicators for gender equality in the media
 - Provision of information and promotion of good practices

³² <http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta07/ERES1557.htm>

³³ <http://assembly.coe.int/Mainf.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta07/EREC1799.htm>

³⁴ <http://assembly.coe.int/Mainf.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta02/EREC1555.htm>

³⁵ <http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/AdoptedText/ta10/ERES1751.htm>

³⁶ http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/media/doc/cm/rec%281984%29017_EN.asp

- Accountability channels
 - Research and publication
 - Media literacy and active citizenship
- **Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2007\)17](#)** on “gender equality standards and mechanisms” (2007)³⁷

As well as the more general recommendations of the Council, in particular those on:

- The integrated approach of gender equality [CM/Rec\(98\)14](#), and gender equality in education [CM/Rec\(2007\)13](#), as well as those on the balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making [CM/Rec\(2003\)3](#);
- The promotion of diversity of content and media pluralism: Recommendations of January 1999, n°R(99)1³⁸, and that of 31 January 2007, [CM/Rec\(2007\)2](#)³⁹;
- Or generally concerning freedom of expression, a culture for human rights and democracy, as well as the fight against violence in the media, such as: Recommendations 1466 on the protection of the role of the media in democracy in the context of media concentration, of 31 January 2007, on “media education”, of 2007 on “the media and the promotion of a culture of tolerance”, “the mission of public service media in information society” and “the governance of public service media” (2012) as well as Recommendations [CM/Rec\(2007\)11](#) on promoting freedom of expression and information in the new information and communication environment, of 30 October 1997 on the portrayal of violence in the electronic media, and [Rec\(90\)4](#) on the elimination of sexism from language.

2.4 Other regional frameworks:

- **The African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights**⁴⁰ adopted on 27 June 1981 in Nairobi (Kenya) during the 18th Conference of the Organisation of African Unity, which came into effect on 21 October 1986, following its ratification by 25 States, as well as the additional protocol on the rights of women, adopted in Maputo on 11 July 2003. In particular, Article 2 prohibits any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnic group, colour, sex, language, religion, political or any other opinion, national and social origin, fortune, birth or any other status; and Article 18 calls on all States to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and to ensure the protection of the rights of women, as stipulated in international declarations and conventions;

³⁷ <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=CM/Rec%282007%2917&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=9999CC&BackColorIntranet=FFBB55&BackColorLogged=FFAC75>

³⁸ <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=399303&Site=CM>

³⁹ <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1089699>

⁴⁰ http://www.aceci.org/documents/Charte_africaine.pdf

Second part:

Indicators and procedures of evaluation of gender stereotypes conveyed by the audiovisual media

I. Introduction

The Beijing Action Plan, cited in reference, has set amongst its strategic goals to reinforce the access for women to the media and decision-making within media enterprises, as well as their access to new communication technologies and to participation. Further, it proposes to promote a balanced and non stereotyped image of women.

Since then, numerous studies and reports carried out by international and regional organisations such as the United Nations and the European Union, have sought to establish indicators intended to identify in a reliable, rational and objective manner, the stereotypes and sexism still transmitted by the media.

The idea was to identify, on the one hand, the stereotypes as well as any sentiment, image and message either implicitly or explicitly damaging, demeaning or sexist, with objectivity and precision, in order to prevent their spreading; and, on the other hand, to find out whether discriminating procedures and/or attitudes against women persist within the media.

The implementation of these tools is still in its early stages, and a recognised and tested method is still lacking, partly because the application of indicators of gender-based measurements in the media is complex and remains controversial; and partly because it is not easy to raise awareness among distributors and other stakeholders in the sector – in particular advertising executives, creators or producers – as to their own responsibility and that of the media as regards the construction of mass social perceptions and the education of minors. Reports by those organisations and countries which have tried to apply strategies in favour of the human rights of women through the media, as approved during the 1995 Beijing Conference, attest to this paradox. The table of indicators for gender equality in the media, proposed by UNESCO in 2012,⁴¹ constitutes a significant progress. The same applies to tools developed in the context of national regulatory experiences which take into account media monitoring and supervision from the perspective of gender, such as the Andalusian or French authorities.

