



Capacity building
for women candidates and
media stakeholders
in public debates in Greece



**Guide for Journalists
and Media stakeholders** ● ● ●



**Guide for Politicians
and Candidates** ● ● ●

SYNOPSIS



Guide for Journalists and Media stakeholders

Guide for Politicians and Candidates

Synopsis

This Synopsis is a comprehensive overview of the two Practical Guides for Women Politicians and Candidates and for Journalists and Media Stakeholders, which were the outcome of the educational activities carried out in the framework of the Gender Public Debate project.

For more information regarding the Guides, as well as the educational activities, educational material and trainers, please refer to <http://nosexism.isotita.gr/>.

The examples contained in this Synopsis serve exclusively its educational nature and relate specifically to the identification, recognition and dealing with stereotypical and sexist behaviours in the public sphere in the context of the Gender Public Debate project. There is no intention on the part of the authors to target the persons to whom they refer.

Athens, October 2020

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Preface

The project titled "[Capacity building for women candidates and media stakeholders in public debates in Greece](#)" ("GENDER_PUBLIC DEBATE") was implemented by the [Center for European Constitutional Law](#) - (coordinator) in collaboration with the [National and Kapodistrian University Athens](#) (Department of Communication & Media Studies) and the [General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality](#) with co-funding from the "Rights, Equality and Citizenship" Program ([REC](#)) of the European Union (2014-2020).

The GENDER_PUBLIC DEBATE project seeks to reinforce the capacity of Greek female politicians, candidates, as well as media stakeholders –journalists, media studies students, bloggers- to recognize, address and prevent gender discrimination in public debates. To this effect, a number of training and empowerment activities have been carried out in Athens and Thessaloniki (2019-2020) by an educational team of academics and gender experts, targeting:

- ✚ Media stakeholders (journalists and media students), to build on their ability to identify, respond to and prevent sexism and gender discrimination in the media and to help them raise their capacity to address such incidents and promote gender balanced journalism further.
- ✚ Female politicians and candidates, to empower and enhance their capacity to identify and respond to incidents of sexism and discrimination in public debates.

The project's outcome is disseminated via the [/nosexism.isotita.gr/](#) website (with on-line follow-up involvement of the trainees/multipliers), a special final conference, the printed and electronic media/social media, as well as printed and electronic educational and information material. One of the core objectives of the dissemination plan is to engage all concerned stakeholders in a long-term approach to promote discrimination free media.

Identify It!

The effort to combating stereotypical and sexist behaviour cannot be considered complete if the view of participation in public debates is absent.

*Women who participate in public life, whether as public figures, as candidates or as elected representatives, experience discrimination that concerns not only their political views but also their gender, that is to say, that they are women and politically active.*¹

Therefore, the ultimate aim of empowering women is not only to protect basic human rights and essential freedoms but also to recognize the advantages of integrating women's perspectives into the political system².

In order to enhance women's participation in the public sphere and foster their addressing of sexist behavior within their media exposure and at any given instant, it is essential to **identify some fundamental concepts and terms and provide relevant examples for consideration.**

I. Key Concepts and Terms

a. Sexism

The Council of Europe adopted the [Recommendation](#)³ on preventing and combating sexism, according to which **sexism is:**

Any action, gesture, visual presentation, oral or written speech, practice or behaviour based on the idea that a person or group of persons is inferior because of their gender, which occurs in the public or private sphere, whether online or not, based on the idea that an individual or group of persons is inferior because of their gender, for the purpose or effect of:

¹ Dr. Dubravka Simonovic, Special Rapporteur on violence against women, Expert Group Meeting Report & Recommendations on violence against women in politics, 8-9 March 2018, page 5, <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/ViolenceAgainstWomeninPoliticsReport.pdf>

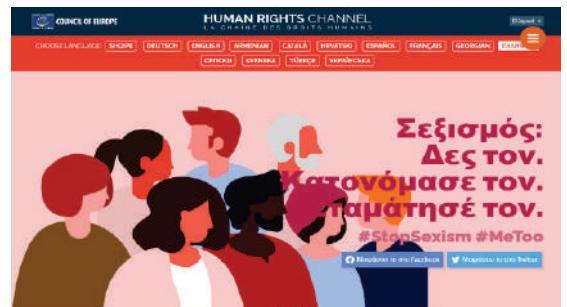
² Expert Group Meeting Report & Recommendations on violence against women in politics, 8-9 March 2018, Page 5, <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/ViolenceAgainstWomeninPoliticsReport.pdf>

³ Council of Europe, Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)1 adopted by the Committee of Ministers, of the Council of Europe, 27 March 2019, available at <https://rm.coe.int/cm-rec-2019-1-on-preventing-and-combating-sexism/168094d894>, Also translated (informally) in Greek, at <https://rm.coe.int/16809e17ab>

- Infringement of the inherent dignity or rights of a person or group of persons;
- resulting in physical, sexual, psychological or socio-economic harm or pain to a person or group of persons;
- creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, degrading or offensive environment;
- being an obstacle to the autonomy and full realization of human rights by a person or group of persons;
- maintaining and reinforcing gender stereotypes

In the context of combating sexism even carries out the campaign [Sexism: See it. Name it. Stop it](#) which is even available in 13 languages, including Greek.

In addition to providing more general information about sexism, this campaign also includes a number of materials that helps identify and address it.



Are you sexist? Take the **'test'** to find out??

Sexism, like racism, implies a hierarchy-based system that argues that one gender is superior to the other, and always means favouring one group at the expense of another. Sexism is the activities or behaviours that discriminate against people solely on the basis of their gender.

Linguistic sexism is the practice of discriminating against a person on the basis of gender reflected in language use and behaviour. Sexism is not limited to verbal expressions, but can also be evident in the form of daily discrimination through everyday expressions sending derogatory or disparaging messages based on gender.⁴

Often and sometimes "humour" is being used as a vehicle to present violence against women as normal and incitement. Sexism is based on "jokes", in an essentially complicated way that perceives women as minorities without taking any responsibility for this exception.

Some common sexist expressions, which is essentially negatively gendered are "whining like a woman", "boy hair", "woman's work", "you're acting like a woman", etc.

⁴ Mills, S. (2008), Language and Sexism. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 192.

It is common for women in positions of power to accept linguistic sexism or sexism in general, as they consider it a sign of weakness if they **denounce it**. It is as if suddenly a general weakness has been revealed in public, which they have embraced because of stereotypes from birth.⁵ We often use words which, without our understanding, promote the distinction between men and women.

According to definitions of sexism or sexual racism, **sexism emerges when vocal or physical practices aim at insulting or underestimating a person on the basis of sex, gender or sexual orientation**⁶. The discussion about sexism usually focuses on **practices that prioritize biological or social characteristics of gender, over other characteristics that are more significant in relation to one's professional identity or personality**. Although, sexism is usually thought to be something **obvious**, there are also cases where sexism is covert or latent sexism.

Covert sexism is usually considered deliberate and includes references that contribute to unfair judgments about women (or persons of non-heterosexual orientation) that are possibly recognizable but not obvious.

