



## Gender in Media in 2021:

### Gender Issues and the Manner of Depicting Women and Men In the Sports Programmes of the National Terrestrial Television Channels

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## 1. Research Problem

What is understood today as universalized sports is historically and inextricably linked to the emergence, strengthening and multitude of transformations of the medium as an organized structure for the construction and mass dissemination of content. Sports, in the sense in which it is perceived in this study, cannot simply be understood within its basic definition – as a group of physical activities that have a competitive character and strengthen the human body and human spirit. It should also be fathomed in its sociological and communicological sense, as a mediatized interactive ritual that may symbolize antagonism and, in this sense, hegemonize constellations of power among socially construed categories, as are the constructs of “masculinity” and “femininity”.<sup>1</sup>

To a large extent, “media created sports” (Dorer & Marschik, 2020),<sup>2</sup> and their trajectory has begun to entwine with the spread of modernization and re-conceptualization of citizens’ “free time” in Western societies. In the early 1900s, the working class – predominantly male and white – had more free time to dedicate it to attending sports events. At the same time, print media began to cover these events more intensely, thus attracting a much wider audience than only the small group of people who had been able to attend the sports events in person. However, this history is also a history of exclusion and marginalization, which intertwines the issues of gender [women, marginal sexualities] (see Anderson, 2017<sup>3</sup>; Cooky et. Al, 2013<sup>4</sup>); race issues [the African-American and Asian populations in the developed Western societies] (see Cooky et al. 2010<sup>5</sup>; Deeb 2016<sup>6</sup>), nationalism and geopolitics [the issues of athletes' national pride or competition between the two conflicted sides in the Cold War] (see Birrel & McDonald, 2016<sup>7</sup>, Weiderkher 2009<sup>8</sup>, Micevski 2013<sup>9</sup>).

The regulatory authorities in the field of broadcasting industry have a legal obligation to monitor if broadcasters provide equal opportunities for representing men and women in the media contents, as well as whether they reflect the overall gender diversity in society. This is why the

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<sup>1</sup> As regards the sociological aspects of the problem, see:

- Broch, T. B. (2020). *A Performative Feel for the Game*. How Meaningful Sports Shape Gender, Bodies, and Social Life. Springer International Publishing.

- Erikainen, S. (2019). *Gender verification and the making of the female body in sport: a history of the present*. Routledge.

- Dabscheck, B. (2017). *Changing the Playbook: How Power, Profit, and Politics Transformed College Sports*, by Howard P. Chudacoff.

<sup>2</sup> Dorer, J., & Marschik, M. (2020). Intersectionality in Sports Reporting. *The International Encyclopaedia of Gender, Media, and Communication*, 1-13.

<sup>3</sup> Anderson, S. (2017). The forgotten legacy of Stella Walsh: The greatest female athlete of her time. London, UK: Rowman & Littlefield.

<sup>4</sup> Cooky, C., Dycus, R., & Dworkin, S. L. (2013). “What makes a woman a woman?” versus “Our first lady of sport”: A comparative analysis of the United States and the South African media coverage of Caster Semenya. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 37(1), 31–56. doi:10.1177/0193723512447940

<sup>5</sup> Cooky, C., Wachs, F. L., Messner, M., & Dworkin, S. L. (2010). It’s not about the game: Don Imus, race, class, gender and sexuality in contemporary media. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 27(2), 139–159. doi:10.1123/ssj.27.2.139

<sup>6</sup> Deeb, A., & Love, A. (2018). Media representations of multiracial athletes. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 42(2), 95–114. doi:10.1177/0193723517749598

<sup>7</sup> Birrell, S., & McDonald, M. (2000). Reading sport, articulating power lines. In S. Birrell & M. McDonald (Eds.), *Reading sport: Critical essays on power and relations* (pp. 3–13). Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press.

<sup>8</sup> Wiederkehr, S. (2009). “We shall never know the exact number of men who have competed in the Olympics posing as women”: Sports, gender verification and the Cold War. *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 26(4), pp.556–572.

<sup>9</sup> Micevski, I. (2013) Constructing the “Ancient Macedonians” and the “Oppressed Albanians”: European Handball Championship in 2012 through the printed and online media, in Shopar, V., Reporting on interreligious and interethnic tensions: The meaning behind the headlines, SJPR, Skopje

broadcasting regulatory bodies conduct surveys that need to establish to what extent and how media observe the principles of gender equality, non-discrimination, promotion of values of tolerance. However, some of the surveys conducted by regulatory authorities point to the fact that the media – despite the multitude of public deliberations – continue to favour the so-called “male sports,” to underestimate the achievements made by female athletes and to passivize and objectify female bodies. A recent baseline study on gender pluralism and equality, conducted by the *Mediterranean Network of Regulatory Authorities*,<sup>10</sup> has found that the regulatory bodies should “promote non-discriminatory behaviour in the field of sports media content”. In order to achieve this in the Macedonian sports and media landscape, it is necessary to determine the state of play in this domain in the Republic of North Macedonia.<sup>11</sup>

Since 2012, the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services has been paying special attention to raising awareness about gender issues and gender equality in audiovisual programmes. In this context, in the past period the Agency has initiated and published several studies and analyses focused on the way gender roles are portrayed in audiovisual programmes, as well as the presence of language and content that could lead to discrimination based on gender differentiation. The issue of the scope and content of sports programmes offered by the domestic broadcasters, and the way in which gender roles are presented in these programmes in particular, has not been researched in a comprehensive manner in the Republic of North Macedonia. This survey focuses exactly on this problem and seeks to establish, by way of content analysis, what gender constructs are produced by the sports news and shows of the Public Broadcaster and the privately-owned terrestrial television stations at the state level in RNM.

The results of this research will enable the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services in creating the future regulatory policies. This is in accordance with the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, which obligates it to conduct analyses on gender and gender issues in media programmes which, as a regulatory body, it is competent to oversee so as to establish the manner of depicting and portraying women and men in the programme concepts and contents (Article 17, Paragraph 3), and determine the treatment of gender-related issues in the media (Article 17, Paragraph 4), as well as in accordance with the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services (LAAVMS).

The results of the research will also help the Agency for Youth and Sports in its work – specifically in “promoting gender equality in all areas of social life and including a gender perspective

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<sup>10</sup> Mediterranean Network of Regulatory Authorities, *Equality between Men and Women in the Sports Programmes through Audiovisual Media Services*. Available at: [https://www.rirm.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Study-Gender-Equality-in-SPORTS-PROGRAMMES\\_2017\\_ENGLISH\\_ANGLAIS.pdf](https://www.rirm.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Study-Gender-Equality-in-SPORTS-PROGRAMMES_2017_ENGLISH_ANGLAIS.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> The new *National Strategy on Gender Equality 2021-2026*, which was in Parliament at the time of the preparation of this study and not yet adopted, basically defines the state priorities related to gender equality in the media for “[...] promoting gender equality in the programmes and contents, by presenting positive examples, a more frequent engaging of women as interlocutors in the debates and other programmes involving guests, as well as larger presence of contents covering gender equality issues, i.e. including the gender aspect in the majority of topics covered in the media. To this end, there should be more women at decision-making positions, and as editors and directors, as well as education and raising awareness about the gender issues with all media workers.” (2021; 25)

in the policy making and budgeting”,<sup>12</sup> which is one of its priority strategic goals arising from the strategic goals of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Finally, the research will help the media outlets in the Macedonian media space in meeting their legal obligations related to the establishment of gender equality.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### 1. Research Goals and Research Questions

Starting out from the defined problem, this study aims to investigate the issue of gender equality and gender representation in the sports programmes of the Macedonian terrestrial national television channels. This goal has yielded two blocks of research questions have emerged that require a different research strategy:

(1) **Quantitative strategy** – in the context of gender issues, it identifies the frequency of appearances of gender-related aspects in the sports programmes (shows and news):

1. What are the frequency, duration and genre diversity of the sports contents in the national broadcasters’ programmes?
2. What are the frequency, duration and the diversity of roles of the female and male participants in the national broadcasters’ sports programmes?
3. Which sports receive the most frequent coverage on the broadcasters’ part and how many of these sports are men's and how many – women's competitions?

(2) **Qualitative strategy** – to establish how gender-related issues have been treated and how women and men have been construed in the sports television shows:

1. How are the male and female athletes construed in the sports programmes and through what strategies?
2. What language do media use when presenting male and female athletes?
3. What topics related to gender roles arise from the sports programme?

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<sup>12</sup> Strategic Plan of the AYS 2021-2023, see pp. 11, 15 and 22. Available at: <http://ams.gov.mk/%D0%B8%D0%BD%D1%84%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%BC%D0%B0%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%B8-%D0%BE%D0%B4-%D1%98%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%B5%D0%BD-%D0%BA%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BA%D1%82%D0%B5%D1%80>

## 2. Basic concepts<sup>13</sup>

The topic of this research requires preliminary marking of several key concepts that will be elaborated in more detail in the analysis that will emerge from it.

*a. Gender and gender identity:* The distinction between the concepts of “sex” and “gender” as a difference between *the biological determinants and the social construction* of the division of social roles, is the fundamental position of feminist theories and is the response to functionalist models of social organization. These essentially heteronormative theories derive gender roles from the biological fact of sex difference (see Shapiro, 1981<sup>14</sup>, McGuinness & Pribram, 1979<sup>15</sup>).

*b. Gender equality:* According to the *Strategy on Gender Equality in RNM 2013-2020*, “gender equality means that the different behaviors, aspirations, needs of women and men are being respected, taken into account, valued and equally supported. This means that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities shall not depend on whether they were born a man or a woman. It is based on the principles of human rights and social justice. It is clear that gender equality and the empowerment of women are key to addressing the main concerns of poverty and insecurity and to achieving sustainable development with the **man/human being/individual** as the center.” (2013:7)<sup>16</sup>.

*c. Gender equity:* According to the *Strategy on Gender Equality in RNM 2013-2020*, “Gender equity means fairness in the treatment of men and women, in accordance with their personal needs, fairness especially in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities. “Gender equity is concerned with the promotion of personal, social, cultural, political and economic equality for all.” (2013:7)<sup>17</sup>.

*d. Gender stereotyping:* According to the Council of Europe's *Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023*, “gender stereotypes are preconceived social and cultural patterns or ideas whereby women and men are assigned characteristics and roles determined and limited by their **sex...** Gender stereotypes both result from and are the cause of deeply engrained attitudes, values, norms and prejudices. They are used to justify and maintain the historical power relations of men over women, as well as sexist attitudes which are holding back the advancement of gender equality.” (2018:16<sup>18</sup>).

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<sup>13</sup> The basic concepts relevant to this research were also used in the author's previous research. Hence, the following few paragraphs have been taken from Micevski, I., (2020), *Gender in Media: Analysis of the Gender Aspects in Children's Programmes on the National Terrestrial Television Channels*, AAAVMS, Skopje.

<sup>14</sup> Shapiro, J. (1981). *Anthropology and the Study of Gender. Soundings*, pp. 446-465.

<sup>15</sup> McGuinness, D., & Pribram, K. H. (1979). The Origins of Sensory Bias in the Development of Gender Differences in Perception and Cognition. *Cognitive Growth and Development: Essays in Memory of Herbert G. Birch*, pp. 3-56.

<sup>16</sup> Gender Equality Strategy 2013-2020, available at <https://dejure.mk/zakon/strategija-za-rodova-ednakvost-2013-2020>.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Council of Europe (2018) *Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023* <https://rm.coe.int/ge-strategy-2018-2023/1680791246>

### 3. Relevant literature

A review of the literature relevant to this study reveals both thematic and methodological diversity in gender-related research in the context of sports media content. One can distinguish several methodological approaches to the problem, within which there are several thematic lines of analysis in the context of gender hegemonies, which are not only reinforced through the media coverage of sports events, but are also construed by and through the media.

The largest group of research in the field of gender aspects of sports programme uses *Content Analysis* as a predominantly quantitative approach, but also as an inherently mixed (Qual + Quan) research strategy (see discussion in Chapter 6).

Thus, a series of publications resulting from a longitudinal study conducted between 1989 – 2019, use, according to the authors' statement – *Textual Analysis* and *Content Analysis*. The longitudinal study refers to the frequency with which they appear (quantity) and the way (quality) women and men are covered in the sports programme.

A recent publication that had stemmed from this study by Cooky et al. (Cooky et al., 2021<sup>19</sup>) makes a longitudinal analysis of the media (television) coverage of sports events in the United States in the past 30 years, however, the sample taken for the last decade includes online media and social networks as well, thus ensuring a comparative approach to the problem. The researchers concluded that, in the past three decades, there had virtually been no shift in traditional media in terms of the ratio of the quantitative representation of men and women in the sports programme in this country. The so-called "men's sports" still receive an extremely high percentage of coverage in the programme, this being particularly true for basketball, baseball and American football. The study states that even when television channels report on the so-called "women's sports" or women's competitions in what is considered as "men's sports," they usually receive an isolated report followed by a series of large blocks referring to men's sports competitions and male athletes. As regards content analysis of social media, the researchers conclude that the gender asymmetry typical of the broadcast media is also reflected in the behavior of new media and social networks. The authors found a consistent occurrence of gender-soaked sexism characteristic of the so-called "women's sports" and women's sports competitions. They detect this gender characteristic within three main themes: (1) nationalism, (2) asymmetric gender marking combined with local parochialism, and (3) charitable contributions. The other publications from the same longitudinal

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<sup>19</sup> Cooky, C., Council, L. D., Mears, M. A., & Messner, M. A. (2021). One and Done: The Long Eclipse of Women's Televised Sports, 1989–2019. *Communication & Sport*, 9(3), 347-371.



survey initiated in 1989 (Messner et al., 1993<sup>20</sup>, 1996<sup>21</sup>, 2003<sup>22</sup>; Cooky et al., 2013<sup>23</sup>, 2015<sup>24</sup>; Musto et al., 2017<sup>25</sup>), imply the same persistent problem.

Adams & Tuggle add more weight to the quantitative aspects of *Content Analysis* in their replicated study (Adams & Tuggle, 2004),<sup>26</sup> in which they analyze the coverage of female and male athletes in various competitions. In the original, 1997, survey of two sports shows on CNN and ESPN, the authors noted that, although there had been a marked increase in the presence of women in sports in general [i.e. in the sports offer], yet, media coverage did not follow the same upward trend. They found that only 5% of the total sports programme was dedicated to female athletes or women's sports competition. The research conducted in 2002 (a decade and a half after the first), applying a fully identical methodology, was aimed at establishing whether media coverage had reduced the quantitative difference between men and women following the introduction and fortifying of two professional leagues in different sports in women's category in the United States. The authors concluded that, despite the change in the structure of organized sports, the media had not followed the trend and the coverage of female athletes had remained at the old, low, level. This suggests that the control factors in the analysis, such as the strengthening of organized sports competitions in women's category, have a limited impact on media's behavior. Similarly, taking into account the restructuring and the increased presence of women's sports and controlling the variables associated with them, Eastman and Billings found in their study (Eastman and Billings, 2000)<sup>27</sup> that there was no consistent coverage of female athletes appropriate to their actual presence in large-scale competitions in the respective sports. For example, media coverage was visibly increased during the US Open golf tournament for women and for the duration of the Wimbledon tennis tournament, but there was no media interest in a number of other equally interesting sports and tournaments in the women's category, such as the opening of the season of WNBA or French Open.

A survey conducted by Alexander (Alexander, 1994)<sup>28</sup> revealed that there was a positive correlation between the type of sports on one hand, and the competition category in which they are held and are aired by the media. Television coverage of men's competitions favours team sports,

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<sup>20</sup> Messner, M. A., Duncan, M. C., & Jensen, K. (1993). Separating the men from the girls: The gendered language of televised sports. *Gender & Society*, 7(1), 121-137.

<sup>21</sup> Messner, M. A., Duncan, M. C., & Wachs, F. L. (1996). The gender of audience building: Televised coverage of women's and men's NCAA basketball. *Sociological inquiry*, 66(4), 422-440.

<sup>22</sup> Messner, M. A., Duncan, M. C., & Cooky, C. (2003). Silence, sports bras, and wrestling porn: Women in televised sports news and highlights shows. *Journal of sport and social issues*, 27(1), 38-51.

<sup>23</sup> Cooky, C., Messner, M. A., & Hextrum, R. H. (2013). Women play sport, but not on TV: A longitudinal study of televised news media. *Communication & Sport*, 1(3), 203-230.

<sup>24</sup> Cooky, C., Messner, M. A., & Musto, M. (2015). "It's dude time!" A quarter century of excluding women's sports in televised news and highlight shows. *Communication & Sport*, 3(3), 261-287.

<sup>25</sup> Musto, M., Cooky, C., & Messner, M. A. (2017). "From Fizzle to Sizzle!" Televised sports news and the production of gender-bland sexism. *Gender & Society*, 31(5), 573-596.

<sup>26</sup> Adams, T., & Tuggle, C. A. (2004). ESPN's SportsCenter and coverage of women's athletics: It's a boys' club. *Mass Communication and Society*, 7, 237-248.

<sup>27</sup> Eastman, S. T., & Billings, A. C. (2000). Sportscasting and sports reporting: The power of gender bias. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 24(2), 192-213.

<sup>28</sup> Alexander, S. (1994). Newspaper coverage of athletics as a function of gender. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 17, 655-662.

whereas the coverage of women's competitions favours individual sports. This survey supports a previous study by Kane (Kane, 1989),<sup>29</sup> according to which women who compete in sports such as tennis or golf, receive significantly larger media attention than those competing in other sports, team sports in particular.

The issue of the frequency with which male and female athletes appear in the public sphere has been researched in recent years in the context of social platforms. A survey by Lameiras & Rodriguez-Castro (Lameiras & Rodriguez-Castro, 2020<sup>30</sup>), found that, out of the sample of sports-related tweets coming from the Twitter accounts of the general-format media in Spain (N = 5260), only 1.6% were tweets related to female athletes. In addition, the study also established that, in the tweets of specialized sports media, there was widely spread negative stereotyping and sexual objectification, which basically underestimated the female athletes' achievements.

Certain studies of the online sphere combine the methods of content analysis with thematic analysis. Thus, Deighton-Smith & Bell (Deighton-Smith & Bell, 2017)<sup>31</sup> applied a combined strategy in their analysis of the posts using the Instagram hashtag #fitspiration. *First*, the authors took a sample of the last 944 visual depictions of bodies using this hashtag. An initial grounded overview of the visual content was performed so as to enable an inductive classification of the various categories. From the multitude of categories, the authors isolated four comprehensive classes under which they could include all the listed categories, and developed a coding strategy. The lead researchers then coded the entire content, after which the same content was coded by two junior researchers, nevertheless, without being informed of the purpose of the study. The concurrence between the researchers and the coders was 98.10%. *Second*, the researchers worked within the four categories for which a second coding strategy had been developed, which made it possible to refine the analysis by more qualitative nuances that contextualized the quantitative content analysis. They concluded that social media, too promoted unrealistic ideals about the male and female bodies (as established in the #fitspiration case), unattainable for the majority of people, and that the athletes' bodies had been objectified on the online platforms as well.