The difficulty of proposing indicators dedicated to the question of gender in the media, to be adopted and applied within the MNRA, stems from all these factors and also from a triple complexity which is a product of the field of analysis and application as much as it is of instruments and methods of measurement: how to implement in a field of expression which is

⁴¹ http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/IPDC/ipdc28_gsmi_paper_rev.pdf

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creative and artistic, and moreover ephemeral and elusive as that of the audiovisual media content, methods of analysis that are adequately homogenised so as to be shared and applicable by all regulatory authorities of the Mediterranean region? How to take into account, notwithstanding the similarities, the particularities and the diversity of contexts (mission, resources and cultural and political national frameworks, professional practices) and the unequal social, economic and technological advancements?

However, precisely by raising difficulties, these unequal advancements all the more legitimise the exchange of experiences and ideas in search of better practices favouring the elimination of stereotypes and the promotion of gender equality in the Mediterranean Basin.

Apart from promoting equality, the media can also play a role in the fight against direct violence suffered by women, through information and awareness. The media and stakeholders in this sector, as well as advertising executives, owe to make use of guidelines and codes of conduct in this sense, in order to develop their vigilance regarding contents of a character that is violent or degrading to women, and against pornographic content.

II. Measures and actions pertaining to regulation, self-regulation and co-regulation

The indicators collected in this report take into account the mentioned factors; they aim at encouraging regulatory authorities, either members or candidate members of the MNRA, to develop, where there is none, an appropriate strategy based on a diagnosis and analysis of the situation, in order to reinforce regulation, self-regulation and co-regulation pertaining to the promotion of gender.

It is a set of quantitative and/or qualitative indicators based on media analysis and supervision, and on the parallel adoption of guiding principles which lead towards a political and social dialogue on the promotion of gender equality, and which stimulate the spreading, on behalf of media organisations, of non sexist social media and attitudes across all proposed programmes.

This section proposes a certain number of measures to be adopted by regulatory organisations with the aim of encouraging dialogue with media stakeholders and advertising executives, and in particular creating a permanent forum for the exchange of ideas and experiences within the MNRA.

Actions intended to promote gender equality at decision-making level and in procedures of adherence, employment and promotion of media enterprises, and of professional organisations and labour unions are not listed in this first framework⁴².

⁴² These important actions do not fall within the competences of certain regulatory authorities. There are avenues for collaboration with other specialised institutions, with professional associations and media institutions, of both audiovisual production and advertising, that may be available individually as they may be discussed in the presence of all members.

Regulatory authorities may carry out studies and research on these aspects with organisations that have at their disposal relative information: employment authorities, labour unions and professional organisations, communication enterprises, etc.

In the following paragraphs we have systematised the objectives which combine the different dimensions in which regulatory entities of the Mediterranean have intervened for the promotion of equality and the fight against sex-based stereotypes. In order to put each objective into operation, we propose a set of indicators and respective methods of verification.

Objective 1: To promote regulatory measures aiming at combating all existing forms of sex-based discrimination, either direct or indirect, and at favouring real equality between women and men, through the suppression of barriers and stereotypes which hinder it.

❖ **Indicators:**

1. Existence of specific laws and rules which favour equality in the media and social media and which provide for evaluation tools and the establishment of control devices against the spreading of discriminatory contents or sex-based prejudice and stereotypes, or their legitimisation (laws pertaining to audiovisual communication, gender equality, guidelines for the elimination of violence against women, etc).
2. Existence of control instruments intended to prohibit or halt the spreading of advertising contents which violate the dignity of women, or perhaps even to correct such content.

❖ **Method of verification:**

- Creation within the MNRA of a database by which the regulatory authorities may register the normative advances occurred in their respective country.
- Publication of an annual report by the MNRA on the legislative advances recorded in the represented countries as far as non discrimination against women and gender equality in the media is concerned.

Objective 2: To encourage the adoption of codes of ethics, reference guides and manuals, and editorial policies privileging and promoting the principle of equality in media content, encouraging active and voluntary collaboration with media professionals by means of self-regulation and co-regulation, in order to effectively fight against gender stereotypes in programmes and advertising.