Covert sexism is definitely different than **latent sexism**, a form of sexism that is not necessarily obvious or intended (e.g. compliments) but in many cases the two are confused. The following headlines from the Greek Press, maybe classified as latent sexism, which although not intending to degrade women, seems to contribute to unfair judgments based on women's gender.⁷

- *'56 pairs of heels under the Parliament's benches'*
- *'A woman without issues celebrates her birthday and reveals her age'*
(about an M.P. and former minister)

b. Power relations among women and men

Sexism **is** linked to power and its exponents consider women inferior to men and believe that this should be reflected in society, language, rights and law (*Mediterranean Institute for Social Gender Studies, 2009*).⁸

⁵ Bregianni Katerina, Gendered inequalities and sexism in the MEDIA industry, Dawn, PRINT EDITION, Published: 10 June 2018 15:30, available at: <http://Www.avgi.Gr/article/10838/8956353/emphyles-anisotetes-kai-sexismos-Ste-biomechania-Ton-mme>, access on 2/7/2020.

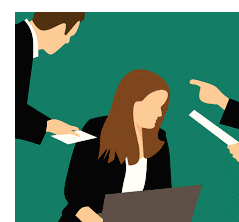
⁶ Vetterling-Braggin, Mary (ed.) (1981). *Sexist Language: A Modern Philosophical Analysis*. Littlefield, Adams.

⁷ Swim, J.K., Mallett, R. & Stangor, C. Understanding Subtle Sexism: Detection and Use of Sexist Language. *SexRoles* 51, p.p. 117–128 (2004).

⁸ Moschovakou Nausika, Lina Hatziantoniou. K.E.TH.I. Ed. (2018). Guide to the Media on the Elimination of Sexism and Gender Discrimination. Research Center for Equality Issues: K.E.TH.I.

- Sexism or sexual racism is the practice through which people are degraded based on their gender (*General Secretariat for Gender Equality, 2014*).
- Sexism is the practices by which one promotes sex when this is not the most important characteristic.⁹
- "Practices where one puts gender in the spotlight when this is not the most remarkable characteristic".¹⁰
- "A system of oppression based on gender differences, involving cultural and political policies and practices, as well as the beliefs and actions of individuals" (Shorter-Gooden, 2004).
- It's a question of power that makes women weak (Glasser, 2017).

Gender mediation theory¹¹ refers mainly to the field of politics and is based on the assumption that the way policy is presented is determined by a male-oriented agenda that premiums the exercise of politics as a "male" hypothesis¹², therefore, it supports the status quo (male as a norm¹³) and regards female politicians as exceptions.¹⁴ Moreover, «different thematic coverage is another way of distinguishing between women and male» politicians¹⁵.



- Reference to a female politician **by her first** name and without references to the status: "Mr. SMITH, Member of Parliament..." while "tell us MARY".¹⁶

According to surveys, when politicians are used as sources of information or when presented in the news it is customary to refer to the authority by their name and status and then to refer briefly only by last name, as this gives them credibility and validity. Such opinions are made in more cases to male politicians than to women.

Available at: https://kethi.gr/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/%CE%9F%CE%94%CE%97%CE%93%CE%9F%CE%A3_mme_publ.pdf

⁹ Vetterling-Braggin, Mary (ed.) (1981). *Sexist Language: A Modern Philosophical Analysis*. Littlefield, Adams.

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ Moschovakou Nausika, Lina Hatziantoniou. K.E.T.H.I. Ed. (2018).

¹² Ross, K., & Sreberny, A. (2000). Women in the House: Media representation of British politicians. In A. Sreberny & L. van Zoonen (Eds.), *Gender, politics and communication* (pp. 79–99). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press

¹³ Sreberny-Mohammadi, Annabelle, and Karen Ross. "Women MPs and the media: representing the body politic." *Parliamentary Affairs*, vol. 49, no. 1, 1996, p. 103+. Gale Academic OneFile, Access 2 July 201 2020.

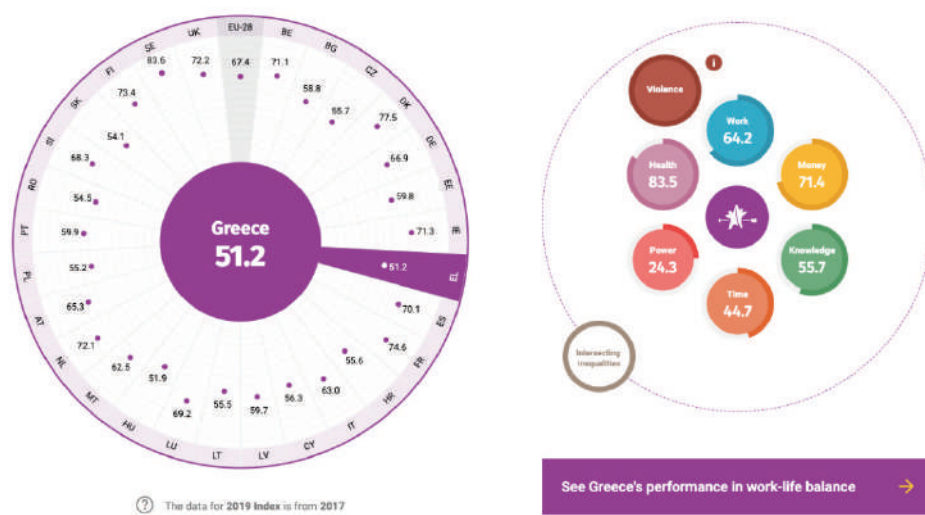
¹⁴ Alan Peter, David Cutts, And Rosie Campbell (2014), "Measuring the Quality of Politicians Elected by Gender Quotas – Are there Any Different?" *Political Studies*. Available Network, September 2014. Doi: 10.1111/1467-9248.12161 | Campbell, X.M. (2014), *Gendered Mediation: A Continued Disadvantage to Female Politicians*, Department of Political Science, Montreal: McGill University.

¹⁵ Rakow, L. F., & Kranich, K. (1991). Women as sign in television news. *Journal of Communication*, 41, 8–23.

¹⁶The surname and name are randomly selected.

Also, female politicians receive less media coverage and their coverage is more personified and in a more negative tone.¹⁷

In Greece, women have for more than three decades been engaging with national and regional politics, business and the media industry. Nevertheless, there is still a gap in what concerns the nature of the positions women occupy within the public sphere, the nature of the responsibilities in the household and the nature of the jobs they are employed for. **The European average regarding equality issues** is according to the EIGE index **67,4, while the percentage of integration in Greece is 52.1.**



EIGE index: Data about Greece. Source: EIGE (2019)

Greece can be seen almost at the bottom of the list of EU members in what concerns the number of women who hold a position of power (24,3). If one looks at the particular angles of this category, those concerning political, social and economic positions, it becomes clearer that there are inherent issues of inequality and under-representation of women in fields traditionally assumed to be masculine. According to the same data¹⁸, **17,2% and 18,4% of women respectively engage in politics at a national level and 20,9% at the regional level.** Furthermore, it is only in a **few cases that women are offered ministerial positions.** And there are even fewer cases where women are offered ministerial positions that are traditionally considered male, such as those of a minister of foreign affairs, a minister of public safety, or a minister of finance.