The problem of *presenting* the diversities in sports is a topic that occurs frequently. In their study of gender differentiation in sports, Buysse & Embser-Herbert (Buysse & Embser-Herbert, 2004<sup>32</sup>) note that, in the field of sports, the presentations of femininity and masculinity in the media establish and maintain gender differentiation. The study shows that female athletes are less likely to be presented as active participants in sports and are, at the same time, more likely to be depicted

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<sup>29</sup> Kane, M. J. (1989). The Post Title IX Female Athlete in the Media: Things are changing, but how much?. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, 60(3), 58-62.

<sup>30</sup> Lameiras, A., & Rodriguez-Castro, Y. (2020). The presence of female athletes and non-athletes on sports media Twitter. *Feminist Media Studies*, 1-18.

<sup>31</sup> Deighton-Smith, N and Bell, BT (2017) Objectifying fitness: A content and thematic analysis of #Fitspiration images on social media. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 6 (1). ISSN 2160-4142  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000143>

<sup>32</sup> Buysse, J.A.M. & Embser-Herbert, M.S. (2004). Constructions of gender in sport: An analysis of intercollegiate media guide cover photographs. *Gender & Society*, 18(1),66-81. doi: 10.1177/0891243203257914

in passive traditional female roles, although the authors note that, between 1990 and 1997, this trend was slightly mitigated. The findings suggest that women's sports leagues themselves produce gender stereotypes in a similar way to popular media, although it is intuitive to expect the opposite. See Bernstein (2002)<sup>33</sup>, Koivula (1999)<sup>34</sup>, Billings & Angelini (2019)<sup>35</sup>, Bruce (2013)<sup>36</sup>, Bruce (2016)<sup>37</sup>.

Probably the most fruitful analytical line of study of the gender aspects in sports is the set of surveys focusing on the concept of *intersectionality*. In 1989, Kimberly Crenshaw (Crenshaw, 1990)<sup>38</sup>, proposed this term to denote the overlap of different identity domains, such as race and sexuality, so that, from this point of view, she could develop a strategy for attacking the hegemonies within them. Since then (thirty years already) intersectional analyses have been made in the spheres of communicological, sociological and political research, of the issues of gender and race (Cooky et al., 2010)<sup>39</sup>, trans-sexuality, inter-sexuality and sports (Anderson 2017)<sup>40</sup>, homosexuality and sports, nationalism and sports (Weiderkher, 2009<sup>41</sup>, Micevski 2013<sup>42</sup>), gender and class in sports media (Lenskyj, 2012)<sup>43</sup>, etc.

The thematic and methodological diversity presented in this review of relevant literature will reflect on the concepts developed for this research.

#### 4. Regulation in RNM and international documents related to gender issues and media content

This survey arises from the obligations that the Macedonian legislation envisages for the regulator – the *Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services*, the broadcasters and the state institutions. The obligations of these stakeholders arise from the Constitution of the RNM, the domestic regulations (the Law on AAVMS, the Law on Equal Opportunities of Men and Women, the Law on Prevention of and Protection against Discrimination, etc.), as well as the international documents (the United Nations, Council of Europe).

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<sup>33</sup>Bernstein, A. (2002). Is it time for a victory lap? Changes in the media coverage of women in sport. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 37, 415–428.

<sup>34</sup>Koivula, N. (1999). Gender stereotyping in televised media sports coverage. *Sex Roles*, 41, 589–604.

<sup>35</sup>Billings, A. C., & Angelini, J. (2019). Equity achieved? A longitudinal examination of biological sex representation in the NBC Olympic telecast (2000-2018). *Communication & Sport*, 7(5), 551–564.

<sup>36</sup>Bruce, T. (2013). Reflections on communication and sport: On women and femininities. *Communication & Sport*, 1(1–2), 125–137.

<sup>37</sup>Bruce, T. (2016). New rules for new times: Sportswomen and media representation in the third wave. *Sex Roles*, 74, 361–376.

<sup>38</sup>Crenshaw, K. (1990). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of colour. *Stan. L. Rev.*, 43, 1241.

<sup>39</sup>Cooky, C., Wachs, F. L., Messner, M., & Dworkin, S. L. (2010). It's not about the game: Don Imus, race, class, gender and sexuality in contemporary media. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 27(2), 139–159. doi:10.1123/ssj.27.2.139

<sup>40</sup>Anderson, S. (2017). *The forgotten legacy of Stella Walsh: The greatest female athlete of her time*. London, UK: Rowman & Littlefield.

<sup>41</sup>Wiederkehr, S. (2009). "We shall never know the exact number of men who have competed in the Olympics posing as women": Sport, gender verification and the Cold War. *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 26(4), 556–572.

<sup>42</sup>Micevski, I. (2013) Constructing the "Ancient Macedonians" and the "Oppressed Albanians": European Handball Championship in 2012 through the printed and online media, in Shopar, V., *Reporting on interreligious and interethnic tensions: The meaning behind the headlines, School of Journalism and Public Relations*, Skopje.

<sup>43</sup>Lenskyj, H. J. (2012). Reflections on communication and sport: On heteronormativity and gender identities. *Communication & Sport*, 1(1–2), 138–150. doi:10.1177/2167479512467327

The **Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia** as the primary fundamental value of the State sets forth the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual and the citizen, known from international law (Article 8).

The **Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services** imposes an obligation on the Agency to “take care of the protection of citizens’ interests in the area of audio and audiovisual media services” (Article 6). In this regard, the Agency supervises the implementation of the obligations the Law prescribes for the broadcasters. Article 61 of the Law lays down a series of principles that the broadcasters should adhere to when performing their operations. In the context of this research, the relevant principles are those of “equality of the freedoms and rights regardless of sex, race, national, ethnic and social origin, political and religious beliefs, wealth and social status of the individual and the citizen,” “fostering and development of the individual’s human and moral values and protection of the individual’s privacy and dignity” and “objective and impartial depiction of events, ensuring equal treatment of the diverse views and opinions, and making possible the free formation of the opinion of the audience with regard to certain events and issues”. Also, Article 48 stipulates that audio and audiovisual media services are prohibited from broadcasting programmes that “... incite or spread discrimination, intolerance or hatred based on race, skin colour, origin, nationality or ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, belonging to a marginalized group, language, citizenship, social background, education, religion or confession, political affiliation, other beliefs, disability, age, family or marital status, wealth status, health condition, personal traits and social status, or any other grounds”. The explicit prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity creates an extremely important obligation for the broadcasters to adopt a subtle and careful approach. Article 110, which refers in full to the obligations of the Public Broadcasting Service, states that the Public Broadcaster should “develop and plan a programme scheme in the interest of the general public, while the programmes should be intended for all segments of society without any discrimination”; “ensure constant, truthful, complete, impartial, fair and timely information by creating and broadcasting high quality programmes for all important ... sports events” in the country, Europe and the world; furthermore, it has an obligation, by means of its programme, to contribute to the promotion and observance of fundamental human rights and freedoms, including “gender equality and the eradication of discrimination”; “promote sports and recreational activities and broadcast sports events from the country and abroad, which involve Macedonian national teams or athletes, as well as the less represented sports, i.e. sports events.” The MRT has an obligation to inform and educate, as well as to “create high quality programmes of entertaining content for all ages”.

The **Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men** (Article 17, Paragraphs 4 and 3) stipulates that the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services, within the frameworks of its legal powers and competencies, “oversees the manner of depicting and portraying women and men” and “prepares analyses of the gender issues within the programme concepts and contents of

the media” once a year. Additionally, (Article 17, Paragraph 1) the media – and, in this sense, the broadcasters – have an obligation to “contribute to developing and raising the awareness about equal opportunities, as well as to ensuring equal participation of women and men in the creation of programming concepts and contents”. The national broadcasters’ sports programme, which is the subject of this research, plays a significant role in the constructing of social norms about the way the population of different sexes acts in the public and private domains and about the expectations it harbours in the process of individual transformation.

Article 5 of the **Law on Preventing From and Protecting against Discrimination** prohibits “any discrimination based on race, colour, origin, nationality or ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, belonging to a marginalized group, language, citizenship, social background, education, religion or confession, political affiliation, other beliefs, disability, age, family or marital status, wealth, health condition, personal trait and social status or any other grounds”.

In the **Draft-National Strategy on Gender Equality 2021-2026**, it is pointed out that the key priorities include: the need to increase the representation of women in managerial positions, provide conditions for girls and young women to do sports and, later on, remain in the field of sports as adults. To this end, among other things, it is also necessary to “break the stereotype that sports are a ‘male’ domain ... as well as to introduce measures for combating violence and sexism in sports”.

## 5. Data Collection and Analysis

### 5.1 Research techniques<sup>44</sup>

The research uses (1) Content Analysis and (2) Thematic Analysis, which arises from the nature of the research questions.

(1) Based on the ontological understanding of what can be called “content”, Krippendorff (2018)<sup>45</sup> distinguishes among three types of definitions of what should be perceived as *content analysis*: (a) definitions that rest on the assumption that content is *inherent* in the text; (b) definitions that assume that content relates to the *condition or characteristics of the text source*, and (c) definitions according to which content *springs out from the moment in which the analyst analyzes the text* in relation to a particular context. A typical definition of the first type of ontology is Berelson’s definition according to which “Content analysis is a research technique for an objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifested content of communication” (Berelson, 1952<sup>46</sup>). The second type of understanding of the nature of content is related to the definition by Holsti, according to whom “content analysis is a technique for making inferences by systematically

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<sup>44</sup> See Micevski, I., (2020), Gender in Media: Analysis of the Gender Aspects in Children’s Programmes on the National Terrestrial Television Channels, AAAVMS, Skopje.

<sup>45</sup> Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology*. Sage Publications.

<sup>46</sup> Berelson, B. (1952). *Content Analysis in Communication Research*.

and objectively identifying specified characteristics of messages,” (Holsti, 1969<sup>47</sup>). Finally, according to Krippendorff, “content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use” (Krippendorff, 2018). Given that the phenomena investigated in this study are conceptually simple, what Berelson means by Content Analysis is the most appropriate way of collecting and analyzing data.

(2) *Thematic analysis* is a popular qualitative technique that aims to identify the topics arising from the content analyzed. Despite its popularity, there is no established or standardized way for its implementation, nor is there a consensus on what constitutes a particular *theme* (Bryman, 2016)<sup>48</sup>. For example, thematic analysis is an approach also used by the analysts who deal with discourse analysis, grounded theory or narrative analysis. However, thematic analysis can also be part of what is known as content analysis. The topic, as a unit of analysis, is treated differently in different approaches: for instance, it can be considered a network of different concepts that constitute a certain consistency of meaning, but it can also be treated simply as a code, in terms of content analysis. This is the approach adopted in this study.

## 5.2 Sample

In this research, triple sampling was done:

**Phase 1:** In the first phase, the media that were used to draw content from for the analysis were selected. The study covered the television programme services at the national level, which air programme using digital terrestrial multiplex. This sample includes sports news, shows (magazines) and sports broadcasts in the programmes of the Public Broadcasting Services of MRT 1 and MRT 2 (programme in the Albanian language), as well as the programme broadcasted on the MRT 3 Channel, established as a specialized sports channel. The sample also includes the following privately-owned broadcasters at the national level: Alsat-M TV (in Albanian), *Alfa TV*, *Kanal 5 TV*, *Sitel TV* and *Telma TV*.

**Phase 2:** As part of the selection for the first phase, a two-component programme subsample was made according to the criteria of *time* and *type of programme covered*.

a. The **first** subsample consists of seven editions of the central sports news (standalone or as part of the central daily news edition), sports shows (magazines) and sports broadcasts aired during one week when there were no sports events of major importance on the sports schedule, i.e. from 4 to 10 May 2021, on MRT 1 and MRT 2 (in Albanian), Alsat-M TV (in Albanian), *Alfa TV*, *Kanal 5 TV*, *Sitel TV* and *Telma TV*, and the entire programme aired on MRT 3 in this same period;

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<sup>47</sup> Holsti, O.R. (1969). *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

<sup>48</sup> Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods*. Oxford University Press.

b. The **second** cluster includes programme that was broadcasted at the time of the holding of an event of major importance for sports, which, in this case, were the 2020 Summer Olympics.<sup>49</sup> The sample in this cluster also consists of seven editions of the central sports news (standalone or as part of the central daily news editions) and sports shows and broadcasts aired in the course of one week during the Olympic Games, i.e. from 26 July until 1 August 2021, on MRT 1 and MRT 2 (in Albanian), Alsat-M TV (in Albanian), *Alfa TV*, *Kanal 5 TV*, *Sitel TV* and *Telma TV*, and the entire programme broadcasted on MRT 3 in this same period.

The reason for constructing such a sample was the need to compare the gender analysis of the coverage of men's and women's sports competitions during periods when there are and when there are not any specific types of sporting events.

**Phase 3:** Specific editions of sports news and sports shows shall be isolated from the initial findings of the content analysis, which have been found amenable to thematic and/or discursive analysis. Only these shows shall be analyzed in this way.

### 5.3. Description of the Coding Process in the Content Analysis

In *the first phase of coding*, which corresponds to the first phase of sampling, the research applies elementary *content analysis*, close to the definition suggested by Berelson. At this level, all occurrences of the sports programme described in this chapter on the selected television channels and within the selected time slots are encoded in a code matrix.

In *the second phase*, the contents of all types of sports programme are encoded for the two subsamples – and this, at three levels. Coded at the first level are the occurrences per show unit, i.e. the basic parameters for each show are encoded, including the duration and the type. At the second level, the gender parameters are encoded at the level of a television item unit, including those such as the type of competition and the type of sports covered in the item, while, at the third level, gender parameters are encoded at the level of participants in the programme, including their sex and the manner of their representation.

In *the third phase*, in the cases where the codes indicate use of gender-soaked discourse constructs, media content is analyzed directly.

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<sup>49</sup> The Summer Olympics in Tokyo had been scheduled to take place in the period from 24 July until 9 August 2020, however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, they were postponed and were held from 23 July until 8 August 2021. Despite their rescheduling for 2021, they kept the name “Tokyo 2020”. Hence, in the text they shall be referred to as the Summer Olympics 2020 or the Olympic Games 2020.

## INDIVIDUAL FINDINGS



### III. ANALYSIS

#### III.1. Makedonska Radio Televizija – First Programme Service (MRT 1)

##### Introduction

The first programme service of *Makedonska Radiotelevizija* (the Macedonian Radio and Television, MRT 1) has, as expected, the largest frequency and the greatest diversity of represented sports and male and female athletes in its programme. In the two selected periods of the sample – from 4 until 10 April (sample 1 – before the Summer Olympics) and from 26 July to 1 August (sample 2 – during the Olympics), a total of 126 editions of sports shows were aired on MRT 1, of which 83 or 65.87% were broadcasts of sports events,

while 43 editions or 34.13% were informative sports programmes such as news or sports magazines. Given that the second time excerpt (sample 2) was chosen so as to cover the duration of the 2020 Summer Olympics, the survey, as expected, disclosed an unequal distribution of shows by type: a total of 82 editions or 98.80% of the Broadcasts aired (Table 1), were aired in the second sample. This constitutes 98.45% of the total airtime devoted to broadcasts in both samples together (Table 2). The significantly larger frequency of sports shows in the second sample is primarily due to the significantly increased number of broadcasts from the Summer Olympics.

Show/ Sample	News	Magazine	Broadcast	Total	%
Sample 1	27	0	1	28	22.22%
Sample 2	6	10	82	98	77.78%
Total	33	10	83	126	100.00%

Table 1: Frequency of sports shows on MRT 1 according to their type

From the data of both tables, it appears that, although in the first sample more editions of informative sports programme were aired (27) than in the second (16), the informative editions during the Olympic Games were more than twice as long. Out of the total of 10 hours, 35 minutes and 48 seconds of informative programme broadcasted (news and sports magazines), 69.43% of the time were aired in the second sample. This is mostly due to the airtime dedicated to taekwondo – the sport which, due to the success of the Macedonian national team athlete Dejan Georgievski, received significant coverage of 2 hours, 19 minutes and 49 seconds, in the sports magazines of the included in the second sample.

The frequency and duration of the broadcasts of sports content on MRT 1 during the Olympics also reveals how great and significant was the attention that the First Programme Service dedicated to sports of global importance, in relation to all other contents that were not related to sports. Thus, out of 168 possible hours of programme aired during one week,<sup>50</sup> in the second sample, the total of sports programme aired was 115 hours, 4 minutes and 53 seconds, which constitutes 68.50% of the time dedicated to the overall programme. This means that the remaining

<sup>50</sup> Како што беше посочено во воведот, во истражувањето анализирана е целата програма во 24 часа и репризите на спортските изданија се земени со еднаква тежина во него.

contents were given, on average, somewhat less than 8 broadcast hours out of a 24-hour programme<sup>51</sup>.

Type of show/ Sample	Broadcast	% Broadcast	Information programme	% Information programme	Total	% Total
Sample 1	1:41:42	1.41%	3:14:23	2.70%	4:56:05	4.11%
Sample 2	107:43:28	89.76%	7:21:25	6.13%	115:04:53	95.89%
Total	109:25:10	91.17%	10:35:48	8.83%	120:00:58	100%

Table 2: Duration of the sports shows aired on MRT1 by type

The occurrence of the various genres and their distribution was also determined by the duration of the Summer Olympics, although in both samples there was a slight difference, judging from the total number of genre units aired on MRT 1. Table 3 shows that in the sample taken during the Olympics, the number of classical genres, such as the news and the report, was reduced significantly. Out of the 44 items of the news genre aired in the two samples together, 40 or 90.91% were from the sample preceding the Olympics. Out of 97 items belonging to the genre of report, 70 or 72.16% were from the sample preceding the Olympics. The overview, as an analytical and commentary genre, which is typical of sports journalism, had a relatively stable frequency. Just as expected this change at the level of the two samples was, comparatively, so was the visibly increased frequency of interviews in the second sample, along with the already noticed high frequency of broadcasts<sup>52</sup>. Out of the total of 36 interviews in both samples, 26 or 72.22% were from the sample taken from the time of the Olympics. These frequencies are, of course, mostly due to the fact that the amount of time allotted for sports broadcasts during the 2020 Summer Olympics was so large that it inevitably squizzed the other genres out of the programme. The analytical genres were expected to receive a larger amount of airtime during the Summer Olympics because, under the pressure of the Olympic offer, journalists had a need to cover the condensed events more comprehensively and from different angles. Finally, the Olympic programme provided more opportunities for talks with male and female sports experts and athletes – which may explain the higher frequency of interviews during that week.

Sample / Genre	News	Report	Interview	Overview	Broadcast	Debate	Other	Total	%
Sample 1	40	70	10	35	1	0	0	156	47.71%
Sample 2	4	27	26	30	82	1	1	171	52.29%
Total	44	97	36	65	83	1	1	327	100%
%	13.45%	29.66%	11.01%	19.88%	25.38%	0.31%	0.31%	100%	

Table 3: Frequency of items on MRT1 by genre

<sup>51</sup> Determining the distribution of the aired programme in certain segments of the day and the focus of the audience's interest in relation to that distribution, is beyond the scope of this research.

<sup>52</sup> In this research, broadcasts were double-coded, both as a specific genre in sports journalism and as a type of show in the media outlets. However, in the aggregation, it was processed as a **unique/single** unit.