❖ **Indicators:**

1. Existence of codes of self-regulation and co-regulation, of manuals, manuals of style or guides with recommendations aiming at advancing equality by promoting a balanced and diversified portrayal of men and women in the programming.

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2. Existence of codes of self-regulation and co-regulation, of manuals or guides on advertising role models aiming at eradicating sexist ads and the spreading of discriminatory stereotypes in commercial communication.
3. Organisation and promotion of programmes and training workshops in order to advance self-regulation, taking into account gender and diversity among the professionals of information.
4. Actions towards the acquisition of media competences at school so that children may develop the skill to understand and evaluate in a critical way the dissemination of stereotypes and discriminatory content through communication services and advertising.
5. Organisation and promotion of programmes and workshops for media and advertising professionals on the discrimination and stereotypes about men and women in the media and advertising.

❖ **Method of verification:**

- Creation, on behalf of regulatory authorities, of a database compiling the codes, manuals, guides and recommendations set up by the audiovisual media of member countries.
- Signature of agreements and protocols of self-regulation and co-regulation between monitoring bodies, media and journalists organisations.
- Presentation of a letter/research to the media so that they may become aware of the existence of codes, agreements, etc., and of the measures taken to improve and promote equality.
- Monitor the respect for the dispositions laid down in agreements of self-regulation and co-regulation in order to evaluate the degree of conformity and efficacy, by drafting periodical reports.
- Set up lines of collaboration with professional organisations, media, governments and education and academic communities towards organising workshops and training courses.
- Creation within the MNRA of a database of initiatives of self-regulation and co-regulation initiatives, encouraged or managed by the represented authorities.
- Publication of an annual report by the MNRA in order to promote the exchange of experiences and initiatives of self-regulation and co-regulation.

Objective 3: To eliminate open dissemination of content of a pornographic character, considering that pornography is an especially serious violation of the dignity of a person, usually of women, mainly when it is accompanied by images of violence and sexual aggression.

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❖ **Indicators:**

1. Existence of these rules;
2. Provided field of limitation and/or prohibition of the dissemination of pornography.
3. Presentation of criteria, professional guidelines and codes of conduct regarding materials of a violent, degrading or pornographic character portraying women in the media and advertising.

Objective 4: To promote awareness in society of the role and responsibility of the media in terms of advancing equality and eliminating gender stereotypes.

❖ **Indicators:**

1. Preparation and dissemination on behalf of regulatory organisations of material and reports, and creation of working groups for promoting the value of equality in the media.
2. To encourage the filing of complaints and protests concerning sex-based discriminatory content and the dissemination of gender stereotypes through the media and advertising.
3. Actions towards the acquisition of media competences at school so that children may develop the capacity to understand and evaluate in a critical way the dissemination of gender stereotypes and discriminatory content through communication services and advertising.

❖ **Method of verification:**

- Integration by the regulatory authorities of the perspective of gender in their statements and annual reports.

III. Information programmes

Media monitoring and the evaluation of the portrayal of men and women, as has been encouraged by the Beijing Platform, aims at achieving a balanced portrayal of men and women in the essential sector of information and expression of ideas and opinions.

The monitoring and analysis of the portrayal of men and women in information programmes is one of the indicators proposed by various international organisations, such as the UNESCO, in order to assess equality in the area of communication. This indicator has been used since 1995 in the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), developed by voluntary organisations in more than seventy countries, to evaluate the presence of women in current affairs. Regulatory authorities and observatories equally perform these analysis with different quantitative and qualitative methodologies in both the public and private media.

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The media, both public and private, need to reflect social diversity and to contribute to gender equality by correctly presenting, without any prejudice or stereotypes, images, discourses and knowledge generated by women. Public or public-funded media owe to specially address this issue, as well as the promotion of equality, active participation of all citizens in the public sphere and the expression of ideas for the formulation of a pluralistic public opinion combining the collective will of a nation. It is therefore proposed the adoption of tested quantitative indicators that organisations belonging to the MNRA integrated in their regular monitoring process. Each regulatory authority will be able to adapt these indicators to its own resources, particularly as regards the choice of which sample to analyse and the frequency of analysis reports.