More specifically, although in recent years Greece has managed to record a positive trend in the affirmation and promotion of women in politics, the recent (2019) **parliamentary elections have turned the clock a few years back in terms of**

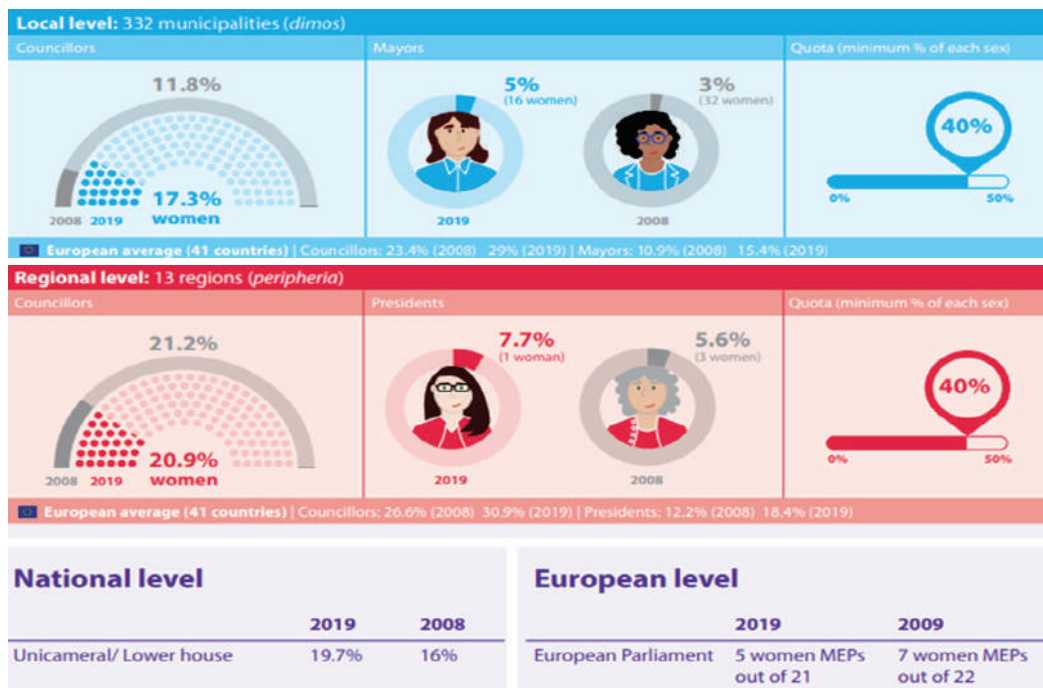
¹⁷Alan Peter, David Cutts, And Rosie Campbell (2014).

¹⁸ EIGE (2019). *Gender Equality Index: Greece*. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2019/EL>

women's political participation: 61 MP's (approximately 19,7%) out of **300** were elected in total. Moreover, in the May 2019 **European elections**, out of the total number of **21** seats in the European Parliament allocated to Greece, only **5** were filled by women (**about 23.8%**).¹⁹

At the level of Local Government, again, in positions of responsibility in this field their representation appears limited. Specifically, in the Municipal & Regional elections of 2019, to a total of **332 Municipalities** and **13 Regions**, **19** female mayors (**about 5.7%**) and only **one** female Regional Governor were elected.

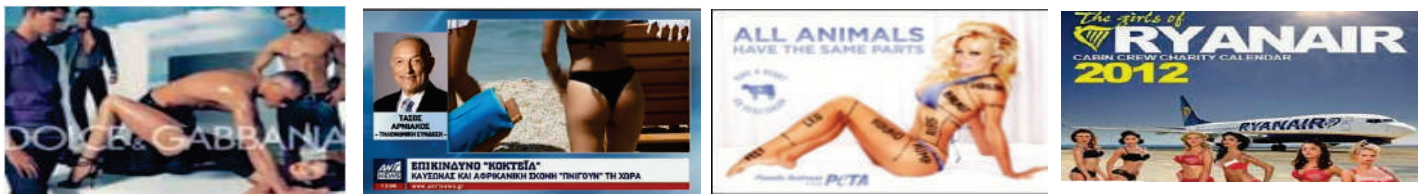
The figure below describes the percentages and changes in women's participation in politics as elected over the past 10 years - at local, regional and national level, revealing a positive change -although small- in women's participation in politics from 2008-2019. It is observed that even with the **recent minimum 40% ballot quota system (Law 4604/2019)**, the increase of participation percentage has been between 2-5%. In addition, it is remarkable both socially and historically, as this decade was characterized by a **deep crisis**, that at the level of local government the participation rates of women increased, at the national level they decreased.



¹⁹ Research Center on Equality Issues- Advisory Center of Syros, Women and Politics in Greece, Tuesday, June 25th, 2019, available at: <https://www.koinignomi.gr/news/politiki/2019/06/25/gynaikes-kai-politiki-stin-ellada.html>

In the **media industry**, although women today are offered more positions of power than before, especially after the media deregulation of the 1990s, the numbers are still low in comparison to the positions held by men (e.g. CEO, news director, editor-in-chief, marketing director).

The same seems to go for those that work in the media industry as journalists: although some women work as lead newscasters, a few of them work as war or finance reporters, while they are mostly chosen for lifestyle shows, as health reporters or celebrity news journalists.



c. Objectification

The issue and concerns about women's objectification draw upon the theoretical and political agenda of the second feminist movement.²⁰ Part of the discussion about women's position in the workspace and the public sphere more broadly, also concerned issues of **women's representation in the media, advertising and popular culture.**²¹

Within this context, discussions about what counts as a realistic and authentic female body emerged, leading to theoretical discussions and concerns about how audiences (and primarily men) perceive them (**male gaze**). The issue of **objectification** arose as a result of those concerns, having mostly to do with the assumption that audiences (especially men) would consume the female body merely as an object and in certain circumstances (advertising, popular culture, pornography) as a sexual object (Carson, 2006).

²⁰ Thornnham, S. (2006). Second Wave Feminism. In S. Gamble (ed) *The Routledge Companion to Feminism and Postfeminism*. London & New York: Routledge, pp. 25-35

²¹ Segal, L., & McIntosh, M. (Eds.). (1993). *Sex exposed: Sexuality and the pornography debate*. Rutgers University Press.

Historically, the social construction of women included narratives about youth, sexiness, femininity and aesthetics; such narratives inevitably inform anxieties and concerns about how the female body is perceived in representations in the public sphere. Such concerns have found firm ground in cases of offensive and discriminatory behaviour within Greek politics:

A member of the parliament (man) posted the following Facebook comment about a former minister (woman): 'I like this chick. Kisses baby! Don't listen to anybody, go on, keep going, do the right job'. The comment referred to a photograph of the minister's backside, taken in the parliament by one of the largest news agencies in Greece.

Examples of this sort illustrate sexuality as one of the defining characteristics of womanhood and femininity; to take the argument a bit further, **in such innuendos underlie narratives about women's role as to please the male gaze or fulfill male sexual pleasure.** Interestingly enough, there are cases of women journalists/columnists who -in their pieces- discuss women in politics (or women in positions of power) as textiles or as rooms of a house. Overall, there is a quite wide range of cases like the aforementioned, where the representation of women in the context of their **appearance** (e.g. facial characteristics, dressing style), **body characteristics** (e.g. slim, juicy, sexy etc) or **youth** (e.g. young/old) **draws to a great extent upon elements that possibly contribute to a certain objectification of the female body.**

d. Gender stereotypes

The word **stereotype** refers to the **perceptions** we have as a result of **prejudices** against **individuals, groups** and **ideas**. That is, they are a set of beliefs about the personal characteristics of a group of people, which, however, do not always correspond to reality. In relation to gender, gender stereotypes are the perceptions we have and the attitudes we adopt, regarding the identity of men and women.

Does this seem "stereotypical" to you?

Women are gentle, tender and sensitive.

Men are dynamic, rational and determined.

Men do not cry, they do not show emotion

Gender stereotypes are schematic and universal representations that attribute characteristics supposedly "natural" to women and men.

Gender stereotypes are simplified, of social origin, persistent, subjective, which are transmitted from generation to generation.