The entire sports programme in both genres was coded for the type of sport to which the media outlet had dedicated attention<sup>53</sup>. Due to the nature of the sports broadcasts, the programme analysis by types of sports was conducted separately for the broadcasts and for the news programme, respectively.

In the sample preceding the Olympics, it was obvious that the sports information programme had given significantly more room to team sports – 2 hours, 45 minutes and 32 seconds, meaning that 85.16% of the total sports information programme in the sample preceding the Summer Olympics (see Figure 1) were dedicated to this type of sports. As regards individual sports, in the sample preceding the Olympics, they had received 24 minutes and 1 second, or only 12.35%.

In the sample taken during the Summer Olympics, for comparison, the status of both types of sports was virtually completely changed, under the obvious pressure of the Olympic programme dominated by individual sports. Out of a total of 7 hours, 21 minutes and 25 seconds of sports information programme, 70.23% were set aside for individual sports, while 16.57% – for team sports. Although, based on this, one cannot conclude that the media outlet was systematically biased towards team sports in the usual sports information news programme throughout the year, this finding may be considered as suggestive in favour of such a conclusion.

The presence of a large number of sports broadcasts in the second sample, and their virtually complete absence from the first sample, creates a distorted picture of the representation of individual and team sports in the programme.

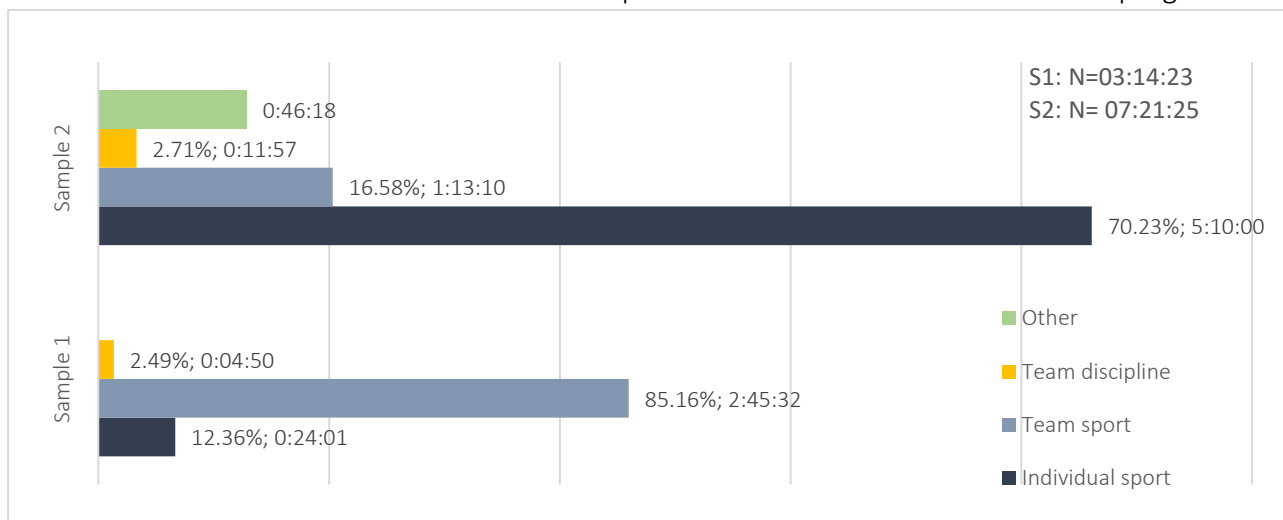


Figure 1: Share of individual and team sports in the sports information programme of MRT 1 in the respective samples

<sup>53</sup> The division of team and individual sports is quite problematized due to the fact that in certain traditionally individual sports there is team competition and, accordingly, these should be considered as team sports because they involve coordinated action by a group of competitors. However, in order to ensure validity of the data interpretation in this research, the category "team sport discipline" was added, which specifically coded the sports that are traditionally considered as individual, but in which there are team disciplines (for example, relay races in athletics, synchronized diving, etc.).

Hence, the segregation of the sports information programme (Figure 1) from the sports broadcasts (Figure 2), was inevitable and, as such, gives a clearer picture of the attention that the Sports Desk of the First Programme Service had dedicated to the different types of sports. As Figure 2 shows, the entire airtime allocated to broadcasts in the first sample, although relatively short, referred to team sports (it was one football game). In the second sample, individual sports received more weight due to the Olympic offer – 52 hours, 24 minutes and 15 seconds, or 48.65%, of the total broadcasts registered during the Summer Olympics were of individual sports, whereas 39 hours, 11 minutes and 42 seconds, or 36.38%, were of team sports. A remarkably high percentage of the airtime dedicated to sports broadcasts on MRT 1 fell on team sport disciplines in the traditionally individual sports.

In this context, one may obtain interesting findings by comparing the relation that the media outlet had made between individual and team sports in the news programme, on the one hand, and in the sports broadcasts, on the other. As can be seen from the comparison of Figures 1 and 2, the ratio of airtime devoted to the different types of sports in the *information programme* during the Summer Olympics does not correspond with the time dedicated to these types of sports in the *broadcasts* in the same period.

As regards the information programme, in 16.57% of its airtime during the Summer Olympics, the media outlet covered team sports, while, when it comes to sports broadcasts – these sports received 36.38% of the airtime. If, in the information programme aired during the Olympics, 70.23% of the total duration of this programme was dedicated to individual sports, then 48.65% of the airtime for broadcasts was allocated to individual sports. Team sport disciplines in the traditionally individual sports during the Summer Olympics received 2.71% of the time of the information programme, yet, in the broadcasts, they were represented by a significantly higher percentage 4.97%.

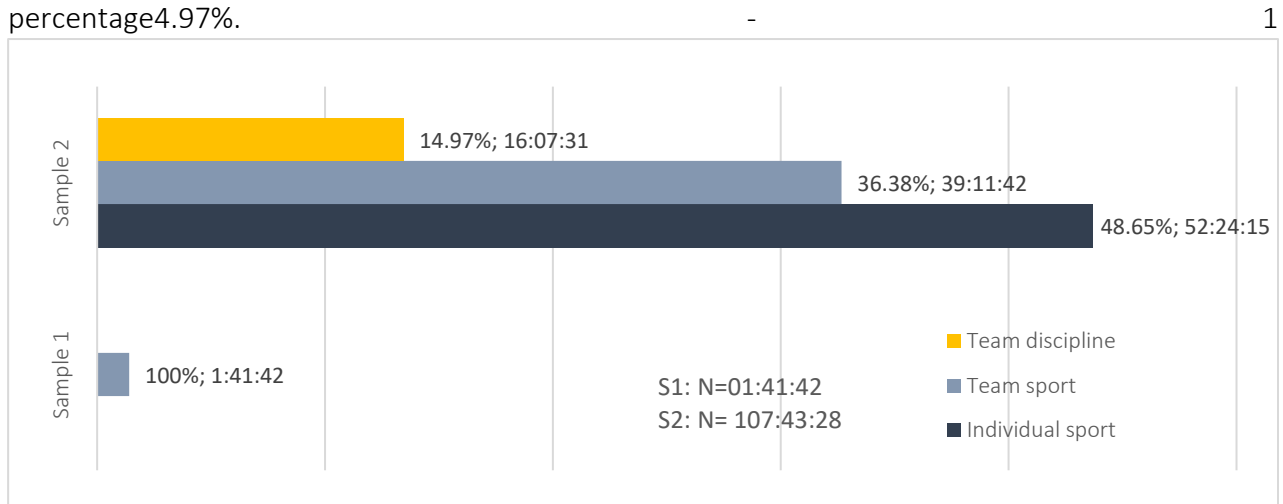


Figure 1: Share of individual and team sports in the sports broadcasts on MRT1

This discrepancy may, but does not necessarily have to, mean systematic bias towards team sports. This is due to the fact that, if broadcasts and the information programme are seen as interrelated variables, it is possible that the greater frequency of team sports in the broadcasts is *due to* the small frequency of these sports in the information programme. It is also possible that the shorter airtime of the individual sports in the broadcasts was registered *due to* the longer airtime given to these sports in the information programme and *vice versa*. Yet, it is noticeable that, in the first sample, team sports were absolutely predominant in both the information programme and the broadcasts, which points to a systemic bias.

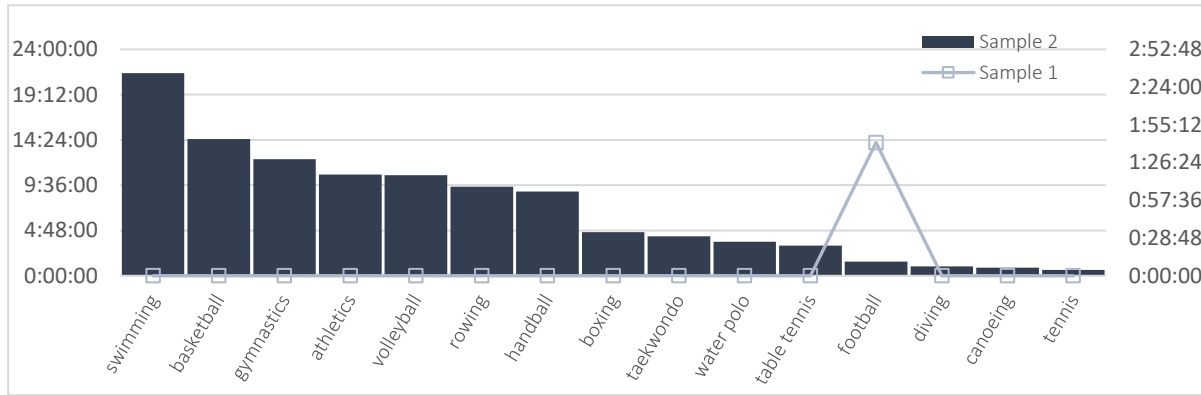


Figure 2: Share of particular sports in the MRT1 broadcasts

In addition, in the second sample, the significantly longer airtime dedicated to individual sports was owing to the coverage of the success of the Macedonian taekwondo national team athlete, which occupied 31.67% of the duration of the entire information programme covered by the second sample. For comparison, the taekwondo sport in the cluster of broadcasts in the second sample received a coverage of 3.88%. The five leading sports for which there was the greatest interest during the week of the Summer Olympics included in the sample were: swimming (19.96%), basketball (13.45%), gymnastics (11.48%), athletics (9.97%) and volleyball (9.91%). The First Programme Service presented a great diversity of sports both in its sports information programme and its sports broadcasts (Figures 3 and 4).

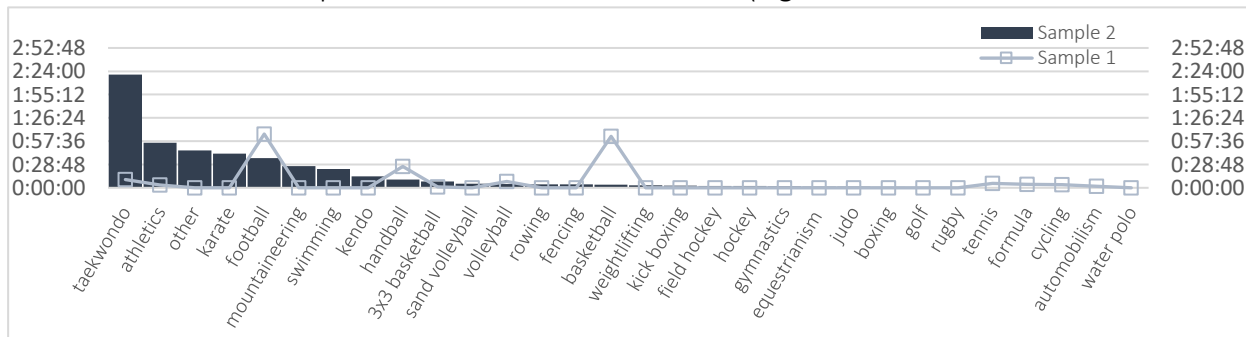


Figure 3: Share of the information on particular sports in the MRT1's information programme

## Analysis of Gender Aspects in the Sports Programme

Taking into account the overall sports information program of the First Programme Service of MRT (see Figure 5), men's sports competitions had received prevailing airtime – a total of 7 hours, 35 minutes and 56 seconds – which represented even 71.71% of the total airtime dedicated to sports in the information programme of this service during the two analyzed weeks. Women's sports competitions (both team and individual sports) had received 1 hour, 6 minutes and 22 seconds, which represented only 10.44% of the time dedicated to sports information programme. The remaining airtime referred to mixed-sex sports competitions (5.95%) and other news related to the organization of sports and sporting events, which were not directly related to specific sports competitions – 11.90%.

The dominance of men's sports competitions is clearly expressed in both individual and team sports. A total of 4 hours, 3 minutes and 48 seconds were set aside for individual male sports competitions, which represented 88.78% of the total airtime dedicated to individual sports. As regards women's individual sports, it followed that they received only 11.22% of the airtime, or 30 minutes and 48 seconds. Men in team sports were dedicated 3 hours, 25 minutes and 6 seconds, which comprised 85.92% of the total airtime allocated for team sports. Women in team sports received 14.08% of the time, i.e. 33 minutes and 36 seconds. This clearly indicates that in its information programme, the First Programme Service had not taken care to ensure adequate representation of both men's and women's sports competitions in either the individual or the team sports.

It is obvious that this quantitative difference would be immediately noticeable even if the two samples were analyzed separately. Along these lines, in the first sample, men's sports competitions received an airtime of 2 hours, 48 minutes and 11 seconds, which was 86.52% of the total duration of the sports information programme. Women's sports received only 22 minutes and 47 seconds, or 11.72% of the time. It is also noticeable that, when it comes to women's competitions, only 28 seconds<sup>54</sup> were broadcast in the first sample, referring to individual sports. This goes against the hypothesis presented in the research cited in the introduction, that there is a positive correlation between individual sports and female sports competitions.

In the second sample, the share of men's sports competitions was reduced, nevertheless, the share of women's sports competitions did not increase at the former's expense. The drop in male competitions' share was due to the nature of the Olympic offer **at the time**, in which several mixed-sex sports prevailed with men and women competing together, and these comprised 7.79%. Also increased during the Summer Olympics was the frequency of information concerning the organization of the competitions or the sports and the Covid-related crisis. Thus, in the sample taken during the Summer Olympics, 4 hours, 47 minutes and 45 seconds were allocated for men's sports competitions, which was 65.19% of the total sports information programme in that sample. In

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<sup>54</sup> Due to the short airtime set aside for women's individual sports in the first sample, these 28 seconds are not fully visible in Figure 5.

women's sports, 43 minutes and 35 seconds were allocated, which was only 9.87% of the duration of the sports information programme. In the second sample, a significantly increased share of sports in both women's and men's categories was noticeable.

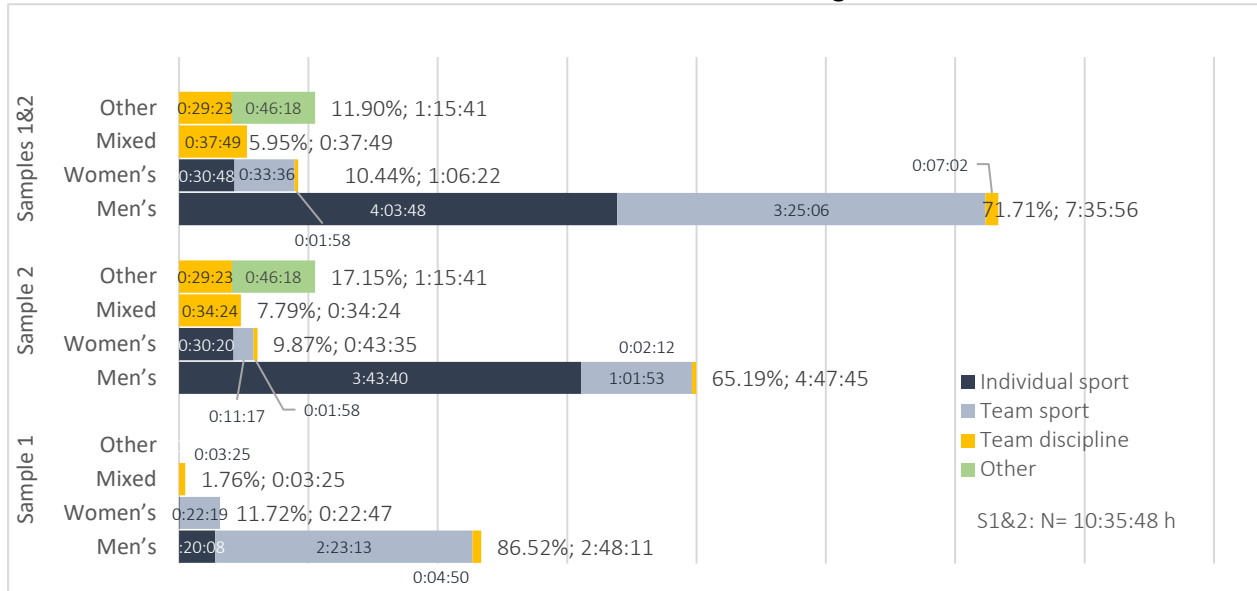


Figure 4: Share of men's and women's sports competitions in the sports information programme on the MRT1, segregated by the sports' type

The research captured a different picture of the shares of men's and women's sports competitions, respectively, within the sports broadcasts in the sample taken during the Olympic Games. Women's sports, as can be seen in Figure 6, were given 36 hours, 41 minutes and 33 seconds, which represented 34.06% of the total duration of sports broadcasts on the First Programme Service that week. As regards men's sports competitions, these were allocated a total of 68 hours, 53 minutes and 42 seconds, which represented 63.95% of the broadcasts' total duration. Although the difference between male and female sports was significant – the ratio was nearly 2:1 – yet, it was reduced compared to what could be seen in the information programme (see Figure 5).

The analysis by types of sports, within the sports broadcasts during the Summer Olympics, showed that the total difference between the shares of men's and women's sports, respectively, were largely due to the difference in the share of team sports in men's and women's category. Out of a total of 39 hours, 11 minutes and 42 seconds – as were allotted for team sports – 30 hours, 51 minutes and 4 seconds, or 78.71%, fell on male team sports competitions, while the remaining 21.29% – on female team sports competitions. The difference in the case of individual sports was much smaller compared to that in team sports. Out of 52 hours, 12 minutes and 35 seconds, which was the total duration of broadcasts that week, male competitors in individual sports received 28 hours, 21 minutes and 18 seconds, which was 54.31%, while women in individual sports were allocated 23 hours, 51 minutes and 17 seconds, which represented 45.69%. According to these

findings, in the broadcasts related to the Olympic Games, female individual sports were more likely to appear than the team ones.

Given that, in the first sample, there was an almost imperceptible frequency of broadcasts, the findings regarding the second sample would be virtually identical to those for the two samples together.