Identifying and evaluating the presence of men and women in information programmes by distributing periodical reports, allows to determine whether the gradual integration of women in the labour market, and their participation in the public life is visible, alongside their diverse contribution to effectively combating sexist stereotypes by utilising the multiplicity of their roles in society, and to acting as agents of change.

Objective: To promote a balanced and non stereotyped image of women in information programmes. Raise awareness amongst society and the media in terms of the invisibility of women as agents of information in order to work against the spreading of a stereotypical image of men and women (one that is linked to traditional roles).

❖ **Indicators:**

1. Allocation of speaking time between men and women (number of interventions and duration in absolute and relative terms) in information programmes.
2. Allocation of speaking time between men and women in accordance with the role of actors in current affairs (number of interventions and duration).
3. Allocation of speaking time between men and women in accordance with the news theme (% of duration).
4. Allocation of speaking time between men and women in accordance with the news topic (% of duration).⁴³
5. Percentage of men and women participating in debates and commentary.

❖ **Method of verification:**

- Monitoring the speaking time of men and women in all or in a significant sample of information programmes for the preparation of periodical reports.

The application of a quantitative methodology allows to analyse the visibility of women in information programmes and their pertinence to the social and political sectors, as well as to detect whether the image of women is associated with traditional roles and sectors.

⁴³ Certain studies use as indicator the percentage of the presence of men and women in information programmes (TV news, news shows, interviews, debates). This requires the inclusion of qualitative indicators in addition to the systematic analysis carried out by regulatory authorities.

- Quantitative monitoring of the presence of men and women in debates and talk-shows.
- Preparation, on behalf of the MNRA, of periodical reports with data provided by regulatory authorities, members of the Network.

IV. Prevention and elimination of violence against women

One in three women over 15 years of age has suffered acts of physical or mental violence by a husband, a partner, a lover or a former partner. In certain regions, this percentage rises from 30% to 38% of the female population. Bearing in mind the importance and complexity of this problem, this platform proposes a series of indicators in order to involve the regulatory authorities and the media in combating violence against women which, according to the World Health Organisation, has reached endemic proportions with the exception of no country or culture. The UN considers this violence as the manifestation of historically unequal relations of power between women and men.

Objective: To encourage the media to denounce violence against women and to contribute to raise awareness among society in order to prevent and eliminate the violence committed against women, by portraying it as a social problem and a violation of human rights and of a person's dignity.

Indicators:

1. Number and percentage of information on violence against women.
2. Pertinence of the information concerning violence against women in news programs alignments (time and place in relation to other topics).
3. Percentage of information concerning aggression (cases of violence) and percentage of news linked to public awareness and sensitisation.
4. Publicity and distribution in the media of advertising campaigns promoted by public institutions, associations and media towards the prevention and elimination of violence against women.
5. Make use of recommendations, manuals, manuals on style or guides addressed to the media and to professionals on the way violence against women is being journalistically mediated.

Method of verification:

- Analysis of information programmes over a significant period of time in order to draft reports on the treatment of violence against women by means of a quantitative methodology, with a view to evaluating the level of attention accorded by the media to violence against women.
- Analysis and drafting of qualitative reports on news centred on violence against women (aggression and murder).

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- Development within the MNRA of recommendations and professional guidelines on the adequate journalistic coverage of the violence against women.
- Agreements of regulation and co-regulation encouraged by regulatory authorities on how violence against women is treated at the informative level, and for promoting the dissemination of actions and programmes of awareness.

V. Commercial communications

The analysis of commercial communications aimed at identifying messages or images that are discriminatory or degrading to women, and stereotypes favouring gender-based inequalities, is hindered by the absence of universally accepted criteria regarding sex-based discriminatory advertising. To generate indicators that allow to assess sexism with precision and to technically argue against it, is fundamental to regulatory authorities entitled to demand the withdrawal of discriminatory advertising or take sanctions against it.