Gender stereotypes have a "justification" role: they justify our behaviour and the social system or the behaviour of a social group in which we recognize ourselves.²²

Women, like men, are not a homogeneous group. There are women and men from different groups, ages, social or educational level, nationalities, with different sexual orientations, different concerns and motivations. There are female entrepreneurs, unemployed women, women working at home, women working in research and female senior executives. There are women and men with immigrant backgrounds or women and men belonging to vulnerable groups, etc. Gender stereotypes not only contribute to maintaining the current situation in the roles of women and men, but also promote an **asymmetric 'vision'** for women and men in the society.²³

In addition, gender stereotypes **reflect social and cultural roles within culture and society, of both women and men.** In many cases, women politicians or those who engage with public affairs more broadly, are framed via discourses that reflect gender-specific social and cultural roles: 'a mother and a politician', 'a mother and a candidate', 'elegant but also smart', 'mother, wife and businesswoman', 'celebrities but primarily mothers'.

The roles of motherhood, of the good wife or of the authentic female, appear rather often in press, discussing those women's political or other public roles, thereby reproducing certain stereotypical social and cultural traits of women and men:

'New borns in the parliament- [a woman M.P.] becomes a mum for the second time'

'The Parliament's future mum'

In the 2018 Best Practice Guide for the Media, produced by the National Research Center for Gender Equality (K.E.TH.I.) **one third of the Press references to women who engage in politics reflected gender stereotypes, related to women's social and cultural roles** of the sort mentioned in this report, reproducing in effect well established gender stereotypes.²⁴ Along similar lines, a project conducted by the faculty of Communication and Media Studies within the Gender Public Debate project, reports that in many cases of media content where women in politics

²² Moschovakou Nausika, Lina Hatziantoniou. K.E.TH.I. Ed. (2018).

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ Moschovakou Nausika, Lina Hatziantoniou. K.E.TH.I. Ed. (2018).

appear, they are discussed through criteria of **appearance, partnership (wife) or motherhood** which are clearly prioritized over their **skills in politics or their profession**. Out of the **six TV channels and total of 47 shows studied**, the women discussed were framed through certain, well-established gender-specific social roles.

The maintenance of gender stereotypes and the internal culture of **many political parties**, characterized by the prevailing "male" leadership profile, continue to be an obstacle to equal representation. **Leadership positions are traditionally occupied mainly by men.**

The characteristics and abilities that leaders are expected to possess — such as imposition, superiority or rational thinking — are considered typical male characteristics, so leadership is often associated with men. **Gender stereotypes are also reflected in the allocation of ministerial portfolios and senior management positions to ministries.** Men dominate portfolios related to basic state functions, such as defence, justice and foreign policy, while **women mainly take over ministries with social-cultural functions**, thereby reinforcing the stereotype that they are more suitable for areas such as education, health and culture.²⁵

In a related excerpt broadcast on public television, namely ERT, on a show titled "Young Women Dare in Politics" in the year of elections (2019), the invited are three female polar candidates who make their appearance for screening before the upcoming elections. During the broadcast the journalist constantly makes comments about the age of politicians, about their marital status, and indeed the journalist mentions that this candidate is working 'in company', and adds 'why do you want to get involved in politics', then he goes on saying 'why would a woman of your age get involved in such a difficult road that is overexert exposure'. The ladies were trying with examples from their lives to bring the floor back to political targeting but the journalist insists 'why try politics rather than stay in another position from which you can (just) keep track of developments'. At another point, while presented as politicians, the image of "mom" appears very strongly as one of the guests was in the last months of her pregnancy and is even asked what is her husband's attitude to her political endeavour.

e. Sexist speech

Sexist speech includes comments or characterizations about a person, on the basis of sex, gender or sexual orientation. Such comments usually refer to ones' **looks** (e.g. **beautiful woman, sexy lady, elegant looks**), **youth** (e.g. **young girl, young woman, gal, girl**) or **sexuality** (e.g. **hot girl, special preferences, cougar, real woman**) or about their choices when appearing in the public sphere (e.g. **comments on dressing**

²⁵ Gender equality in European Institute for Gender Equality (Political Decisions)

style, comparisons with clothes, textiles or home accessories, animals etc). In many cases, judgments that might be classified as sexist, such as the above, may be meant as compliments, according to those who express them.

The discussion about sexism usually focuses on **practices that prioritize biological or social characteristics of gender, over other characteristics that are more significant in relation to one's professional identity or personality.** Although, sexism is usually thought to be something **obvious** and **linguistic**, there are also cases where sexism is **covert** or **latent**.

There are many examples of sexist speech in the Greek media targeting political female figures. There is a frequent tendency to comment on the outfit, the colour of the garment and the length of the dress or the colour of the shoes while there is almost no reference to the policy itself.

Examples of sexist headlines which appeared on Greek printed or television media include: ²⁶

- *High heels, selfies and condolences: Everything that took place during the inauguration of the Parliament*
- *Fashion trends at the festivities for Greek Democracy*
- *Relationships of rage for the president's women*
- *Rivalry about high heels*
- *Anti-Memorandum two-piece suit and Gucci*
- *Shut up, you little garter!*
- *Wildcat, the companion of Hollande*
- *First lady without Prada*
- *Obama's selfie and Michelle's jealousy*
- *The lacy revealing bustier that made her Turkish interlocutor cross and stutter*
- *The Boukharas and the Iron Lady in Louboutin heels*

f. Gender discrimination in the media and in public discourse

Gender equality is a fundamental principle of EU law that applies to all areas of social life. EU countries shall designate the bodies responsible for promoting, analyzing and supervising the principle of equal treatment, as well as ensuring compliance with Community law and providing independent support to victims of discrimination²⁷. Article 2 of Directive 2000/43/EC and Article 2 of Directive

²⁶ Free headline translation from Greek.

²⁷ Eur-lex.europa.eu. 2020. EUR-Lex - C10940 - EN - EUR-Lex. Available on the website: <<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/El/Txt/?Uri=LEGISSUM%3Ac10940>> [Access 2 July 2020].

2000/78/EC **prohibit all forms of discrimination** on one of the grounds referred to in Article 1. The basic conditions relating to gender discrimination are:

- **'direct discrimination'**: where one person is treated less favorably on grounds of sex than another is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation:
-A job advert aimed only at people of one gender²⁸
- **'indirect discrimination'** where an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice would put persons of one sex at a particular disadvantage compared with persons of the other sex, unless that provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim, and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary:
-The connection, for example, of certain types of benefits with criteria such as marital status, the concept of head of the family or 'protector of the family'.
-A company offers its employees courses for their vocational training during afternoon hours.
- **'(sexual) harassment'** where any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature occurs, with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment:
-Pressure to enter into sexual relations, phone calls within and outside working hours, text messages, confessions, and so on.
- **'relationship discrimination'** is the least favourable treatment of a person because of his close relationship with a person or persons with specific characteristics:
-Undesirable behaviour equivalent to harassment related to the disability of the child whose primary care the provider is.

Candidates for...Kissing

Is it just a compliment?

In a morning TV broadcast, the title was "**Candidates in the Local Government Elections for... Kissing**".

The journalist quoted "we invite you more often to the show because the studio is beautified".

²⁸ Unless justified by Law.