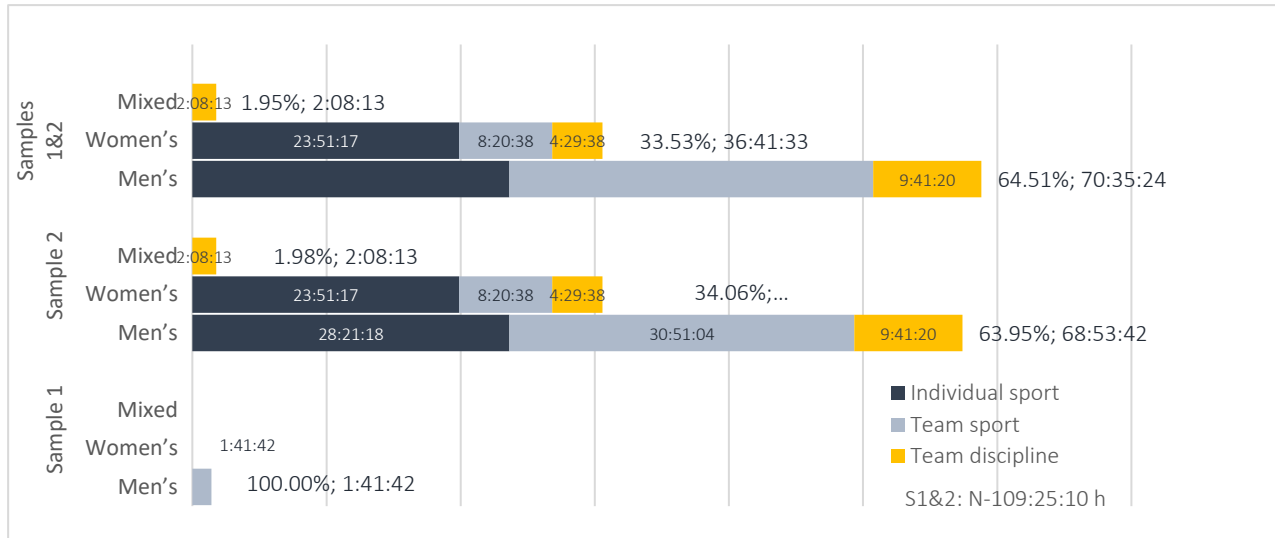


Figure 5: Share of male and female sports competitions in the sports broadcasts on MRT1, segregated by the type of sports

In this research, in addition to the duration of the items that referred to male and female sports competitions, also coded were the instances of appearance<sup>55</sup> of male and female participants in the program. However, apart from the male and female commentators, who will be presented separately, the participants in the sports broadcasts were not coded due to the volume and heterogeneity of the task.

Figure 7 shows the frequency of instances of male and female journalists, athletes and sports workers, i.e. sports experts' appearances. And again, men prevailed in the programme according to this criterion as well. In the two samples taken together, a total of 555 instances of participants'

<sup>55</sup> The concept of "instance of the appearance" is used here to make a distinction between what had been measured in the research and the actual "participants in the programme," and this was done for analytical reasons. "Instances of the appearance" are units of visual or verbal representation of a male or female participant in the programme per item unit. As an example, if 5 items were aired in one news edition and the same journalist appeared in all of these, then this journalist was marked 5 times in the code matrix. This means that one participant has 5 instances of appearance per item unit.



appearances in the programme were registered, of which 444, or 80%, were men (not counting the sports commentators), whereas 111, or 20%, were women.

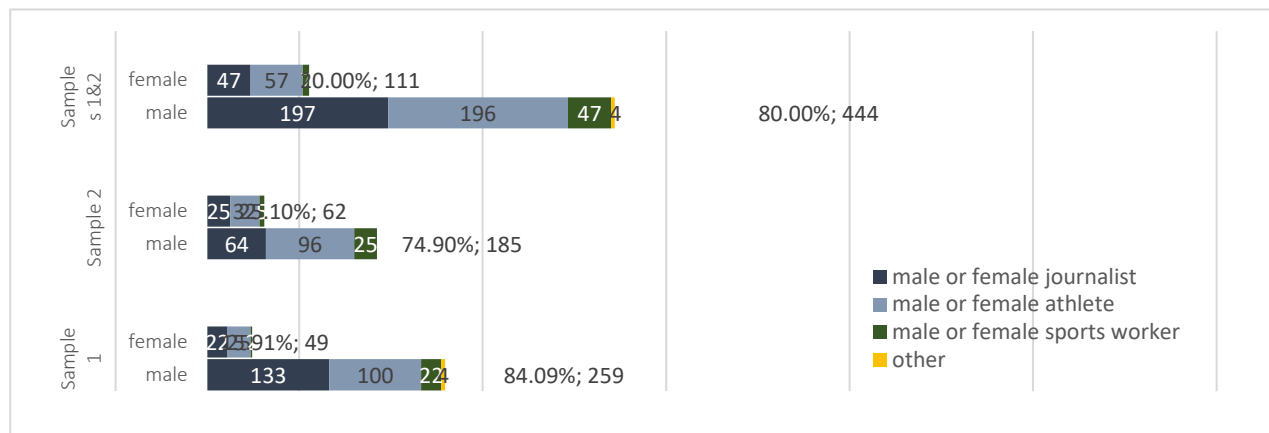


Figure 6: The frequency of instances of appearance of the male and female participants in the sports programme of MRT1 per unit of item, segregated by types of role

Segregated by types of role, registered in the two samples taken together were a total of 244 instances of journalists' appearances in the programme – 197 of these, i.e. 80.74%, were appearances by men, while 47, or 19.26%, were women. Eighteen journalists' names appeared as unique units in the sports information programme of the First Programme Service. Table 4 illustrates the frequency of instances

of appearance by each of these – and that 10 of them were male, while 8 were female journalists. However, this balance does not apply to the Sports Newsroom of the First Programme Service, as, of these 18 names that appeared in the programme related to sports news, eight were of journalists specialized in sports, and one was of a female sports reporter. Out of a total of 244 instances of appearance, 126 (51.64%) were made by the three leading sports journalists – men – in the Sports Newsroom.

Name	Sample 1	Sample 2	Total
Toni Stojanovski	41	3	44
Dragan Nikolovski	8	34	42
Goran Sterjov	40	0	40
Irena Andreevska Dimitrievska	18	11	29
Damjan Nikolovski	8	12	20
Zoran Videvski	16	0	16
Goran Milkovski	15	0	15
Branko Chupevski	0	10	10
Vlatko Arsov	4	3	7
Anita Nikusheva Jovanchev	0	5	5
Aleksandra Spirovska	0	3	3
Bojana Krstevski	0	2	2
Zharko Dimitrioski	0	2	2
Ljiljana Gjorgovska	0	2	2
Sanja Rilkovska	2	0	2
Sunchica Nikoloska	0	2	2
Tanja Stojanovska	2	0	2
Dejan Georgievski	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>244</b>

Table 4: Frequency of individual appearances by male and female journalists on MRT 1

This research registered the duration of each instance of appearance. According to this measurement parameter, as seen in Figure 8, out of a total of 4 hours, 39 minutes and 59 seconds – the time that this television channel set aside for presentations by male and female journalists in both samples together – 84.40% of the time was filled by male journalists’ presentations, while 15.60% – by female journalists. Of the total time of 1 hour, 40 minutes and 19 seconds in which the male and female journalists appeared on-camera in the programme, 73.23% of the time it was male journalists, and 26.77% – female journalists.

This ratio was not evenly distributed throughout the two samples. In the regular programme before the Summer Olympics (Sample 1), journalists’ verbal presentations lasted a total of 2 hours, 37 minutes and 18 seconds. Of these, 90.10% were the time reserved for male journalists’ verbal presentations, and 9.90% for female journalists’ presentations. The difference between the duration of the visual presentations of male and female journalists, respectively, was big as well – out of a total of 40 minutes and 4 seconds in which the male and female journalists were shown on camera that week – men received 98.75% of the time, whereas the female journalists were shown on camera for only 30 seconds, or 1.25% of the time.

In the second sample, the reduced difference in the duration of the verbal presentations by male and female journalists was noticeable, and, at the same time, a balance was established in their visual presentations. Thus, out of a total of 2 hours, 2 minutes and 41 seconds, as the presentations of both male and female journalists lasted in the second sample, male journalists occupied 77.08% of the time, while female journalists – 22.92%. As regards visual presentation – out of the total duration of 1 hour and 15 seconds within which male and female journalists appeared in the programme on-camera, male journalists appeared in 56.27% of time, while female journalists had 43.73% of the time.

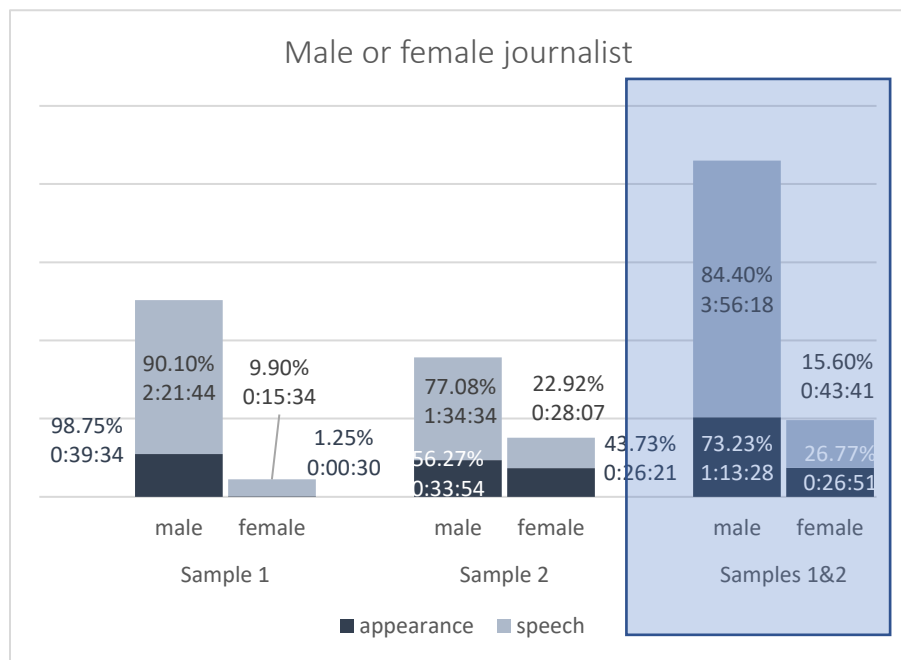


Figure 7: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations by male and female journalists, respectively, in MRT 1’s information programme

As regards visual presentation – out of the total duration of 1 hour and 15 seconds within which male and female journalists appeared in the programme on-camera, male journalists appeared in 56.27% of time, while female journalists had 43.73% of the time.

In the news items aired by the First Programme Service, in the two samples taken together, a total of 253 instances of appearance by male and female athletes were registered in the programme. Of these, 57 or 22.53% were female athletes, while 196 or 77.47% were male athletes

(see Figure 7), which again clearly indicates a dominance by male participants in the programme. This unequal representation was stable in both samples, regardless of the fact that the former was taken before and the latter – during the Summer Olympic Games. In the first sample, preceding the Olympics, 125 instances of appearance by male and female athletes were registered, of which 100, or 80%, were by male athletes and 25, or 20%, were by female athletes. In the second sample, 128 instances of appearance by male and female athletes were registered, of which 96, or 75%, were by male athletes, and 32, or 25%, were by female athletes. The Olympic offer of the First Programme Service did not make a significant shift in the ratio of male and female athletes' appearances in the programme.

The dominant representation of male athletes in the programme of the First Programme Service is visible in the other parameters as well. At the level of the two samples together, as shown in Figure 9, out of 5 hours, 42 minutes and 4 seconds, which was the total duration of the visual presentations of the male and female athletes, 4 hours, 43 minutes and 26 seconds, or 82.86 % of the time was dedicated to the visual presentation of male athletes. The visual presentation of female athletes lasted 58 minutes and 38 seconds, or 17.14% of the time. The ratio between the male and female presence, respectively, was similar, should one take into account the duration of their verbal presentations. Figure 9 shows that male athletes spoke on-camera in 82.18% of the time, while female athletes had 17.82%, i.e. out of a total of 1 hour, 56 minutes and 59 seconds, male athletes were asked for their opinion or had the opportunity to talk about their sport or success for a total of 1 hour, 36 minutes and 8 seconds, whereas women had only 20 minutes and 51 seconds.

This ratio is stable in both samples. Just as the figure associated with the instances of male and female athletes' appearance in both samples was stable, they had an even ratio throughout the two samples. This means that, according to these parameters, too, men dominated the sports programme of the MRT's First Programme Service regardless of the Olympic offer, i.e. regardless of the fact that during the Summer Olympics there was an offer that could have provided greater gender balance.

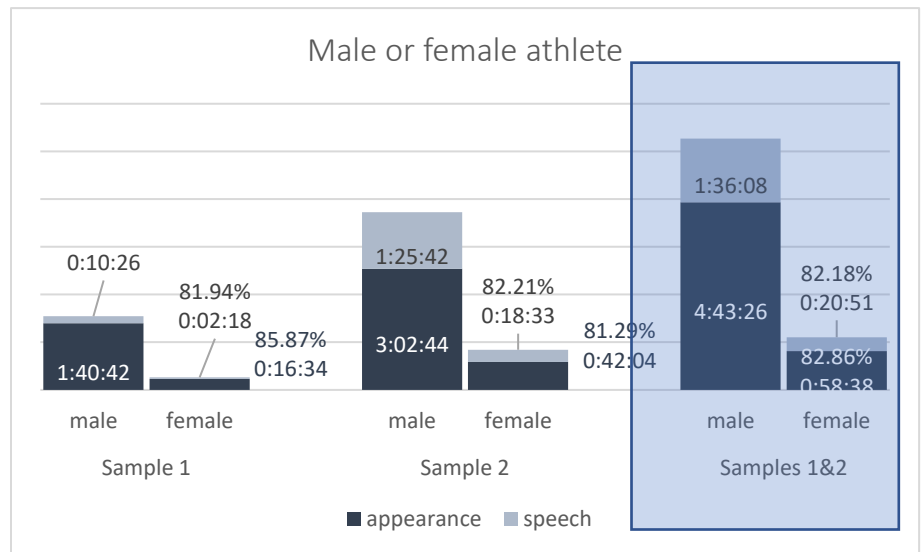


Figure 8: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations by male and female journalists in the MRT 1's information programme

In the case of the First Programme Service, it can be seen that there were differences in the ratio between male and female athletes in the programme, based on the four measuring parameters:

sports competition, the frequency of appearance of male and female athletes and the duration of their verbal and visual presentations. The difference in the frequency of appearance corresponds with the difference in the appearances of male and female competitions in the respective sports. The difference in the duration of visual presentations corresponds to the difference in the duration of verbal presentations.

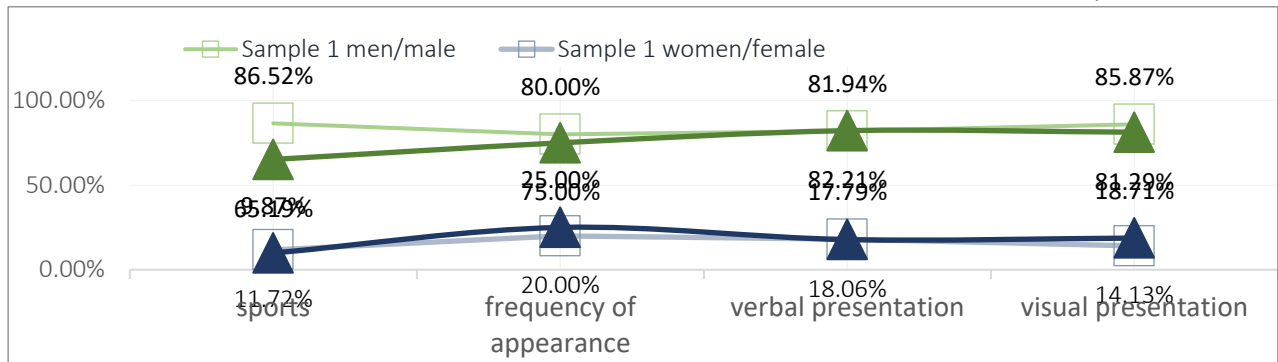


Figure 9: Ratio between the male and female athletes on MRT 1, presented through four measuring parameters in both samples

The last element of the analysis refers to the male and female sports experts, i.e. male and female sports workers who appeared in the programme. As can be seen in Figure 7, out of a total of 54 instances of male and female sports workers appearing in the programme in the two samples taken together, 47 or 87.04% were by men, while 7, or 12.96%, were by women. Five appearances by female sports experts were in the sample taken during the Summer Olympics, while two were from the first sample. In fact, there was one case spotted in the first sample, which was then rerun once. It may be expected that the appearances by the female sports workers were a result of the effect of the pressure that the Olympic events had made on the sports programme. The instances of appearance by sports experts were virtually identical in the two samples – 22 appearances or 46.81% of the total number of appearances by experts came from the first sample, and 25 or 53.19% – from the second one.

Just by seeing the gender-distributed frequency of appearances by male and female sports workers or experts could one conclude that, according to this parameter, too, men dominated consistently in the sports programme. Nevertheless, this research marked the duration of the verbal and visual presentations of male and female sports workers as well, i.e. for how long they had appeared on-camera and how long by speech on the screen. As can be seen in Figure 11, men dominated according to both parameters.

Out of a total of 1 hour, 29 minutes and 47 seconds, or as long as this television channel had set aside for visual presentation of male and female sports workers or experts, 1 hour, 26 minutes and 12 seconds, or 96.01%, had been set aside for men. The ratio in terms of the duration of speech was similar: out of 1 hour, 18 minutes and 4 seconds, i.e. the total set aside for statements by male and female sports experts, 1

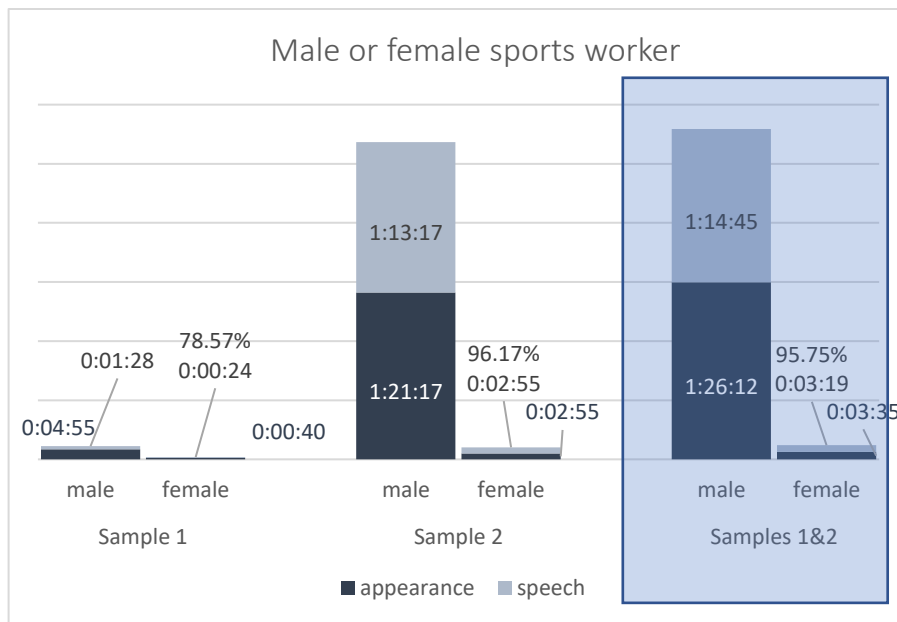


Figure 10: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of male and female sports workers in the MRT 1's information programme

hour, 14 minutes and 45 seconds, or 95.75%, were by men. Most of these figures come from the second sample and very few from the first, although the frequency of appearance of sports workers in the first sample was not small (a total of 24 were from the first sample, as opposed to the 30 from the second one). Judging from this criterion, again, the dominance of male presence in the program is evident.