Regulatory authorities equally owe to encourage the conduct of studies and the preparation of reports on the spreading of gender stereotypes and discriminatory messages in advertising, by promoting a dialogue with the sector for laying down and applying codes of ethics, codes of conduct and professional ethics for a practical implementation of international recommendations. The dignity of women, sexist stereotypes and discrimination through language or image are generally vague legal notions, hardly objective and dependent on multiple social and cultural factors.

It is, consequently, difficult to reach a consensus on the identification of certain stereotypes and discriminatory messages in advertising. But the great concern represented by advertising messages in terms of their social influence in a globalised world, particularly among minors, and the necessity to reinforce the protection of women against languages and images which objectify them, reduce them to sexual objects or to a state of servitude or of being patronised, canonise the standards of beauty or restrict them to specific social and professional roles that are very limited and harmful to their human development and to their aptitude for the production of wealth, require a theoretical effort based on a set of basic indicators and methods of analysis applicable to commercial communications.

Therefore, two precise objectives have been proposed for the adoption of standards within the MNRA as well as a series of initial indicators to guide the drafting of reports and studies in advertising.

Objective 1: To identify sex-based discriminatory commercial communications.

❖ Indicators :

1. When women are portrayed in a vexatious manner, by particularly and directly using their body or parts of their body as an object or as a mere support for the ads, unrelated to the product intended for promotion or as a value added to the features of a determined product, akin to packaging.

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2. When either the domination of men over women, or attitudes that are humiliating to women, or abuse or violence committed against women is favoured in any way, by means of both images and words.
3. When, either explicitly or implicitly, men and women are associated with traditional attitudes or roles that are specific to each gender (example: the woman being responsible for specific duties, like taking care of the house, the children or the family, and the man being the person working outside).
4. When the promoted product is explicitly or implicitly presented as a product destined specifically for women, without this restriction being justified by the nature of such product.
5. When it is claimed or suggested that such product is not appropriate for women, without this restriction being justified by its nature.

Objective 2: Identify the commercial communications which convey negative stereotypes on women.

❖ **Indicators:**

1. Setting standards of beauty considered as synonyms of success.
2. Presenting the body as an area of imperfections to be corrected.
3. Placing feminine characters in a position of inferiority and dependence.
4. Denying the desires and wills of women and presenting their adjustment to the desires and wishes of others as “natural”.
5. Presenting women as incapable of controlling their emotions and reactions.
6. Employing a language which excludes women, which renders their identification difficult or which associates them to derogatory notions.
7. Segregation between boys and girls in advertising, specifically aimed at minors (toy ads).

❖ **Method of verification :**

- Setting up a working group within the MNRA in order to carry out a thorough study to verify the usefulness and effectiveness of indicators and their relevance, based on the results of the research.

VI. Entertainment programmes

The protection of childhood is the area where the greatest progress has been recorded in terms of audiovisual regulation, owing to the large social and political consensus on the necessity to protect minors from any content which could harm their physical, mental or moral self-fulfilment. This fundamental principle is generally not controversial even if it imposes, as a consequence, limits to the freedom of programming. There are, therefore, no universal criteria for the classification of entertainment programmes.

Children are more and more exposed to the influence of the media which broadcast programmes carrying models of attitude and behaviour, and gender stereotypes which

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determine the way in which men and women are perceived by children, mainly during the period of their intellectual and social growth, and prove harmful to the culture of equality and to social construction, through the distribution of a boys/girls distinction in terms of allocated roles and social attitudes. This is the reason why it is impossible to promote equality, if we do not first target the content destined for children and adolescents, and if we do not promote contents which can change their attitudes and opinions and enable them not to model their attitudes on pre-established models and carriers of violence, mainly sexist.

Objective: To verify that entertainment programmes (reality shows, series, animation, films, magazine shows, etc.) distributed during the time slot reserved for children do not broadcast models of discriminatory behaviour by presenting, without criticising them, sexist messages and attitudes, and do not trivialise or encourage the violence committed against women.