- **'discrimination on grounds of thought characteristics'** means the least favourable treatment of a person because he is presumed to possess specific characteristics of colour, race, national or ethnic origin, etc.
-A person is not invited in an interview or discussion to participate due to specific characteristic.
- **'multiple discrimination'** means any discrimination, exclusion or restriction, against a person, based on more than one of the above grounds.
-e.g. a woman, Roma, elderly, with a disability.
- **'refusal of reasonable adjustments'** for persons with disabilities or chronic diseases shall be understood as discrimination, and on the contrary "reasonable adjustments" shall mean the necessary and appropriate amendments, arrangements and appropriate measures, necessary in a particular case, to ensure the principle of equal treatment, which do not impose a disproportionate or unjustified burden on the employer²⁹.
-e.g. of reasonable adjustments: Installing a disabled ramp to facilitate access to the workplace.

Equal treatment is a fundamental right in the European Union. It is illegal to discriminate on the grounds of a person's gender, age, disability, racial or ethnic origin, religion, belief or sexual orientation.

In addition, it is worth mentioning that legislation has been adopted to ensure that women and men receive equal treatment in the field of work. All EU countries have an obligation to adopt these equality rules. EU countries must also comply with these rules.³⁰ These laws cover a range of areas, including equal treatment when applying for a job, equal treatment in the workplace, protection of pregnant workers and breastfeeding mothers, maternity leave and parental leave.³¹

Still, according to the World Media Observatory, women make up only **24%** of people hosted in traditional media (newspapers, television, radio) and **26%** of people hosted online.

²⁹Opengov.gr. 2020. Article 02 – The Concept of Discrimination | Ministry of Justice. Available at: <<http://www.opengov.gr/ministryofjustice/?p=6737>> [access July 1, 2020].

³⁰Ec.europa.eu. 2020. Tackling Discrimination at Work - Employment, Social Affairs and Social Inclusion - European Commission. Available at: <<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=158&langId=el>> [access July 1, 2020].

³¹ For more information on this, see Synigoros.gr. 2020. Legislation | Equal treatment. Available at: <<https://www.synigoros.gr/?i=equality.el.ifnomos>> [access July 1, 2020]. And in the relevant Laws 4443 GG I 232/9.12.2016, 4097 GG A' 235/3.12.2012, 3896 GG A'207/8.12.2010, 3769 GG A'105/01.07.2009, 3655 GG A 58/3.4.2008, 3528 GG I 26/ 9.2.2007.

The percentage of **stories** about women has been stable since 2000; only **10%** were stories that focused on them, while only **3%** of traditional media are clearly concerned with gender stereotypes.

In terms of careers, women make up 18% in the category "government - politician - minister" and 67% in the category "housewife - parent".

In newspapers, radio and television, women make up **18%** of commentators, **23%** of speakers and 28% of observers.

In Greece, regarding the content of media articles, gender **inequality** has been noted by relevant surveys, revealing that:

- **31.5%** of articles reproduce gender **stereotypes**,
- **12.4%** of articles challenge gender **stereotypes**,
- **59.6%** of articles reproducing gender stereotypes have been written by women,
- **27%** of the articles did not highlight the gender **dimension** of the subject even though it was possible to do so,
- **13.5%** of articles show incidents of **gender-based violence**³² while
- **52.9%** of these articles **do not** show their **gender dimension**.³³

Women belonging to certain groups, such as young women, politicians, journalists or public figures, are targets of sexist behaviour. Sexism occurs not only in formal but also in informal interactions between people in everyday life, in workplaces, sports, entertainment, in public viewing areas, in the media, etc. Most of the time it's small things that are said or done based on gender stereotypes. **Everyday sexism is often invisible and often accepted.** The usual reaction is to skip it without reacting. Perhaps most of the time it is not certain that the comment is about stereotypes that have to do with sex or sexism or even to consider that the comment is **too small to make a fuss**, leaving it to pass so that it continues to be not controlled.

According to the Council of Europe:

- **63%** of **female** journalists have suffered verbal **violence**
- **Men** account for **75%** of Europe's sources of **information and news**
- **58%** of women elected to **Parliament** have been the target of sexist **attacks** on social **networks**

According to the 2015 World Media Observatory report, only 4% of stories presented by the media question gender stereotypes.

³² Research by the Centre for Research on Equality Issues (KETHI) through 1,528 articles

³³ Bregianni Katerina, Dawn, 2018.

The K.E.TH.I. survey (2018) on the relationship between the Media and gender discrimination showed that: ³⁴

- **16.3%** of articles **do** not present **female** politicians on the basis of their status or profession
- In 17% of articles, female politicians are called by their first name
- **9.5%** of articles on female politicians **refer** to a male **relative of** theirs
- In **23.7%** of articles presenting women in a field, they are called by **their** first name

Given that women generally look after young children and at home in EU countries, society seems to be burdened by a series of prejudices and processes of political and economic stereotypes about women. Let's keep the following:

*-Even articles showing women distinguished in a field refer to motherhood **(25%)** and their role as spouses and housewives. **(20.5%)***

*-When articles present "everyday" women, they are often referred to by their first name **(33%)**, while references to motherhood **(21.3%)** and their role as housewives **(20.2%)** as well as to a male relative **(22.3%)** are common.*

*-Women politicians are projected more by the media **post-election (69.1%)** than in pre-election periods **(47.5%)**. However, in 24.9% of post-election articles, i.e. since women have occupied a political position, their mental and professional skills are presented in a derogatory way.*

*-In **21.3%** of articles, the mental or professional skills of women politicians are **somehow underestimated**.*

g. Advertising- political advertising

In political advertising the conventions of commercial advertisements emerge; in many cases, women candidates appear as mothers or grandmothers, as real/authentic women, as young and beautiful, while their identities as citizens, politicians or professionals are to a great extent marginalized. Gender representation in political advertisements following certain conventions of well-established narratives about gender appears to run through different cultures, according to academics. ³⁵ It is important though to highlight that **women in politics, are also representing themselves through such narratives about womanhood.**



³⁴ Moschovakou Nausika, Lina Hatziantoniou. K.E.TH.I. Ed. (2018).

Such cases where women define themselves via motherhood or via their husbands are frequently used in political marketing and advertisements in Greece. They nevertheless, contribute as well in **reproducing gender stereotypes to such an extent that the political role and activity of those women is further underestimated.**

h. Underrepresentation of women

In general, especially in pre-election periods the media is quite careful about who and who they call to the panels. But it is quite common for women to be under-represented. This characteristic is particularly real in political life. In the aforementioned study by the Kapodistrian University, although there were broadcasts in which only women were invited, in the vast majority of broadcasts **the ratio of men to women is 3 to 1.**

Under-representation of women in elected office will remain a real problem unless more young women are encouraged to engage in politics.

Measures such as **mentoring, education programmes, public campaigns and professional networking** can make a significant contribution to encouraging more women to run for office and preparing them for a political career. The European Union has taken important steps to ensure gender equality and more specifically the participation of women on the political scene.³⁶

Political parties have a primary role in determining the quantity and quality of opportunities for women to participate in party politics. Women's opportunities to take leadership positions also depend on the process of selecting and approving members. In addition, political parties decide on the prioritization of candidates in electoral combinations and tied combinations (lists) of constituencies, as well as in party structures.

What measures are being taken to improve gender balance? According to the EIGE survey findings, the largest increase in the number of women in politics since 2003 occurred on average in Member States with mandatory or optional quotas with little

³⁵ Carson, F. (2006). Feminism and the body. In S. Gamble (ed) *The Routledge Companion to Feminism and Post-feminism*. London & New York: Routledge, pp. 94-102

³⁶ Despina Tunta, Under-representation women in the European Parliament, 6 November 2019, International and European Affairs Group | IPC, available at: <https://odeth.eu/%CE%B7-%CF%85%CF%80%CE%BF%CE%B5%CE%BA%CF%80%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%83%CF%8E%CF%80%CE%B7%CF%83%CE%B7-%CF%84%CF%89%CE%BD-%CE%B3%CF%85%CE%BD%CE%B1%CE%B9%CE%BA%CF%8E%CE%BD-%CF%83%CF%84%CE%BF-%CE%B5%CF%85%CF%81/>

on average growth over the last decade. Quotas are just one measure to improve gender balance. Nevertheless, on their own they are not enough.