In this research, coded from a gender aspect were the athletes and the sports to which the reporting in the information programme referred. One of the parameters refers to the discourse nodes by which media construct the male and female athletes within the frameworks of feminizing or masculinist stereotyping markers. In the first sample, no feminizing or masculinizing stereotyping markers were registered, however, in the second sample, a masculinist strategy was registered in in 10 news items, where male athletes had been construed as heroes or as super humans with nerves of steel, etc. Interestingly, in the context of discourse strategies, this research – just as the previous researches conducted in North Macedonia – revealed a genre-woven practice of using martial rhetoric in sports reporting, which acquired an accentuated ethno-mythological dimension whenever Macedonian athletes participated involved in the reported events. Thus, for example, in the report on the Macedonian Olympic taekwondo player Dejan Georgievski, sentence constructions were being used, such as: “the Macedonian sports hero,” “our Macedonian hero,” “the Macedonian pride,” “the Macedonian sports national hero”. In an item aired on 27 July, a sentence construction was used, stating that he was “the first *native Macedonian* (author’s note) to fight for gold in the Olympic Games’ finals.” The phrase “native Macedonian” implies differentiation from and comparing of ethnic Macedonians against the other **Macedonian** citizens.

On the First Programme Service, in the second sample, feminizing constructions were identified in 11 news items. These items marked a frequent use of the noun “ladies” for the female athletes. The following sentence constructions were used: “the ladies shall compete in 400 metres freestyle,” “the ladies’ 100-metre butterfly finals,” “the fastest ladies of today,” “the remarkable Swede remains the fastest lady,” “the first lady in the waters of the aquatic center,” “the extravagant Thompson [the adjectives in the Macedonian language have suffixes that reflect the gender – in this case, the feminine one, translator’s note].” Interestingly, certain reporters’ constructions used contrasting gender markers. For instance, an item aired on 26 July said, “[...] the declaring of winners in the ladies 400-metre race [...] they call her by her nickname *terminator* (author’s note), there is no explanation why, but people who carry such nicknames are usually dedicated to that job [...]”.

In three news items, the journalists made sentence constructions that highlighted the physical traits of the female athletes and there was an explicit gender-soaked discourse that involved objectification of the female body, and speech that construed the female using inferior markers. Thus, in an announcement for an interview that was aired on 27 July 2022, it was said: “[...] while these warm-ups are going on, here is somewhat more of these *cute girls* coming out, most of them teenagers [...]”. Or, in an item aired on 30 July, it was said: “The *attractive*, eternal Catherine Iburgüen. *Her age does not show much, except perhaps a little on her face, but the body of this exceptional athlete remains among the most attractive ones*, while she is trying to reach the finals as the current champion from Rio. She no longer has the speed, nor does she have the strength, but she *still has the elegance* and she will have it – this *beautiful female athlete whose appearance has been captivating* for more than two decades”. Or, the news item aired on 26 July: “this is the coach, no, the *female coach* – so as not to upset the ladies [...] is of Greek origin, her father is Greek who had moved to Canada [...] this is devastating for a coach, had Zhivko Obradovikj (the father of the female coach of the Serbian *team* – *author’s note*) been here, tables and chairs would have flown and what not [...] one man on the field, and he has to decide *the outcome* of this match [...] [the referee] from Argentina is the *representative of the stronger sex* [...] *it is difficult when playing with ladies, at that moment whenever a goal is scored the lady is in front of the TV screen, this time she is in front of the camera*”.

This research also coded the rhetorical compositions that referred to the way in which male and female journalists construed sports. In sports reporting, it is common for men's sports to be called by their generic name, thus naturalizing the male competition. In the first sample from the First Programme Service of MRT, 18 instances were registered where a gender marker was used to mark a female sports competition, and 8 instances in which the generic name of the sports was used, although it was a female sports competition. In three instances, gender markets for men's sports were used, whereas, in 168 instances, the generic name was used. Similarly, in the second sample, the generic name for women's sports was used in 19 instances, whereas, in 36 instances, a gender marker was used. The generic name for men's sports was used in 95 instances, and in 26 instances – the gender marker. According to this, it appears that the gender-marked adjective of the sports’ name is more likely to be used for women’s sports competitions, than for men's.

## III.2. Makedonska Radio Televizija – Programme in the Albanian Language (MRT 2)

### Introduction

The *Makedonska Radio Televizija – Programme in the Albanian language* (MRT 2), had a high frequency and diversity of represented sports and athletes in its programme. In the two periods selected for the respective samples – from 4 to 10 April (before the Summer Olympics 2020) and from 26 July to 1 August (during the Olympics), MRT 2 aired a total of 77 editions of sports shows, 46 editions of which, or 59.74%, were broadcasts of sports competitions, while 31 editions – or 40.26% – were sports information shows, such as news or sports magazines.

The second **timeframe excerpt/selection** was chosen to cover the duration of the 2020 Summer Olympics and, for these reasons, the media outlet had an uneven distribution of shows according to their type in both samples: 44 editions of sports broadcasts, representing 95.65% of the total frequency of broadcasts, were aired in the second sample (see Table 5). Taking into account the share of broadcasts, not according to the frequency of their appearance, but according to their duration, 98.44% of the total time dedicated to broadcasts was within the sample taken during the Summer Olympics.

Show/ Sample	News	Magazine	Broadcast	Total	%
Sample 1	11	2	2	15	19.48%
Sample 2	16	2	44	62	80.52%
Total	27	4	46	77	100.00%

Table 5: Frequency of sports shows on MRT2 by type

As regards the sports information programme, in the 18 news editions that had been aired, the Newsroom dedicated to it a total of 2 hours, 10 minutes and 2 seconds in the second sample, which constituted 56.61% of the total duration of the information editions in the two samples together. In the first sample, a total of 1 hour, 39 minutes and 39 seconds were broadcast, which represents 43.39% of the total duration of the information programme in both samples together. Of the total duration, 94.86% were filled by sports broadcasts, whereas 5.14% were dedicated to the information programme.

There is an interesting discrepancy between the participation of different types of shows according to their frequency and this same participation calculated according to the duration in the programme in both samples. Thus, according to the number of shows aired before the start of the Summer Olympics, the sports programme participated with 19.48% (15 shows) in the total frequency, however, according to the duration, the fifteen registered shows participated with only 6.80% in the total programme (see Table 5 and Table 6). This is due to the fact that, in the sample that coincides with the Summer Olympics, each of the broadcasts had a long duration, but also because the MRT 2 Programme in the Albanian language noted a large frequency of daily sports information programme in the sample during the Olympics.

The overall duration of the sports programme during the Summer Olympics shows that major sporting events and sports in general play a significant part in the editorial decisions of the Public Broadcaster (in the First Programme Service, too, a huge portion of the time within a week was dedicated to the Olympic sports events). Along with the reruns, MRT 2 had aired 69 hours, 22 minutes and 56 seconds of programme in the sample program that coincided with seven days of the Olympics. This means that during the week from which the sample had been taken, during the 24 hours of programme, MRT 2 broadcasted 9 hours, 54 minutes and 42 seconds of programme on the average. On average, the rest of the programme received about 14 hours per day.

Type of programme / Sample	Broadcast	Broadcast %	Information programme	Information programme %	Total	Total %
Sample 1	3:23:55	4.57%	1:39:39	2.23%	5:03:34	6.80%
Sample 2	67:12:54	90.29%	2:10:02	2.91%	69:22:56	93.20%
Total	70:36:49	94.86%	3:49:41	5.14%	74:26:30	100.00%

Table 6: Duration of sports shows on MRT 2 by type

The occurrence and distribution of different genres was, again, determined by the specific nature of the covering of major sporting events such as the Summer Olympics. Table 7 shows that in the programme during the Summer Olympics, the number of broadcasts increased significantly<sup>56</sup>. Nevertheless, the frequency of other genres, such as news and reports, was visibly higher as well. The typical short news on MRT 2 was not a genre that was used frequently, and one could also note the total absence of reviews – the analytical and commentary genre that **was** quite present in other media outlets.

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<sup>56</sup> The broadcasts were double-coded in this research, both as a specific genre in sports journalism and as a type of **media broadcast**. However, in the aggregation, it was processed as a single unit.



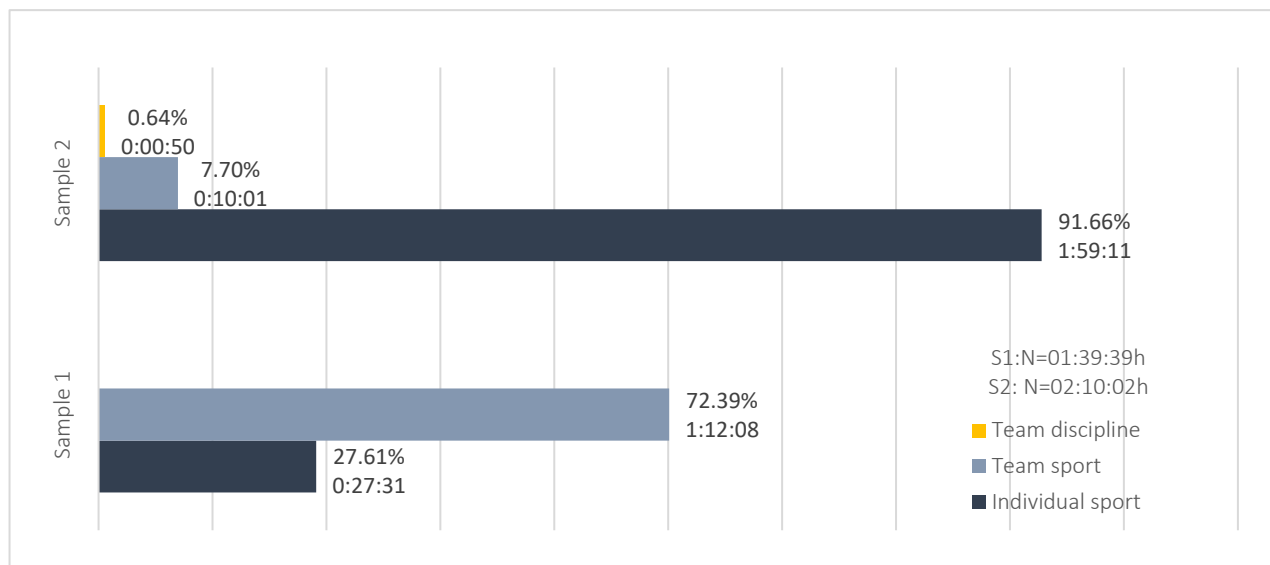


Figure 11: Share of the individual and team sports in the sports information programme aired by MRT 2 in the respective samples

In the research, the entire sports programme in both samples was coded for the type of sports to which the media outlet had been paying attention – be it team or individual<sup>57</sup>. In the sample taken before the Summer Olympics, the overall sports information programme had given significantly more space to team sports. Out of a total of 1 hour, 39 minutes and 39 seconds of programme, 1 hour, 12 minutes and 8 seconds, or 72.39%, had been dedicated to team sports. The situation was dramatically opposite in the second sample. Influenced by the Olympic offer, the MRT 2 Newsroom turned predominantly towards individual sports in its sports information programme. Out of a total of 2 hours, 10 minutes and 2 seconds, even 91.66% of the programme – or 1 hour, 59 minutes and 11 seconds – had been dedicated to individual sports (Figure 12). This distribution was mostly due to the share of information related to athletics in the sports programme – even 1 hour, 2 minutes and 11 seconds, or 47.82% of the length of sports information in the second sample, were dedicated to athletics. The sample that refers to the regular sports programme (before the Summer Olympic Games) covered one week and one could not draw any conclusions on whether the MRT 2 Newsroom was biased towards team sports, or whether their attitude towards individual sports in the big competitions depended on the level of "pressure" that the sports offer put on the programme, only on the basis of these findings. Be it as it may, this is not the subject of this research, but is analyzed here only to present the context of reporting on women and men in sports.

<sup>57</sup> The division into team and individual sports has been problematized to a great extent due to the fact that in some traditionally individual sports there is team competition and, accordingly, these should be considered as team sports because they involve coordinated action by a group of competitors. However, in order to make that the interpretation of the data in this research is valid, a category "team discipline" was added, within which the sports that have been traditionally considered as individual, but still include team disciplines (e.g. relay races in athletics, etc.), were coded separately).

Nevertheless, the comparison of the share of different types of sports according to the length of their coverage in the information programme with that in the broadcasts reveals some quite interesting information about this issue. As can be seen in Figure 13, the share of the different types of sports in the broadcasts in both samples does not correspond adequately to their share in the information programme. Even though, in the information programme covered by the sample preceding the Summer Olympic Games, the individual sports participated with 27.61% in the total length of the information programme, the individual sports were completely absent from the broadcasts category in this same sample. The entire airtime of 3 hours, 23 minutes and 55 seconds of broadcasts in the first sample was dedicated to team sports.

The sample taken during the Summer Olympics reveals an interesting dynamic. Here, one can see the weight that the newsroom gives to team sports, as opposed to the individual ones. If, in the sample covering the Olympic Games, team sports were represented only in 7.70% of the news programme, when it came to the broadcasts, they occupied 54.03%. And, *vice versa*, in the information programme in the second sample, individual sports had a share of 91.66% in the entire information programme in that sample, but as regards broadcasts, these sports were represented with 43.89%. Although this comparison may at first glance suggest that, despite the Olympic offer, the Newsroom preferred team sports in the broadcasts, this suggestion should be taken into account very carefully – as, it is just as likely that the higher frequency of team sports in the broadcasts may have led to a smaller frequency of team sports in the sports information programme. Broadcasts and information programme are interdependent variables. Any precise specification of the reasons for this distribution, as noted above, is beyond the scope of this study.

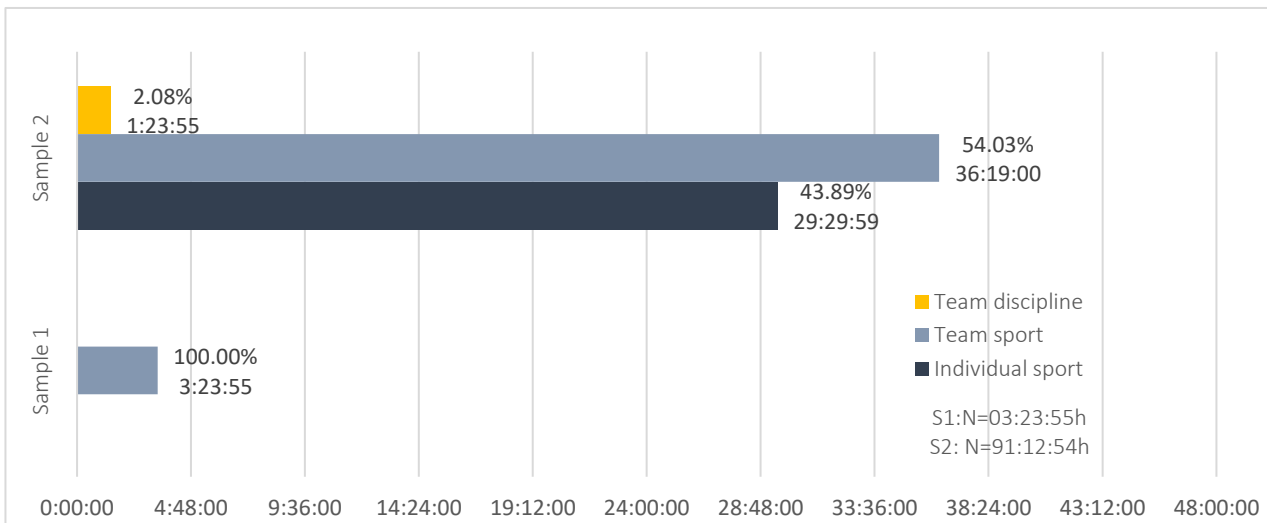


Figure 12: Share of individual and team sports in the MRT 2 broadcasts in the respective samples

As pointed out, the biggest reason for the prominent place that individual sports occupied in the information programme in the second sample was the airtime dedicated to athletics and the relatively smaller presence of sports such as football and basketball, compared to the first sample. In this same period, when it came to broadcasts, the increased presence of team sports was primarily due to the relatively larger focus given here to basketball and volleyball, as can be seen in Figures 14 and 15.

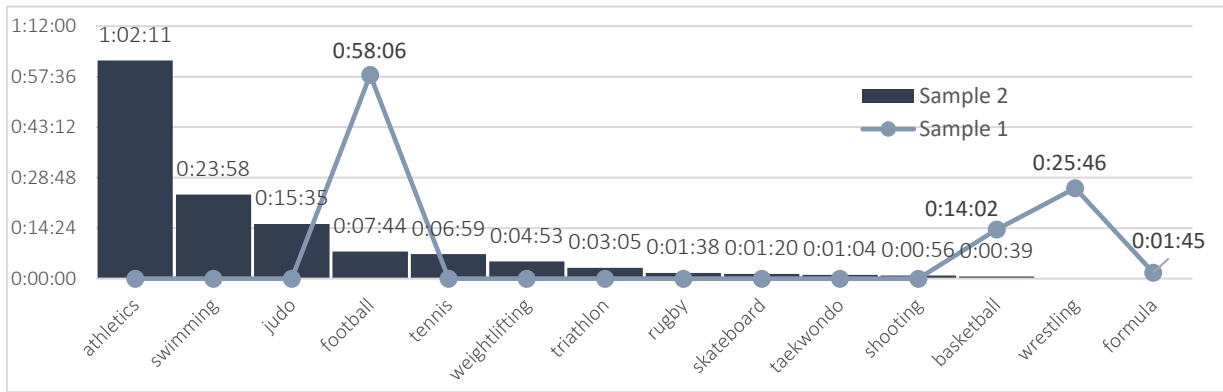


Figure 13: Share of the different types of sports in the overall analyzed sports programme of MRT 2 in the respective samples

The presence of basketball and volleyball in the broadcasts testifies about the relatively big weight that was given to team sports. Basketball occupied 0.50% of the information programme in the second sample, however, its share in the total broadcasts **airtime** in this same sample was 25.14%. Volleyball, on the other hand, was completely absent from the information programme, while in the broadcasts it participated with 17.68% (Figures 14 and 15).