❖ **Indicators :**

1. Lay down criteria to guide the classification and signage of programming and which define the non critical dissemination of models of sexist behaviours and images of sexual violence and aggression against women, such as contents which may harm the physical, mental or moral self-fulfilment of minors.
2. Classification programmes which encourage sexist activities, social models and attitudes and which trivialize violence against women, as not recommended for children younger than 18.
3. Programs which favour gender equality and non sexist social models and attitudes during the children's time slot.

❖ **Method of verification**

- Promotion by the regulatory authorities of agreements with the sector on self-regulation and co-regulation for the adequate classification and signage of programming, with an eye to protecting the rights of women and gender equality.
- Analysis of programming and drafting of reports on the dissemination of discriminatory stereotypes and sexist content in programmes destined for minors.
- Verify that the classification and signage of programmes (films, series, cartoons, etc.) aired in the children's time slot is indeed appropriate, by analysing the programmes broadcast during this particular time slot.
- To encourage the filing of complaints and protests on behalf of citizens on the issue of the dissemination of discriminatory models and attitudes during children's programmes.

Third part: Recommendations

The platform aims to stimulate the reflection, the production of ideas and the debate on this issue within the members of MNRA, based on the proposals expressed by the working group, and prior to that on the members' responses to the questionnaire and also in conformity with the most recent regional and international recommendations.

As reported in the first part of this document, the Network constitutes an area of shared missions and values, of dialogue and common action, opening a great potential of cooperation between the respective Members. Given that Mediterranean regulatory authorities have at their disposal a shared basis of values which permits them, through the Network, to act in concert, it remains to be seen, within the present platform, which actions they may put into operation, in alignment with their institutional position and their mandate, towards promoting equality between men and women and combating stereotypes in the media.

It appears important to indicate once again the recent character of measures surrounding this issue in the countries where they do exist, which indicates that there is a growing recognition and awareness of its relevance and an increase in the respective internal and external visibility of the question. The absence of clear and explicit rules on the matter do not prevent - as showed by the examples of various authorities - the adoption of specific provisions in the context of the defence of human dignity and diversity and the fight against discrimination.

The range of indicators laid down in the second part of the document points out the great variety of dimensions and forms of intervention on behalf of Mediterranean regulators in this matter, in accordance with their tasks and mission, and their distinct work methodology. It must also be ensured that each regulatory authority belonging to the MNRA shall be able to adjust the proposed indicators to its own resources and its regular monitoring procedure, in particular regarding the choice of the sample to be analysed and the frequency of analysis reports.

1. Lines of thought addressed to members:

▪ **Tasks that regulators may launch for the present project:**

- Make recommendations and propose legal amendments and/or normative adjustments and set procedural rules of management;
- Regulate the content, by means of normative and logistic provisions, in keeping with the double approach of *ex officio* investigations and the handling of complaints, and by developing mechanisms of self-regulation and co-regulation.
- Put in place promotional quotas for the respect of obligations linked to the promotion of equality between men and women in media content and society.

▪ **Actions that may be undertaken by regulators in favour of the promotion of equality between men/women:**

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- Integrate into their procedures a clear reference on the principles of equality between the sexes, of equal access to the media and of the fight against sexist stereotypes
- Set up indicators of monitoring and assessment of:
 - Equality of access to positions (of work, responsibility or decision);
 - Equality of access to media studios/airwaves and to economic, scientific, artistic consultation and expertise...;
- Activate the warning and vigilance functions of public and civil society.

2. Lines of thought of interest to the Network:

- **Tasks that regulators may launch for the present project:**
 - Adopt a concerted policy at the Network level for the integration of principles of equality between the sexes, of equal access to the media and of the fight against sexist stereotypes;
 - Promote joint or coordinated efforts within the Network and with other networks or with regional or international authorities;
- **Actions that may be undertaken:**
 - Members owe, as a matter of priority, and consistent with the implementation timetable of the Lisbon Declaration, to officially designate the working group which shall remain in charge of this topic;
 - The Network may moreover proceed to:
 - Collect and publish, at specific intervals the regularity of which remains to be defined, relevant figures and monitoring results by regulators;
 - Conduct studies and/or concerted actions of awareness.

Translated from French original by Despina Pirketti

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