EIGE identified a number of good practices for training and empowering more women with the skills needed for political careers in a more diverse and representative environment.³⁷

Targeted measures and initiatives: It is noted that mandatory legislative or voluntary measures implemented by political parties increase women's participation in decision-making.

Regular monitoring: An important element is monitoring developments and assessing the success of initiatives.

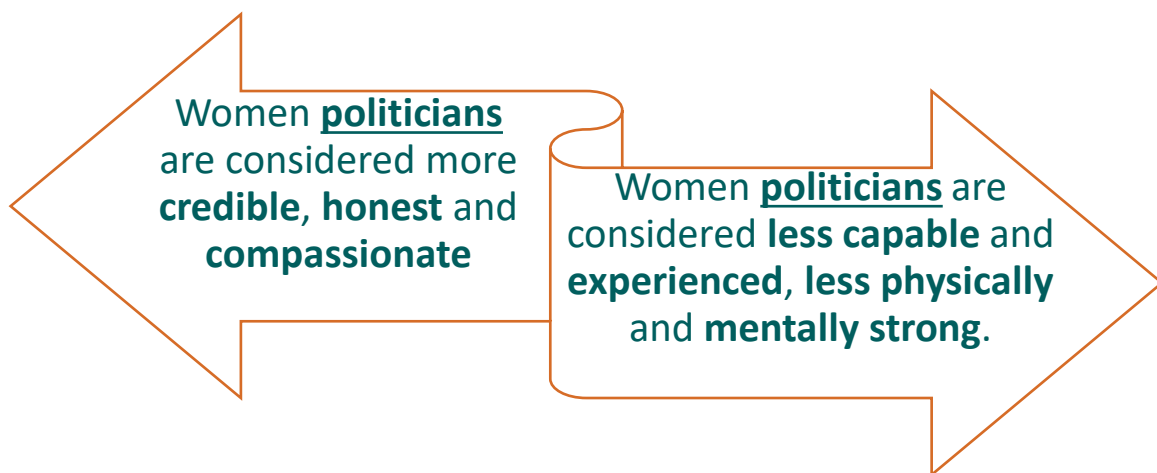
The extent to which women candidates or politicians appear in the media is a lot smaller than their male counterparts. This is a lot related to the smaller numbers of women that participate in politics both at a national and a regional level. However, in the recent study conducted by the faculty of Communication and Media Studies (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens) within the Gender Public Debate project, women appeared in less than expected instances in news magazines and TV news. In fact, of the **47 shows** analyzed during 2015-2019, where women politicians or candidates appeared, only 13 were related to young women in politics and 15 to gender-related issues. Respectively, in some cases, women politicians were invited because the discussion revolved around issues of their political responsibility (e.g. ministers, representatives etc).

Apart from those cases though, in many instances and primarily during election periods, **women candidates appear in lifestyle and morning shows**, possibly in an attempt to reach out to the female electorate.

In a 2019 TV morning show broadcast featuring an elected M.P. the screen read: "I didn't change my clothing for the sake of the Parliament. I took out all the classical outfits I had and I am combining!"

³⁷ European Institute for Gender Equality, Gender Equality in Political Decision-Making, available at https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/2016.1523_mh0116064eln_pdfweb_20170511_095719.pdf

Cases such as shown above, confirm the extent to which women in politics and those engaging with public affairs more broadly, **are primarily discussed in the context of being mothers, wives or partners, and less through their political role.** Media but also women who play a political role in the public sphere take for granted the fact that they are defined via their male partners, their roles as mothers or the performance of 'femininity', thereby reproducing such gender stereotypes.



*Is there a paradox?*³⁸

It is also important to see how **visible** women are as **guests in political discussions.** What is their role, which position is given to them, how long are they allowed / asked to talk, which are the questions they are called upon to ask. These are just as important as the quantitative question of how many women are actually guests in TV panels.

Kirsten Gomard's Danish study showed that men journalists, who chair such panels, also control them at the expense of women guests; at the same time, men colleagues of the female guests also form barriers to women expressing their opinions.³⁹ A first glance to such talks on Greek television shows the unequal distribution of time, favorable placement, and number of gender representatives. Gomard's study also reveals the ways in which women manage to face and thwart such obstructions. Apart from that, it shows that women journalists do not monopolize TV time, but offer the change to talk equally to the 'stronger' and the 'weaker' guest.

³⁸ Ditonto, Hamilton & Redlawsk, 2013

³⁹ Gomard, Kirsten, 2001, 'Political Debates on Danish TV: Negotiating Political Competence and Gender', *Nora: Nordic Journal of Women's Studies*, vol 9, issue 2, 107-112.

A 2015 study of 114 countries showed that only 24% of the news sources are women.⁴⁰ From the 45,402 who were questioned in interviews, to use in 22,136 stories, only a 24% of the questioned were women. The women who were questioned had to answer about their personal experience, about things they were witnesses to or about their opinion as part of popular opinion. In a study that spanned ten years from 2004 to 2015, women were only asked as experts in a percentage of 19%.

Function in the news	Female	Male
Personal Experience	38%	62%
Popular Opinion	37%	63%
Eyewitness	30%	70%
Subject of the story	26%	74%
Spokesperson	20%	80%
Expert or commentator	19%	81%

Typology of news subjects and sources by sex. Image: GMMP, 2015

Women are also less ‘visible’ in news that are political and economic – they are more visible in those that deal with science and health. Issues that need more space in printed media and more time in broadcasting media have fewer women in them.⁴¹

Drawing upon such instances, we recommend that there is a need for **media stakeholders to prioritize women’s political skills, role and practices over their appearance or social and personal life**; most importantly though we recommend that the media should **offer the same opportunities to women to appear and have a voice as it happens with men.**

⁴⁰ Maharia, Sarah, and Burke, Marcus, 2020, March, 2, ‘Just 24% of News Sources are Women. Here’s Why that’s a problem’, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/03/women-representation-in-media/>

⁴¹ Ibid.

Address it!

II. Techniques and tools to counteract sexism in journalism and the media

a. Changing the story / reversal

One of the techniques you can use is that of **reversal**. As mentioned earlier, it may be suggested that the politician's job is not appropriate for a woman, because she escapes the realm of the private and enters the realm of the public. In this case you can attack old-fashioned narratives, especially in cases where the public has "learned" to see stereotypes. The presentation of women only by their first name refers to the sphere of private, intimate, family, which may result in their disparaging view as unfit to participate in public life.

If a journalist is not certain whether something is sexist, and in light of everyday sexism, it is a good technique to try and reverse what is said. Would it be said about a man? The Facebook profile "Man Who Has it All" attempts such reversals, with a sense of humor.⁴² Reversing stereotypes is a difficult and useful tool in general. The narrative that is dictated by the image of a 'damsel in distress', is dangerous socially and politically. We can instead, report about the strength of women, the emotional life of men, and the function of all sexes with the same terms, the same desires, abilities and potential.