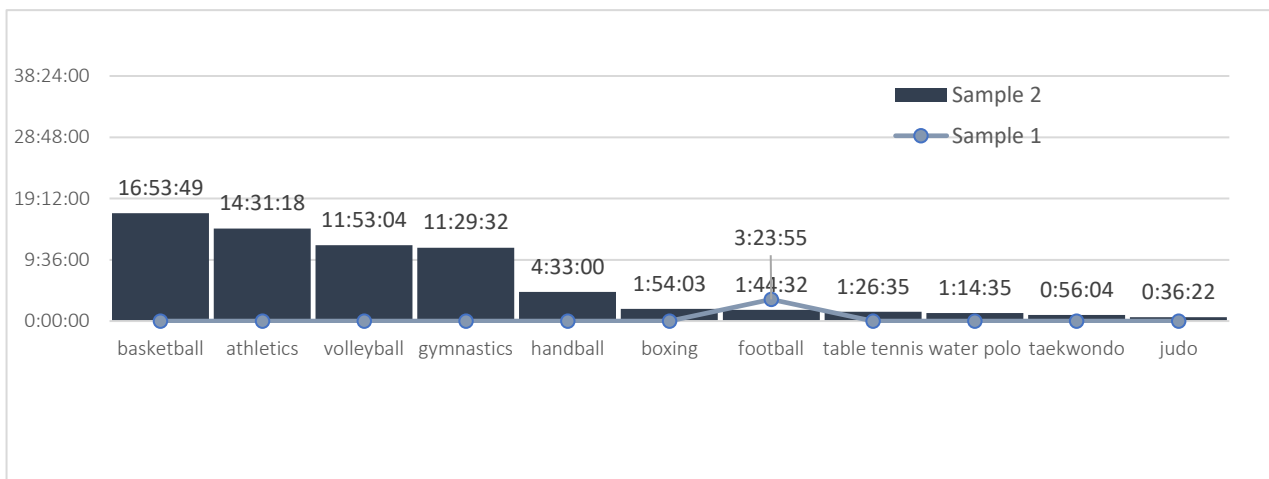


Figure 14: Share of the different types of sports in the overall analysed broadcasts on the MRT 2, in the respective samples

## Analysis of the gender aspects in the sports programme

Taking into account the entire sports information programme of MRT 2 (see Figure 16), men's sports competitions received the longest airtime within this programme – a total of 2 hours, 18 minutes and 9 seconds, which was 60.15% of the total airtime dedicated to sports in the information programme in the two weeks analyzed. Women's sports competitions (here including both team sports and individual sports) received 1 hour, 30 minutes and 18 seconds, which constituted 39.31% of the programme.

There was a striking complete absence of team sports in women's sports competitions category in the MRT 2 programme in both samples. The entire total of 1 hour, 22 minutes and 9 seconds were dedicated to men's' team sports competitions. This airtime was not evenly distributed in the two samples. In fact, aired in the second sample were only 10 minutes and 1 second, of men's team sports – most of which had come from the first sample. Out of the total of 1 hour, 22 minutes and 9 seconds set aside for men's team sports, 1 hour, 12 minutes and 8 seconds, or 87.81%, came from the first sample. Thus, male dominance in team sports in the information programme is unquestionable.

Nevertheless, the figures related to individual sports can be quite interesting. Women in individual sports received 1 hour, 30 minutes and 18 seconds, which was 61.72% of the total of broadcast information about individual sports in the information programme in both samples. Men in individual sports received 56 minutes, or 38.28%. At first glance, this finding looks different from what is seen on other television channels. However, the inspection into the reasons for this revealed that, out of the total airtime given to individual sports in both samples of information programme, which was 2 hours, 26 minutes and 18 seconds, a total of 48 minutes or 32.81% belonged to a single, once rerun, interview with a female athlete. Consequently, this presence of women's individual sports competitions was not due to any systematic coverage but to a coincidence within the sample. This is why the share of information about women's individual sports is so distorted in both samples. In the first sample, 26 minutes and 41 seconds were allocated for men's individual sports competitions, which represented 96.97% of the total airtime allocated for individual sports in the first sample. Women's individual sports competitions in the first sample received only 50 seconds, or 3.03%.

In the second sample, there was a far greater presence of women’s individual sports competitions only because of the effect of a single, once rerun, interview. Out of a total of 1 hour, 58 minutes and 47 seconds, 24.68% were dedicated to men, while 75.32% to women.

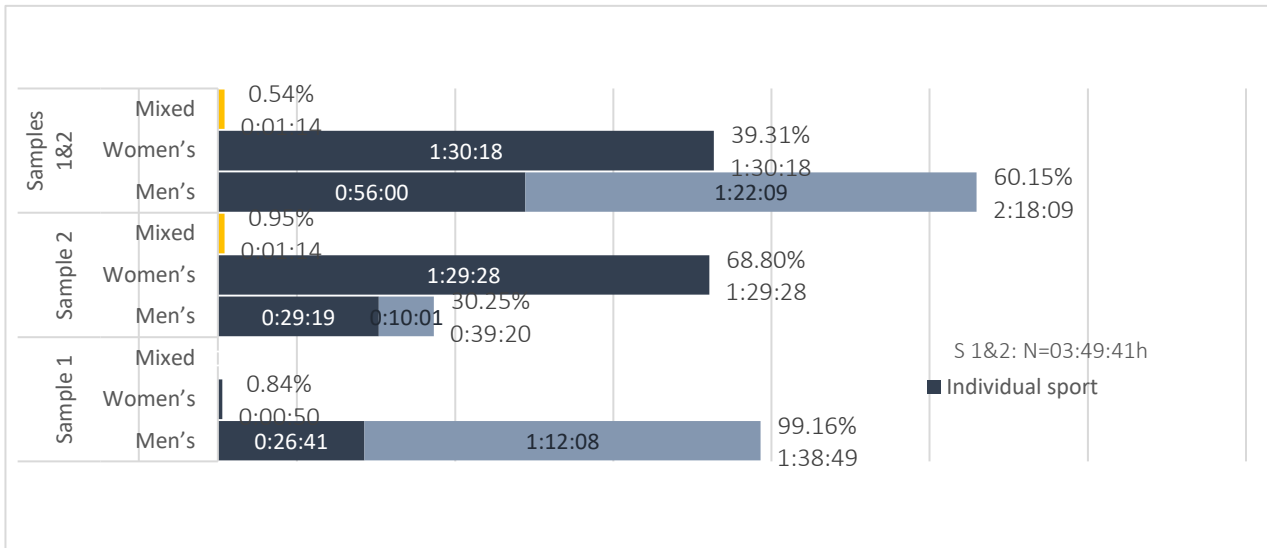


Figure 15: Share of men's and women's sports competitions, respectively, in the MRT 2 sports information programme, segregated by type of sports

There was a different dynamic of presence of male and female competitions in the broadcasts. Taking into account the two samples together, the broadcasts of men's sports competitions were given 19 hours, 57 minutes and 19 seconds, or 72.83%. The sports in which women competed, received 6 hours, 56 minutes and 38 seconds, or 25.34%. However, this portion was not evenly distributed among the different types of sports within the same sample, nor in the different samples of the programme.

In total, the team sports in the broadcasts in both samples were allocated a total of 16 hours, 21 minutes and 57 seconds. Of these, 84.59% were dedicated to men, while 15.41% – to women. At the level of the two samples together, there was a visibly predominant male presence in team sports. As for the individual sports, there was a greater balance, as, out of a total of 10 hours and 32 minutes dedicated to broadcasts of individual sports, 58.02% were of men and 41.98% – of women. This ratio comes entirely from the second sample.

In the broadcasts of team competitions within the regular programme of MRT 2, there was only presence of men's sports competitions. In the first sample, a total of 3 hours, 23 minutes and 55 seconds of team sports broadcasts were entirely dedicated to men. In the second sample, although women’s team sports competitions were present, their percentage was not high – out of a total of 12 hours, 58 minutes and 2 seconds of team sports broadcasts in the second sample,

80.55% were dedicated to men's competitions. Again, here, too, there is an interesting comparison between the share of reporting about female athletes in the information programme and in the broadcasts, respectively, in the sample covering the Olympics. The information programme in the second sample dedicated 75.32% to the women's individual sports competitions, while broadcasts in the same sample received 41.98% of the airtime. This discrepancy, as it was pointed out, is the effect of the share of one interview (its premiere and one rerun) of a female athlete in the MRT 2 programme. If we exclude this effect, it can be seen that in the MRT 2 programme, its broadcasts in particular, there was a greater representation of men's individual sports competitions and dominance of men's competitions in team sports.

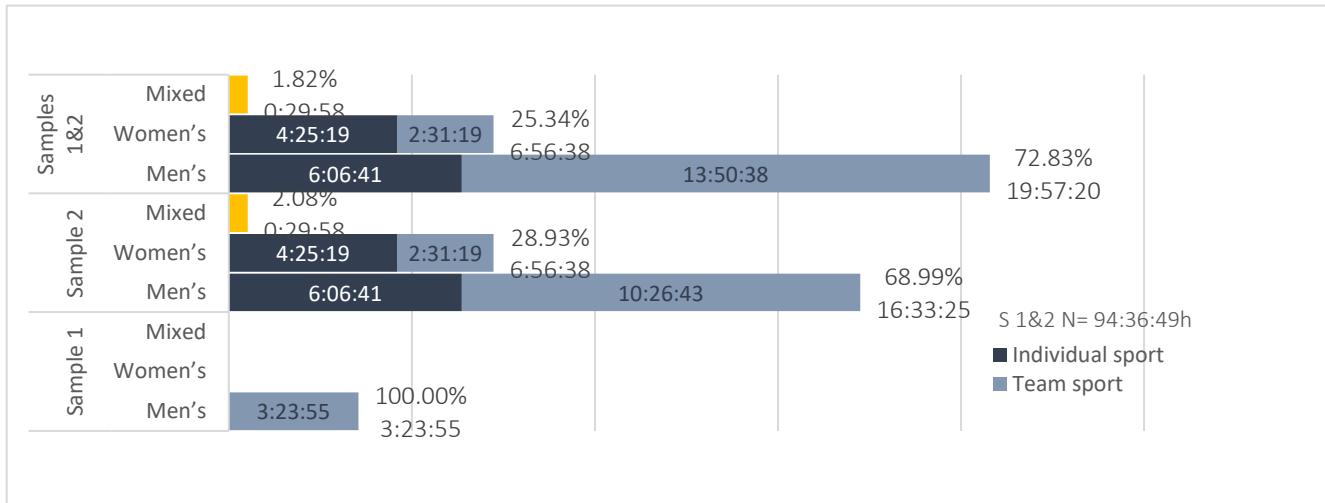


Figure 16: Share of men's and women's sports competitions, respectively, in the broadcasts of MRT, 2 segregated by type of sports

In this research, apart from the duration of the items related to men's and women's sports competitions, also coded were the instances of appearance<sup>58</sup> of male and female participants in the programme. However, except for the male and female commentators who will be presented separately, the male and female participants in the sports broadcasts were not coded due to the volume and heterogeneity of the task. Figure 18 shows the frequency of instances of male and female journalists, athletes and sports workers, i.e. sports experts. According to this criterion, too, male markers dominated the programme. In the two samples taken together, a total of 247 instances of appearances of male and female participants were registered in the programme, of whom 187, or 75.71%, were men (not counting the commentators at the sports broadcasts), while 60, or 24.29%, were women.

<sup>58</sup> The concept of "instance of appearance" is used here to make a distinction between what was being measured in the research and the actual "participants in the programme," and this has been done for analytical reasons. "Instances of appearance" are units of visual or verbal representation of a participant in the programme per unit of item. For instance, if 5 news items are aired in one news edition and one and the same journalist appears in all of them – then, that journalist is marked 5 times in the code matrix. So, there is one participant with 5 instances of appearance per unit of item.

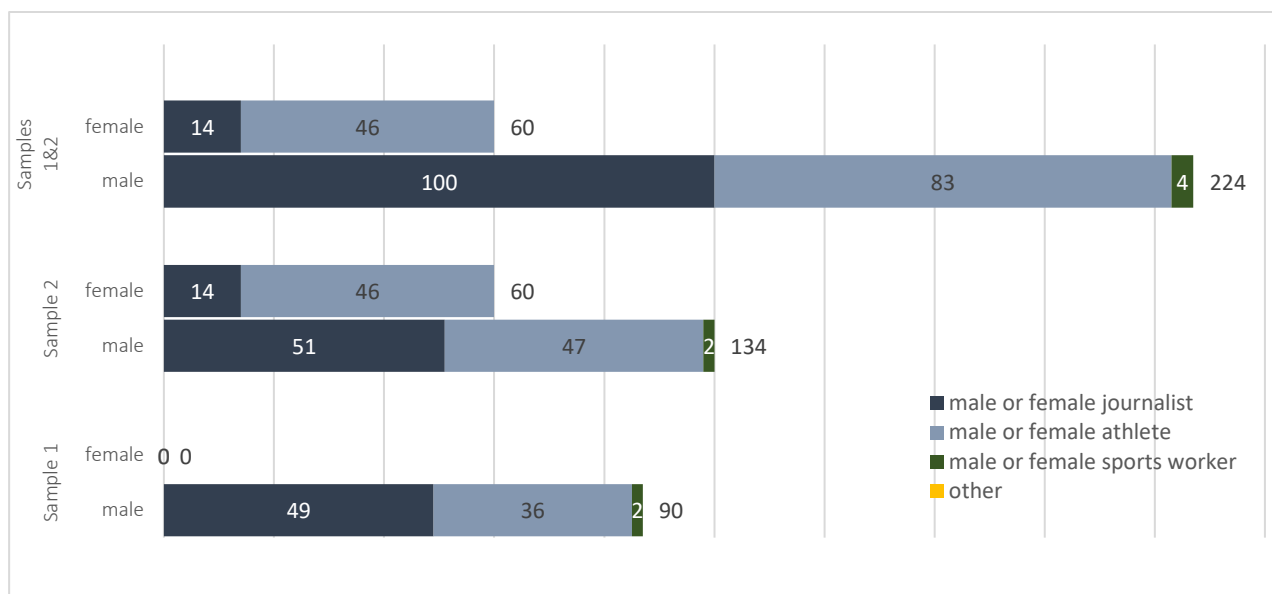


Figure 17: Frequency of instances of appearance of male and female participants in the MRT 2 sports programme per unit of item, segregated by role types

Segregated by the types of roles, in the two samples taken together, a total of 114 instances of appearance by male and female journalists were registered in the programme. One hundred of them, which is 87.72%, were appearances by male journalists, and 14 – or 12.28% – were by female journalists. Appearing as unique units in the MRT 2 programme were 10 journalists’ names. Table 8 shows the frequency of instances of appearance of each of them. In the two samples taken together, 49.12% of the total frequency of instances of appearance belonged to only one journalist from the Sports Newsroom of MRT 2.

Name	Sample 1	Sample 2	Total
Amir Duraku	16	40	56
Denis Shabani	18	0	18
Gazmend Kurtishi	0	9	9
Leunora Jakupi	0	8	8
Artan Ziberi	6	0	6
Mustafa Ademi	6	0	6
Belinda Koka- Ademi	0	4	4
Sami Ademi	3	0	3
Arlinda Baftiu	0	2	2
Atli Dema	0	2	2
Total	49	65	114

Table 7: Frequency of appearances by individual male and female journalists in the MRT 2 programme

This research registered the duration of each instance of occurrence. According to this measurement parameter, as shown in Figure 19, out of a total of 2 hours, 18 minutes and 39 seconds - the airtime that this television channel had set aside for male and female journalists' speech in both samples together - 90.65% of the time it was speech by male journalists, while 9.35% - by female journalists. Of the total time of 40 minutes and 30 seconds during which the male and female journalists appeared on-camera in the programme, 67.98% of the time it was male journalists, and 32.02% - female journalists.

This ratio was not distributed evenly throughout the two samples. In the regular programme preceding the Summer Olympic Games, not a single female journalist appeared in sports information programmes, so the visual and verbal presentations were only those of male journalists. In the second sample, in the 14 instances of female journalists appearing, 12 minutes and 58 seconds were allocated to their

verbal presentation, which was 19.54% of the total time given to verbal presentation. Male journalists' speech received 53 minutes and 23 seconds, which represents 80.46% of the total time for verbal presentation in the second sample. Interestingly, male journalists received less time for visual presentation than the female journalists, although they dominated when it came to speech on-camera. This finding was confirmed with most of the other television channels - that female journalists have better chances of appearing in picture on camera, but less chances for a long verbal presentation.

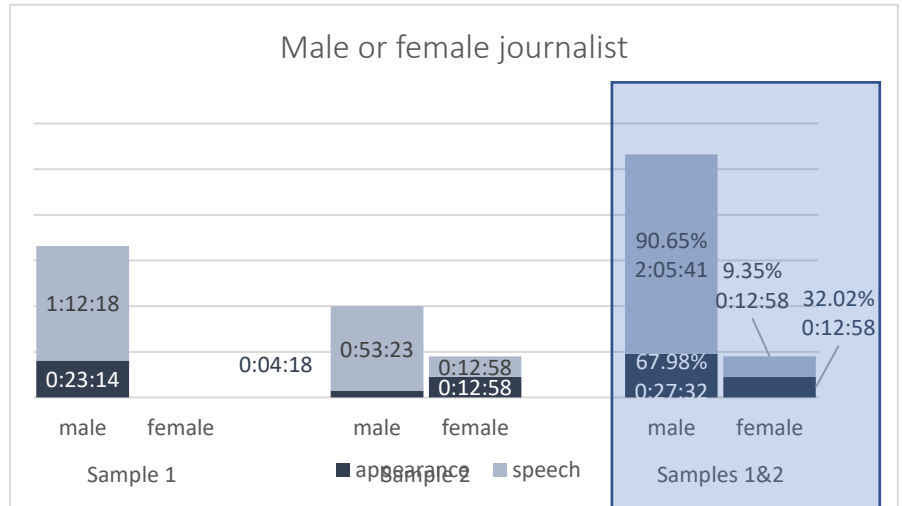


Figure 18: Duration of the visual and verbal representation of male and female journalists in the information programme of MRT 2



In the MRT 2 reports in the two samples taken together, a total of 129 instances of male and female athletes' appearances were registered in the programme. Of these, 46 or 35.66% were female athletes, while 83, or 64.34%, were male athletes. In the first sample preceding the Olympics, 36 instances of athletes' appearance were registered, and all these were men. In the second sample, there were 93 registered instances of appearance of athletes, of whom 46, or 49.46%, were women, and 47, or 50.54%, were men. This complete absence of female athletes from the first sample, and full balance of presence in the sample taken during the Summer Olympics, is entirely due to the pressure made by the Olympic program. But in the second sample, it was indicative that female athletes received more time for visual and verbal presentation than the male athletes. This phenomenon can again be explained by the broadcasted (and once rerun) interview of a female athlete, which takes up 48 minutes of the total airtime in the second sample.