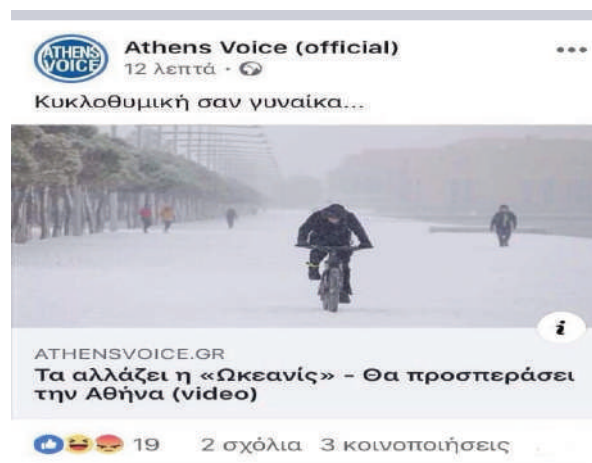


John Kavanaugh's public presence in the hearing about his candidacy for the Supreme Court is a good example of being overwhelmed by emotion. The image where he is crying angrily was viewed on the internet, but "if a woman did the same, they would reject her as hysterical and unworthy of attention."⁴³

⁴² @ManWhoHasItAll, 2016, *The Man Who Has It All: A Patronizing Parody of Self-Help Books for Women*, Sky Horse Publishing (e-Book).

⁴³ D' Antonio, Michael, 2018, September 28, 'Why Men Cry in Public', *CNN Opinion*, <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/09/27/opinions/kavanaugh-and-crying-men-dantonio/index.html> (accessed 1/9/2020).

Stereotypes can easily be about behavior, character, and not just appearances. Women seem to be stereotypically weaker than men, more fragile, but also moody. Being moody or hysterical,⁴⁴ indecisive, mad, are stereotypical characteristics that can eliminate just claims, right from the start, before they have a chance to be expressed fully. **Reversing this injustice**, the media can attest to the fact that the sentiment is not always a sign of weakness, just as logic is not always a sign of strength.



*A Greek newspaper that was reporting the weather, suggested on the 22 February 2019, that the weather is going to be moody as a woman.*⁴⁵

In the seminars of the Gender Public Debate project, a journalist suggested that there are no women entrepreneurs to cover in reporting, not as many as men. This is a view of the world that awards value to entrepreneurs – in a way of seeing those as professions with power. Yet there are other professions of value, worthy of being seen in the media public sphere. **A teacher teaching our children, women and professions that are not related with stereotypes of ‘success’**, can be promoted and be seen by the public, while at the same time creating an environment where sexism is downgraded.

b. The use of language / Communication techniques

The Greek language allows for the feminine to be used, in professions, positions, qualities. Important Greek feminist thinkers suggest that **the female forms of such**

⁴⁴ Tasca, C., Rapetti, M., and Carta, M.G., 2012, 'Women and Hysteria in the history of mental health', *Clinical Practice and Epidemiology in Mental Health*, 8: 110-119.

⁴⁵ Sultan, Hurrifem, 2019, Feb 28, "Moody as a woman", *Yes, you are a Misogynist*, <https://naieisaimisogynis.com/2019/02/28/kyklothymiki-san-gynaika/> (accessed 1/9/2020). Noticeably, the 'official' facebook profile of the newspaper hasn't changed this title (<https://www.facebook.com/AthensVoice/posts/10156452035397991>).

words can educate the public to accept the social and political role of women, and make it more visible.

Language reflects society and its way of thinking about the world. Thus, a language that makes women invisible is the hallmark of a society in which they play a supporting role. Because language is political, it has been directed towards the use of the male gender which has contained the female for several years by groups that opposed gender equality. Of course, in Greece in recent years there has been a coordinated effort to balance this distinction. A *systematization of the use of the female is* primarily *a matter of habit*. Giving weight to the use of the female gender in words such as *congresswoman* makes the woman visible.

In the spoken word:

- Use the words in female and male, in alphabetical **order**, as far as possible.

In the written word:

- Follow the instructions mentioned above, i.e., use both genders, either by entering the whole words (e.g. Congressional representative), or both endings (e.g. congressmen and congresswomen).
-

Some further techniques and tools:

- ✚ Eliminate all expressions that take place around your family, your age, your family or other privacy status, and the prominence of your gender. This is because these expressions refer women and men to traditional social roles. You can eliminate these expressions from all administrative documents, especially forms and mail.
-

"Madam Mayor"

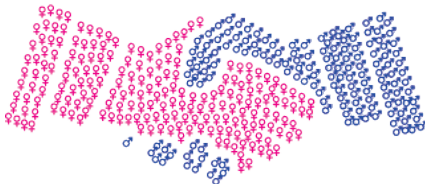
- ✚ The titles of grades, positions or functions exist or have been created in the Greek vocabulary. Otherwise you can "feminize" the post by adding before it the pronunciation "lady".
- ✚ Present yourself with your last name and office (or with your profession). Usually women tend to be presented by their first name and in their capacity as mothers, or spouses. In the case where a woman's name is used first and then the man is introduced by the last name, this contributes to discrimination.

- ✚ It is common to ask women who exercise responsibilities themselves how they manage (or not) to live a career and a family life. If this question is relevant to the spirit of the general debate, a corresponding question should also be addressed to men. Ask yourself why it's not done to a man and answer accordingly by claiming it!
-

"It concerns everyone"

- ✚ **Communication techniques** are related to the process of encoding and decoding the received message and are also related to the personality characteristics of people. **Communication takes place either through the spoken word, written speech, through signals and symbols, through expressions and gestures and through sound and of course by combining all of the above.** Non-verbal communication is one of the main components of communication, complemented by the content of the phrases and the voice itself.

c. Looking for allies against sexism



One of the issues that the **#MeToo** movement showed, was the way one woman speaking out can encourage others to do the same, creating a unity that is valuable in the public sphere.

The Gender Public Debate Project seminars also demonstrated, via the narration of life experiences of the people who took part in them that both men helping women against sexism, and women finding allies in other women and men, can aid against a sexist media environment.



Practical tips against sexism in the media: at a glance

- ! **When covering a story, we make women visible, even if they don't shout or demand it.** Good journalism is promoted with attention in the content of the inputs, not the way they put their positions. Same time and chances to speak, equals good stories.
- ! **We change the narrative I:** The 'damsel in distress narrative, no longer works. We promote stories of men with sentiments and kindness, and of women who don't need to be saved.
- ! **We change the narrative II:** We don't accept stereotypes of values, either: feelings and sentiment are not indicators of weakness, and logic is not necessarily an indicator of strength. Having power does not mean one has the right, either – remember the fine lines between stereotypes and reality.
- ! In difficult cases such as the covering of femicide, we cover the stories with deep analyses of what happened. One way is to use Essed's ⁴⁶three-fold analysis: **what is the situation as it happened, what was the context in that specific time, and what is the broader social context.** This can help avoid stigmatizing the victim.
- ! **We find allies against sexism.** When we protest, when we note sexism, when we need to address it, it is important to find other people, for moral and other support. We are not alone.
- ! **We give special media attention to the education of children.** Efforts to educate about equality in choosing games and toys, in choosing ways to play, are important. Creativity is a characteristic of all sexes, as does the need for adventure.
- ! **We use inclusive language.** The tendency / recommendations of Greek feminist thought is different in Greek than in English, i.e, to use female nouns

⁴⁶ Essed, Philomena, n.d., Towards a Methodology to Identify Converging Forms of Everyday Discrimination, *United Nations* (un.org), <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/essed45.htm> (accessed 1/9/2020)

for professions (because of the different structure of the two languages), but the task is the same – to include women when we speak.

- ! **We look for women experts, to include in our reporting.** As Ruth Bader Ginsburg showed, having a percentage is not enough; we need the change of the attitude of the public, and accepting women should be asked about important, political and economic issues, brings their actual role in society forward.

III. Advice for women exposed to public debate

If you are a candidate, or elected, or more generally if you are exposed to public debate, whether it concerns the Media or conferences, speeches and so on, consider the following tips if you are discriminated against on the grounds of your gender:

- 1. *Appreciate the situation calmly and practice your confrontational and dissuasive reaction***
-

If you receive a comment about your body or gender characteristics, then you can respond by saying that this comment is inappropriate.

- 2. *Speak openly and declare that you are interrupted when you are "protected" by implying that you are powerless to manage the conversation***
-

Perhaps at that moment it will seem redeeming, especially if indeed your interlocutor on the other side has bombarded you with questions and comments and does not let you breathe if another interlocutor, journalist, etc., takes your place and helps you by saying 'don't bombard everyone with such questions'.

More generally, if you're interrupted, that's where you should insist. State that it is not polite to interrupt, especially when time is limited.

- 3. *Use arguments when you're being blamed for your feelings***
-

In a public discussion, if someone declares that you are emotional or hysterical you should bring them back into the conversation, using arguments that they cannot base on your emotional world.

- 4. *Recommend your status when someone refers to you with a diminutive***
-

It is very common for women, especially if they are young in age to address someone with adjectives and submissive but it tends, especially in public discourse, to reduce the position of the person to whom it is addressed.

- 5. *Report directly the comment made because of your gender***
-

Sometimes, the right move is to immediately report a sexist comment. Also, by assessing the situation, you can report it but with the perspective of the person who said it. For example, if someone mentions that women are not smart enough to deal with this issue, you can still mention your status, but also another example of a woman who has made it in the industry.

6. *If you accept a gender comment, disapprove of your interlocutor by pretending you don't understand it - and ask for an explanation*

If you receive a sexist or stereotypical comment in the debate (e.g. you are hysterical), you can respond by asking for explanations of what your speaker means as hysterical, as you will have arguments. It helps in this case if you pretend to take notes. By bringing your interlocutor forward to the comment he made, you will potentially embarrass him. It will be understood that you do not tolerate such behaviour, that you can recognize it, and respond to it. Your interlocutor will be revealed in public, in front of the entire audience, and will probably be condemned.

7. *Become visible if you feel that what you say is not being heard*

Several times, and this is a communication trick, when a woman takes the floor, her interlocutors deal with other things rather than listening to her. They may take care of the mobile phone, not look at it, leave the room and generally not pay attention to it.

8. *Respond calmly if the comments are about your gender*

If, for example, a sexist and stereotypical comment such as 'women are not good at math' is mentioned, then you can generalize it by setting a personal example. You can mention in a neutral tone that for example in your school everyone needed to use a calculator for operations. Be wary but claim when you recognize it.

9. *Be prepared and prepare to react*

Know the exact context of the debate and be informed. For example, they might ask you something about your work and how it relates to politics or specialization. You should be able to link your involvement to what you are asked to implement as a politician. Be prepared! Whether you are invited to a TV show or panel, to the radio, or invited to give an interview, ask who the participants are, the journalist or moderator and the general topic of the discussion.

10. *Speak through your own experiences*

It is important when the question they ask you makes you uncomfortable, or you feel that the question is going into the private sphere, talk about something you know well, using your own experiences and reverse the question. For example, if the question they ask you concerns you, as a "mother" for the passage of an education bill, and therefore concerns your children, the way you raise them in relation to the policy you support, then you can answer by highlighting the nature of the policy,

generalizing the answer and the reasoning behind it, because you support it, and you can share your personal experience.


You can also mention that the comment emphasizes gender discrimination as it confuses the role of the politician and the mother.

11. Reverse stereotypes and generalize

Representations through speech and image often convey stereotypical perceptions. Mention and do not hide the reality that there are female entrepreneurs, engineers, astronauts or male nurses. You can again reverse the question and stereotypes and use the communication technique of generalization, in something that is mutually socially acceptable.

12. Bring the issue of gender to the fore

You can in any case report and disclose a sexist or stereotypical behaviour so to encourage measures to prevent and gradually solve the problem.

 *Report on the dimension of discrimination, stereotypes and sexism in the press*

Even if you are not the recipient of sexist or stereotypical behaviours yourself, but you fall into your perception of such behaviour, show it out.

 *Support corresponding initiatives*

A great way to achieve desired results in the pursuit of gender equality is to connect with others. Search for local update groups. Join groups on gender equality and women's leadership. If there are many voices on an issue, they are more likely to be heard. Become their allies and give your voice to their causes.

 *Is it necessary to question discrimination every time you see it?*

Your voice may not change the world, but it is certainly a powerful voice that causes change; **gender inequality will end** if we start talking about it, if we put others in our place and if the institutions that affect our lives change; each small achievement is an additional step towards our common goal; caring for ourselves means we can continue to support gender equality, so always make sure you maintain your own well-being.

Consider: would they comment on a male politician 'makeup, hair colour, childcare, partner's support, or the absence of children?'

Let's remember the following practical tips:

- ! **Be Visible! If you feel invisible, come forward** and take the floor!
- ! If you hear sexist jokes, don't laugh because you're degrading yourself and women. **Ask publicly** what exactly do you mean?
- ! If you feel that information is being hidden (from informal information cycles, **Ask for a postponement** Ask for a postponement to get more information on the subject and find more information.
- ! Appreciate the situation **calmly**.

And remember!

- ✓ **Identify it and address it.** It is the first step in dealing with it. We must stop letting this kind of language become a common practice. Let us cultivate a culture of intolerance in such attitudes so that such comments are recognized as disrespectful by all members of society.
- ✓ **Think!** Would they ask this question to a male politician?
- ✓ **Involve all genders in this discussion.** Casual sexism is not only imposed on women by men, nor is it only up to women to stop it.
- ✓ **Do not respond with anger.** Careful planning will reduce the likelihood that your conversation with an offender will fuel the controversy in which some people thrive.
- ✓ **The effort is continuous!** The longer you persist, despite the kind of negativity, the more likely you are to be a role model and inspire the next generation.

Replace expressions, terms and words that perpetuate sexism and gender stereotypes, with corresponding expressions, terms and words that are gender neutral.

Be prepared! Whether you are invited to a TV show or panel, on the radio, or you are invited to give an interview, ask who the participants, the journalist or the moderator are and the general topics discussed. Try to be well prepared and know the whole context of the dialogue.

A tool for further use: Exercise

Because practice and repetition are always an ally, an exercise⁴⁷ is listed that will help those exposed in public if they accept one of the following questions.

Do you understand why they can be labelled sexist or that they reproduce stereotypes?

How could you answer?

Case: You take part in a public discussion and your interlocutor asks the following.

From a male interlocutor:

- Are you married?
- Tell us andname....Now what's your opinion?
- I imagine there's going to be a lot of prospective grooms.
- You look 20 years old.
- How do you combine family and career?
- Have you received sexism?
- What does your husband say you're gone all the time?
- I guess they'll flirt with you a lot.
- From such a sweet girl, I didn't expect such a reaction.
- Are you a feminist?

From a female interlocutor:

- Do you have children?
- How do you feel as a young woman in politics?
- When do you see your children?
- Are you married?
- Have you received sexism?
- Are you a feminist?

⁴⁷ Created by Katerina Loukidou, gender expert at the GSFPGE, in the framework of the Project.



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