In the two selected weeks, before and during the Olympics, a total of 4 instances of appearance by male and female sports workers or sports experts were registered – all by men and evenly distributed into both samples (two in each). During the Summer Olympics, it was expected that there would be a higher frequency of appearance by male and female sports experts who would be commenting on the

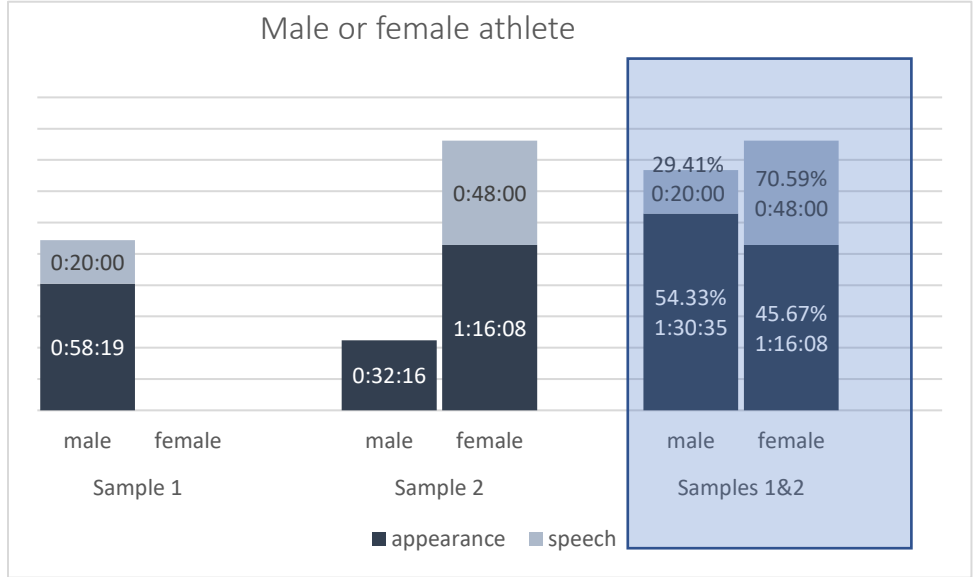


Figure 19: Duration of the visual and verbal representations of male and female athletes in the information programme of MRT 2

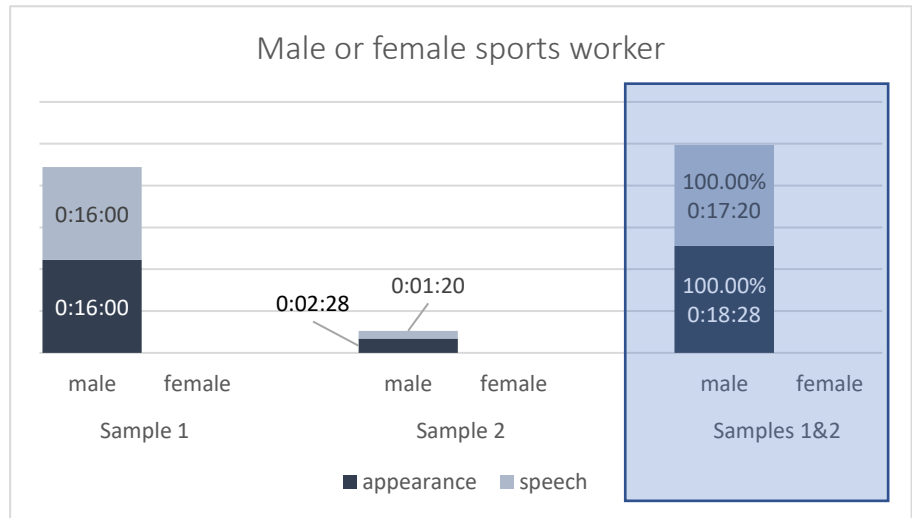


Figure 20: Duration of the visual and verbal representation of male and female sports workers in the information programme on MRT 2

Olympic events, but this was not the case with MRT 2. According to the duration of the visual and verbal presentation of these sports workers, as can be seen from Figure 21, of the 18 minutes and 28 seconds (the total set aside for visual presentation), 86.64% came from the first sample. As regards verbal presentation, on the other hand, of the 17 minutes and 20 seconds (the total singled out for both samples together), 92.31% came from the first sample.

In this research, the male and female athletes and the sports to which the reporting in the programme referred were coded from a gender perspective. One of the parameters referred to the discourse nodes with which media construe the male and female athletes within the frameworks of feminizing or masculinist stereotyping markers. In the second sample, three instances of feminizing stereotyping markers were registered. The female players in a volleyball match were referred to by the syntagm “the gentler sex,” which is a clichéd way of referring to female athletes. In two instances in the second sample, the female athletes were called “gazelles” – which is also a reference holding a subtle sexual connotation.

This research also coded the rhetorical compositions that referred to the way in which male and female journalists construed sports. In sports reporting, it is common for men’s sports competitions to be called by their generic names, thus naturalizing male competition. On MRT 2, in the first sample, there were no instances in which a genderizing strategy was used, i.e. no explicit emphasis that these were men’s or women’s sports competitions. Given that, in this sample, in the information programme there was a negligible frequency of female sports competitions, this finding was expected. In the second sample, however, the picture was different: during the women's sports competitions, the emphasis that these were women’s sports competitions was inescapable. For men's sports competitions, there was such genderizing approach in only two instances, whereas for the vast majority of men's sports, the generic name for the sports was used.

The research did not detect any instances of reporting that raised intersectional topics such as gender and race, or nation. Also, the male and female athletes were most often associated with their achievements and there were no instances of sexualization of their bodies. And finally, for the female athletes, MRT 2 used mostly feminine noun forms.

### III.3. Makedonska Radio Televizija – Sports Channel (MRT 3)

#### Introduction

The specialization of the sports channels enables broadcasting of a varied sports programme that offers a great diversity of sports represented through an extensive offer of information, documentary and analytical shows. However, it cannot be said that the Sports Channel of the Macedonian Radio and Television (*Makedonska Radio Televizija – MRT 3*) has reached that level of diversity at the moment, although its programme provides a large frequency of sports broadcasts.

In the 14 days of the two periods selected for the samples – from 4 to 10 April (preceding the Summer Olympics) and from 26 July to 1 August (during the Olympics), respectively – 14 sports magazines and 149 editions of sports broadcasts were registered on MRT 3.<sup>59</sup> The entire number of sports magazines were aired in the sample preceding the Summer Olympics. Aired in the excerpt of the programme broadcasted before the Summer Olympic Games were 53.69% of the sports broadcasts, while, in the second sample covering the period during the Olympic Games, the analysis registered 69 broadcasts, which was 46.31% of the total frequency (Table 9).

Show/Sample	Magazine	% Magazine	Broadcast	% Broadcast	Total	% Total
Sample 1	14	100%	80	53.69%	94	57.67%
Sample 2	0	0%	69	46.31%	69	42.33%
Total	14	100%	149	100.00%	163	100.00%

Table 9: Frequency of sports shows aired on MRT 3, by type

According to the duration of the programme (Table 10), when it comes to the broadcasts, the distribution looks a little bit different compared to the distribution of the number of individual editions. In the first sample, the sports broadcasts were given 138 hours, 44 minutes and 6 seconds, which represented 49.48% of the total duration of broadcasts. In the second sample, although there were fewer broadcast, they generally lasted longer – the broadcasts in the sample covering the Olympics were allocated nearly three hours more than those in the sample preceding the Olympics.

Show/Sample	Magazine	% Magazine	Broadcast	% Broadcast	Total	% Total
Sample 1	5:03:10	100%	138:44:06	49.48%	143:47:16	50.37%
Sample 2	0:00:00	0%	141:40:33	50.52%	141:40:33	49.63%
Sample 1	5:03:10	100%	280:24:39	100%	285:27:49	100%
Total						

Table 10: Duration of the sports shows on MRT 3, by type

<sup>59</sup> This frequency also includes the reruns, due to which this is not a unique number of broadcasts. Beyond the scope and possibilities of this research was the establishing of, for instance, how many of the 80 broadcasts in the first, and the 69 broadcasts in the second, samples are, in fact, unique first airings.

As for the magazines, allocated in the first sample were 5 hours, 3 minutes and 10 seconds, and most of this programme was a kind of documentarily conceptualized reminiscence of past sports competitions. Each of these documentaristic editions had a structure of an **overview** – an analytical commentary genre characteristic of sports journalism. But, apart from the magazines, occasional airings of classical journalistic genres could also be witnessed within the sports broadcasts. During the sports broadcasts, as can be seen in Table 11, a total of 38 interviews, with a duration of 2 hours and 20 minutes, were registered, as well as 6 overviews with a duration of 50 minutes and 18 seconds.

Sample/genre	Interview	Interview duration	Overview	Overview duration	Total	Total duration
Sample 1	19	01:18:24	6	00:50:18	25	2:08:42
Sample 2	19	01:01:36	0	00:00:00	19	1:01:36
Total	38	2:20:00	6	0:50:18	44	3:10:18

Table 11: Frequency of items aired on MRT 3 by genre

The entire programme of the MRT’s Sports Channel, in both samples, was coded for the type of sports to which the media outlet dedicated attention.<sup>60</sup> For this channel as well, the coding was performed separately, for the information programme (sports magazines in this case) and the broadcasts each. Figure 22 shows how the different types of sports were distributed within the sports magazines. In this case, the distribution referred only to the sample preceding the Summer Olympics because during the Olympics, the Sports Channel aired only broadcasts which, as it was pointed out, contained items of the interview and overview genres. In the first sample, 28.24% of the contents were related to individual sports, and 51.89% – to team sports.

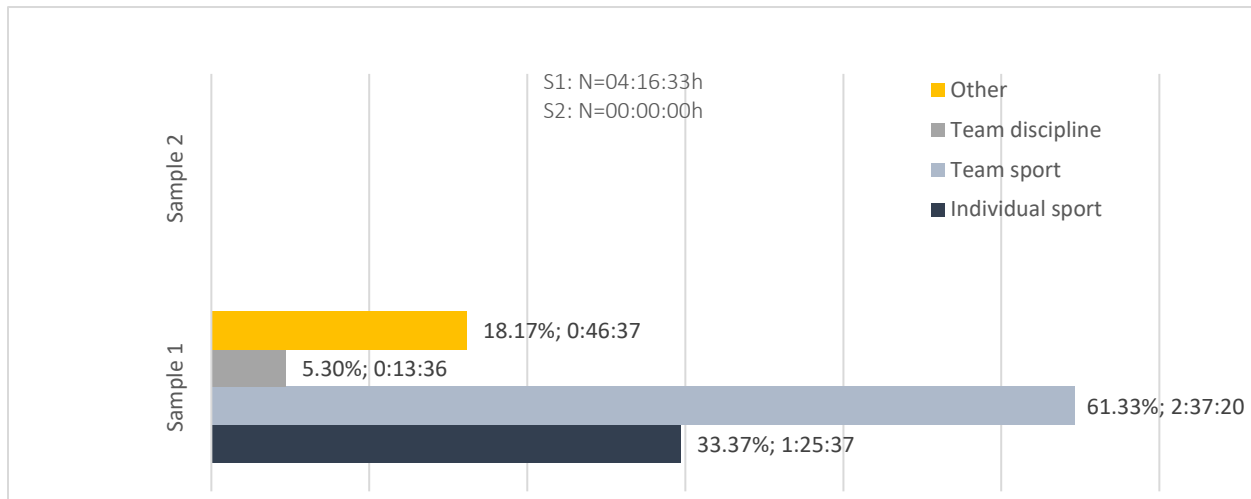


Figure 21: Share of the individual and team sports, respectively, in the information programme of MRT 3

<sup>60</sup> The division into team sports and individual sports has been largely problematized due to the fact that, in some traditionally individual sports there are team competitions and, consequently, these should be considered as team sports, as they involve coordinated action by a group of competitors. However, in order to ensure that the interpretation of the data of this research is valid, the category “team discipline” was added, where sports that have been considered as individual traditionally, but that also include team disciplines (e.g. relay races in athletics), have been coded separately.

The distribution of the types of sports within the broadcasts **segment** in the sample preceding the Olympic Games, did not reflect their distribution in the sports magazines. The total duration of the broadcasts, of somewhat more than 138 hours in the first week, was dedicated to team sports, as can be seen from Figure 23. In the sample that included the Summer Olympics, there was virtually a total balance between the airtime set aside for individual and team sports, respectively, i.e. the difference was only 4 hours, 43 minutes and 34 seconds in favour of individual sports.

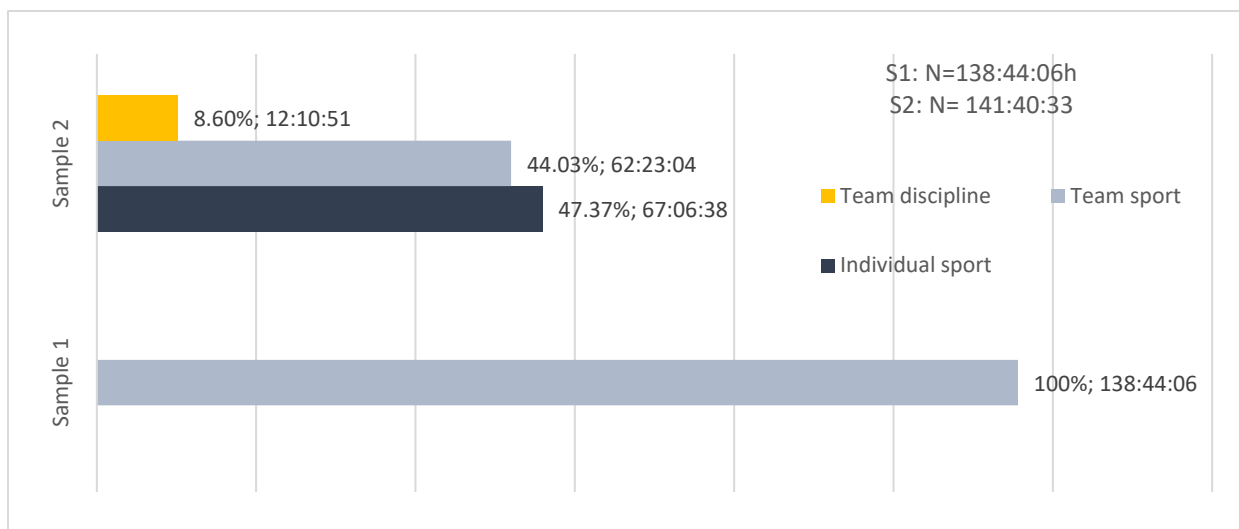


Figure 22: Share of individual and team sports in the sports broadcasts on MRT 3

When it comes to the type of sports that are represented in the Sports Channel’s broadcasts, it becomes obvious immediately that, unlike the programmes of MRT 1 and MRT 2, here there was an extremely small diversity of represented sports. During the Summer Olympics, when one should have expected a higher frequency of broadcasts and, of course, a higher frequency of information and analytical sports programmes – these were either absent from the Sports Channel or were aired with a reduced frequency.

Out of the complete Olympic offer during the Summer Olympics, in the second sample, airtime was given to tennis and volleyball, as well as to gymnastics to a limited extent (Table 12). This finding, however, should certainly be seen in the context of the high frequency of sports programme on the First Programme Service of *Makedonska Radio Televizija*, as the larger and, in this regard, diverse part of the sports programme in both samples was concentrated on the MRT 1, which, in turn, affected the programme of the Sports Channel. Moreover, this finding also reveals

the absence of a conceptual definition of the programme of the Sports Channel in comparison to the sports programmes of the other channels of the Public Service.

Type of sports/sample	Sample 1	Sample 2	Total
Tennis	0:00:00	77:01:23	77:01:23
Basketball	68:35:44	0:00:00	68:35:44
Volleyball	0:00:00	62:23:04	62:23:04
Handball	43:06:24	0:00:00	43:06:24
Football	15:31:21	0:00:00	15:31:21
Basketball 3x3	11:30:37	0:00:00	11:30:37
Gymnastics	0:00:00	2:16:06	2:16:06
<b>Total</b>	<b>138:44:06</b>	<b>141:40:33</b>	<b>280:24:39</b>

*Table 1: Share by different types of sports in the overall analyzed sports programme of MRT 3*

## Analysis of the gender aspects of sports programme

The MRT’s Sports Channel aired information programme only during the sample taken from before the Summer Olympic Games, and only of the sports magazine type. During the Olympics, the survey recorded only sports broadcasts of the sports competitions, without broadcasting classical sports news or sports magazines.

Taking into account the overall sports information programme (sample 1), men's sports competitions received most of the airtime. As can be seen from Figure 24, a total of 3 hours, 5 minutes and 45 seconds were dedicated to men’s sports competitions, constituting 61.27% of the airtime devoted to sports information in the sports magazine shows. Of the time allotted for men's sports competitions, the information on individual sports lasted 58 minutes and 45 seconds, which was 31.63% of the time dedicated to men's sports. The men's team sports competitions were allotted 2 hours, 3 minutes and 22 seconds, which represented 66.42% of the total time allocated for sports information programme when men competed in them.

The time allocated for women's sports competitions was three times shorter – 1 hour, 1 minute and 29 seconds, which was 20.28% of the total duration of the sports information programme. Of these, 26 minutes and 52 seconds were devoted to women's individual sports competitions, representing 43.70% of the total of information on sports in which women competed. The time allocated for women's team sports competitions was 33 minutes and 58 seconds, which was 55.25% of the total of aired contents involving sports in which women competed.

The MRT’s Sports Channel set aside a major proportion of the time in the sample preceding the Summer Olympics – 15.38% of the total duration of the sports information programme – for information on sports that had no direct connection with sports competitions in specific sports, but referred to issues such as the organization of sports and sporting events, e.g. the Covid crisis or the preparation for the upcoming Olympic Games, etc.

In comparison, out of a total of 1 hour, 25 minutes and 37 seconds – as long as the Television Channel set aside for broadcasting information on individual sports – 68.62% were allocated for

men and 31.38% for women. In team sports, the ratio was even more in favour of men, as out of the total of 2 hours, 37 minutes and 20 seconds that were allotted for team sports, 78.41% were dedicated to information on men's team sports competitions, whereas 21.59% – to women's.

Thus, it can be concluded that prevailing in the information programme of the MRT Sports Channel were men's sports competitions, while the team sports in which men competed received the greatest amount of attention in the programme.

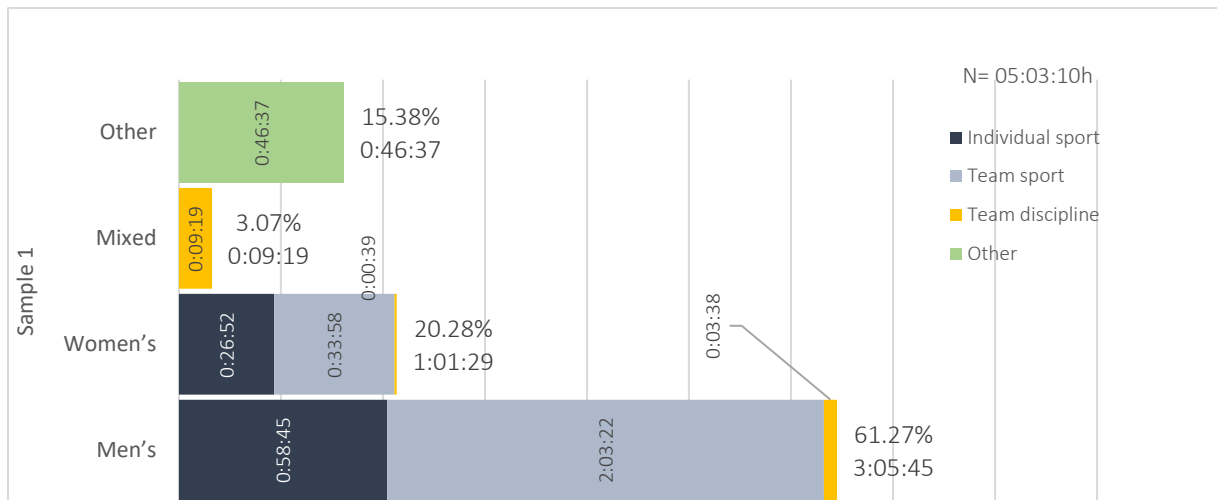


Figure 23. Share of men's and women's sports competitions, respectively, in the sports information programme of MRT 3, segregated by type of sports

The broadcasts of sports competitions, which are the main pillar of the entire programme aired on the Sports Channel, demonstrate the media outlet's bias towards men's sports competitions even more. As can be seen in Figure 25, in both samples taken together, a total of 280 hours, 24 minutes and 39 seconds of sports broadcasts were aired and analyzed (including the reruns). Of these, 138 hours, 44 minutes and 6 seconds, or 49.48% came from the first sample, while 141 hours, 40 minutes and 33 seconds, or 50.52%, came from the second sample. Out of the total duration, 232 hours, 7 minutes and 53 seconds – which was 82.78% of the programme – belonged to men's sports competitions, while 48 hours, 16 minutes and 46 seconds – which constituted 17.22% of the time - were devoted to women's sports competitions.

This obvious bias towards men's sports competitions can also be seen if we differentiate the data by type of sports. In both samples together, a total of 67 hours, 6 minutes and 38 seconds were set aside for individual sports. Of this airtime, 64 hours, 27 minutes and 46 seconds were allocated for men's individual sports competitions, which represented 96.05% of the total airtime dedicated to individual sports. As regards women's individual sports competitions, 2 hours, 38 minutes and 52 seconds were allocated, which represented only 3.95% of the duration of individual sports broadcasts,

As for team sports, a total of 201 hours, 7 minutes and 10 seconds were set aside in both samples taken together. Of these, 157 hours, 45 minutes and 22 seconds were set aside for men's team sports competitions, representing 78.44% of the total duration of broadcasts in the team sports category. Women's team sports competitions received 43 hours, 21 minutes and 48 seconds, or 21.56% of the total duration of broadcasts in the team sports category. The team disciplines in the traditionally individual sports were allocated 12 hours, 10 minutes and 51 seconds. Of these, 9 hours, 54 minutes and 45 seconds were allocated to broadcasts of men's competitions, which comprised 81.38% of the length of broadcasts of individual sports in team disciplines. The competitions among women received 2 hours, 16 minutes and 6 seconds, which represented 18.62% of the total time dedicated to team disciplines in the area of traditionally individual sports. These data reveal an undoubted dominance of men in the broadcasts on the MRT 3. When one adds to this the fact that all the commentators in the sports broadcasts were men, one can say that the picture is fully established.

With a few variations, the same conclusion can be drawn at the level of the two samples separately, so that it cannot be considered that the Summer Olympics had made a certain pressure on or change into the usual routine and setup of MRT 3. Thus, in the first sample, the research did not register any broadcasts of individual sports competitions, or traditionally individual sports in the team disciplines. Team sports broadcasts were registered with a total duration of 138 hours, 44 minutes and 6 seconds, of which 95 hours, 22 minutes and 18 seconds, or 68.74%, were allocated for broadcasts of men's team sports competitions, while 43 hours, 21 minutes and 48 seconds, i.e. 31.26%, were allocated for broadcasts of women's team sports competitions.

The data on the second sample related to individual sports and team disciplines in individual sports are fully identical with the data presented for both samples taken together, due to the complete absence of these types from the first sample. In terms of team sports broadcasts, the second sample contained 62 hours, 23 minutes and 4 seconds of such broadcasts, and these all referred to broadcasts of men's team sports competitions.



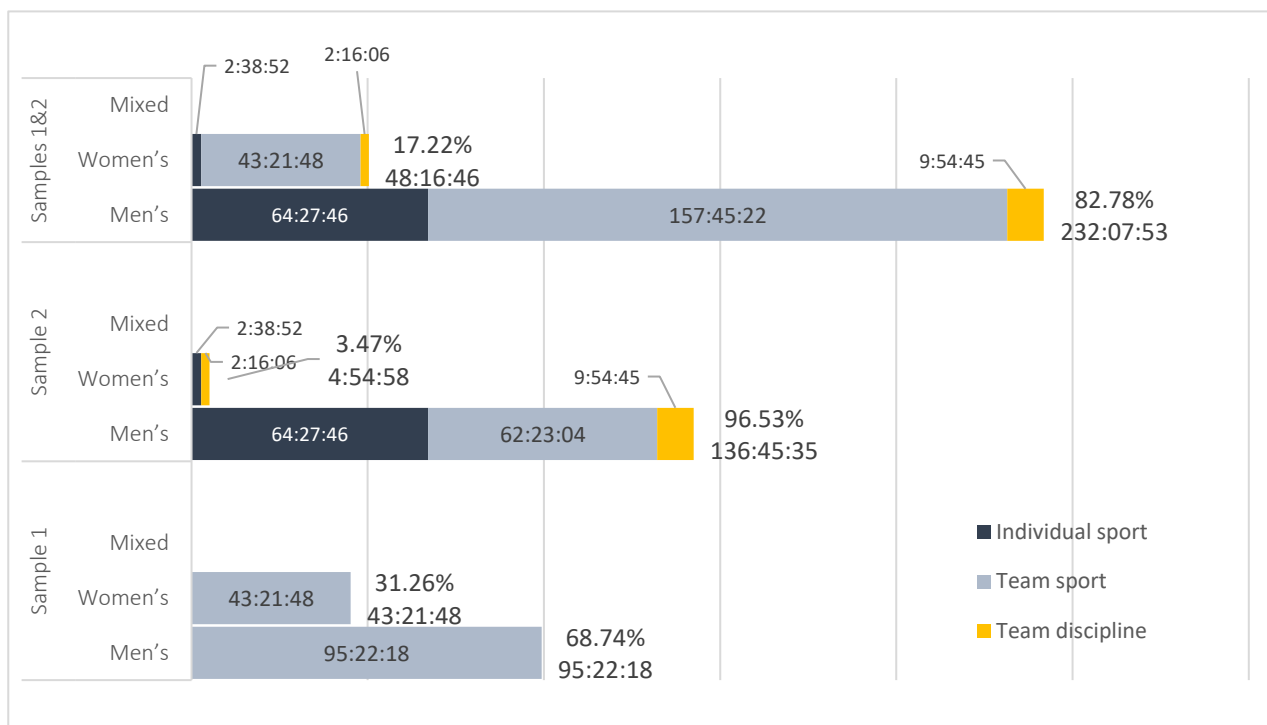


Figure 24: Share of men's and women's sports competitions, respectively, in the sports broadcasts by MRT 3, segregated by type of sports

Due to the nature of the Sports Channel's programme, which was dominated by sports broadcasts – the qualitative data collected in this case were more limited compared to the other MRT channels and private television channels that were analyzed. However, there were certain indications suggesting that, in this regard, the Sports Channel behaved similarly to the First Programme Service. No dramatic gender-soaked constructions were observed in the first sample, yet, there were several objectifying constructions, such as “the cute, miniature Lin Liu,” “the first lady of world tennis, Monika Seles,” etc. In the second sample, there were several examples in support of the conclusion that, in this respect, the sports channel is comparable to the First Programme Service. Above all, because a number of broadcasts that were aired on the first channel were also broadcasted on the sports one. For example, on 27 July, on this channel too, one could hear the following construction uttered during a sports broadcast: “[...] while these warm-ups are going on, here is somewhat more of these *cute girls* coming out, most of them teenagers [...]”.

It is interesting how, in certain statements, a symbolic equivalence was established between the outcome on the sports field and the unification (strengthening) of the nation, such as in this construction published on 27 July and repeated on 28 July and 1 August, respectively: “let us fight for successes because sports unifies the nation more than anything / where does this power in your

hand come from, where does that software that is put in the right arm at night come from, so that the next day one plays everything properly? Then, there is the following construction, aired on 27 July and rerun on 28 and 30 July, which, apart from being a mythologized epic narrative about the indestructibility of the Macedonian people and an obvious simplified invocation of Petre M. Andreevski's novel, also carries an explicit and open political message in which, according to the implication, the monolithically constructed politicians are contrasted with the national heroes from the sports domain: "the Macedonian volleyball players found the strength to surpass themselves after those poor performances they found the strength to win where they could not present a piece of paper and say 'sign here', that is where that Macedonian weed [*pirej*] in Macedonian, which is also the title of the famous novel by the renowned Macedonian writer Petre M. Andreevski – translator's note] is flourishing, oh, men; you, politicians, learn from these guys who are fighting on behalf of Macedonia with all their hearts". After all, in this research, too, just as in some previous research in North Macedonia mentioned in the literature reference list, belligerent rhetoric springs out from the speech of sports journalists, which is something rather typical of sports journalism and globally, in the "big picture". Thus, the antagonism becomes inherent to sports, constructed as a war with other tools. For example: "Perhaps we do not have such a versatile attack so that we could defeat the Bosnians", or "Zoran Karanovic: The Turks are scared, not so much of themselves, but of our team."

### III.4. Alfa TV

#### Introduction

*Alfa TV* is one of the two private television stations that have a high frequency of sports information programme. In the two periods selected as samples – from 4 to 10 April (before the Summer Olympics) and from 26 July to 1 August (during the Summer Olympics) – a total of 75 editions of sports shows were broadcasted, of which 66 were sports news, while 9 were editions of sports magazines.

Table 13 shows that this television channel aired almost an equal number of sports shows in both samples. During the Olympics, the survey registered a slightly larger number of sports magazines, which may be said to have been expected, given the intense sports offer stemming from the Olympic events. No sports broadcasts were registered on *Alfa TV* either in the week taken for the sample preceding the Summer Olympics, or in the sample coinciding with the Olympic Games.

Show/ Sample	News	Magazine	Broadcast	Total	%
Sample 1	34	3	0	37	49.33%
Sample 2	32	6	0	38	50.67%
Total	66	9	0	75	100%

Table 12: Frequency of sports shows on Alfa TV by type

However, the analysis of the duration of the sports programme in both samples shows the effect that the Olympic programme had on the media outlet's scheme – although the number of shows aired is almost identical in both samples, in the second sample, this Television allocated significantly more time for sports. In the first sample, as shown in Table 14, 2 hours, 28 minutes and 9 seconds (or 36.46% of the total duration of the sports programme) were allocated for sports programme, while in the second sample, it was 4 hours, 18 minutes and 13 seconds (which was 63.54% of the total duration of the sports programme). On average, aired daily in the first sample were 21 minutes and 10 seconds of sports news programme, while in the equally long period of the week during which the Olympic Games were taking place, an average of 35 minutes and 28 seconds were aired per day.

Sample / Type of programme	Broadcast	Information programme	Total	%
Sample 1	0:00:00	2:28:09	2:28:09	36.46%
Sample 2	0:00:00	4:18:13	4:18:13	63.54%
Total	0:00:00	6:46:22	6:46:22	100%

Table 13: Duration of the sports shows aired on Alfa TV by type

It may be said that the sports information programme on *Alfa TV* was diverse in terms of genre, with the classic journalistic forms such as news and report prevailing. The news as a genre was the most frequent, as a total of 226 items in the programme, or 56.36%, were actually news, while 112, or 27.93%, of the items were reports. Also occupying a remarkable place in the *Alfa TV*'s programme were the overviews – an informative and analytical genre with elements of sports commentary, which is quite characteristic for sports journalism. Thus, 53 items or 13.22% were

items of this genre. The number of overviews in both samples was almost identical, although, given the diversity and frequency of information about sports arising from the Olympic program, one could expect a more visible place for this genre in the second than in the first sample. It was noticeable that, during the Summer Olympics, the frequency of items belonging to the news genre increased more than threefold, which was an expected change.

The absence of broadcasts from the second sample was due to the fact that the Public Service had the rights for broadcasting the Summer Olympic Games.

Genre/ Sample	News	Report	Interview	Overview	Broadcast	Total	%
Sample 1	54	59	4	26	0	143	35.66%
Sample 2	172	53	6	27	0	258	64.34%
Total	226	112	10	53	0	401	100%

Table 15: Frequency of items on Alfa TV, by specific genres

The Summer Olympic Games put visible pressure on Alfa TV's sports content in terms of the choice of sports represented by their type, as well. As can be seen in Figure 26, in the sample taken before the start of the Summer Olympics, team sports were the most represented in the programme, with 61.98%. On the other hand, prevailing in the week when the Olympics were

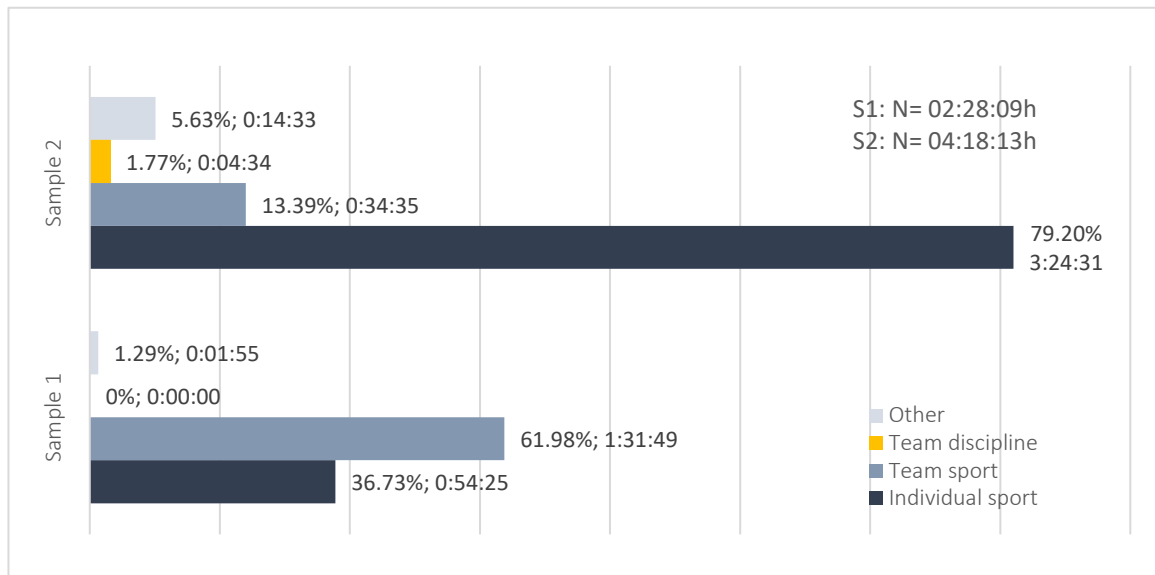


Figure 25: Share of individual and team sports in the Alfa TV's information programme in the respective samples

individual sports in accordance with the Olympic programme. During the Olympics, this television channel devoted one-third of the airtime it usually dedicates to team sports to such sports outside of the big competition event.

The fluctuation in the relative (respective???) duration of both types of sports, in both samples, can be explained by the data contained in Table 16. The two sports with the largest share in the Alpha TV sports programme during the second sample were taekwondo – a sport that became increasingly interesting to the media due to the success of the Macedonian national team member – and swimming. Both are individual sports and in the second sample they both received a total of 2 hours, 44 minutes and 9 seconds, which was 63.57% of the total sports information programme aired by this television channel during the week of the Summer Olympics. All other sports were far less represented in the editorial selection.

Alfa TV, as also visible in Table 16, presented a versatile range of sports in its sports programme – a feature not found on most of the private television stations the programmes of which were analyzed in this study. To illustrate, taekwondo and swimming were represented in the first sample as well, with a solid presence (right after football).

Type of sports/ Sample	Sample 1	Sample 2	Total
Taekwondo	0:22:08	1:27:04	1:49:12
Swimming	0:23:05	1:17:05	1:40:10
Football	0:51:14	0:13:42	1:04:56
Basketball	0:21:54	0:05:26	0:27:20
Handball	0:17:33	0:09:34	0:27:07
Athletics	0:00:00	0:22:10	0:22:10
Summer Olympics	0:01:55	0:14:33	0:16:28
Tennis	0:04:04	0:04:59	0:09:03
Formula	0:03:43	0:02:21	0:06:04
Volleyball	0:01:08	0:03:26	0:04:34
Judo	0:00:00	0:02:50	0:02:50
Water polo	0:00:00	0:01:49	0:01:49
Rowing	0:00:00	0:01:36	0:01:36
Weightlifting	0:00:00	0:01:34	0:01:34
Wrestling	0:01:25	0:00:00	0:01:25
Archery	0:00:00	0:01:22	0:01:22
Gymnastics	0:00:00	0:01:19	0:01:19
Diving	0:00:00	0:01:18	0:01:18
Triathlon	0:00:00	0:01:03	0:01:03
Cycling	0:00:00	0:00:49	0:00:49
Skateboarding	0:00:00	0:00:46	0:00:46
Canoeing	0:00:00	0:00:36	0:00:36
Surfing	0:00:00	0:00:33	0:00:33
Shooting (rifle)	0:00:00	0:00:32	0:00:32
Basketball 3x3	0:00:00	0:00:24	0:00:24
Car racing	0:00:00	0:00:20	0:00:20
Equestrianism	0:00:00	0:00:20	0:00:20
Fencing	0:00:00	0:00:15	0:00:15
Rugby	0:00:00	0:00:14	0:00:14
BMX	0:00:00	0:00:13	0:00:13
<b>Total</b>	<b>2:28:09</b>	<b>4:18:13</b>	<b>6:46:22</b>

Table 16: Share of different types of sports in the entire analyzed sports programme on Alfa TV

## Analysis of the gender aspects in the sports programme

Figure 27 shows that, when looking at the overall sports information programme on Alfa TV, the men's sports competitions received the longest airtime in the programme. A total of 4 hours, 23 minutes and 58 seconds of programme were given to sports that had men competing, which

comprised 64.96% of the total time dedicated to sports in the two weeks analyzed. Women's sports competitions (including both team and individual ones) received somewhat more than 2 hours or 29.58% of the programme.

However, the distribution of men's and women's sports competitions across different types of sports and throughout the two periods analyzed and their corresponding samples, reveals an interesting dynamics. In the sample of the period preceding the Summer Olympics, the sports in which women competed received a virtually negligible airtime of 12 minutes and 49 seconds, compared to the sports where men competed and which had received 2 hours, 8 minutes and 4 seconds, which is even 86.44% of the total sports information programme outside of the Olympics.

Although the sample from a randomly selected week before the Olympics is limited and does not allow general conclusions to be drawn from it, this finding may still suggest that the usual sports programme of *Alfa TV* is male-dominated, primarily in the sphere of team sports. The information on men's team sports competitions were allocated 57.90% of the total airtime dedicated to sports in the sample preceding the Summer Olympics, while men in individual sports received 28.54%.

With Alpha TV, in the sample preceding the Olympics, women's both individual and team sports competitions received equally little attention – the time devoted to information on women in individual sports was 6 minutes and 47 seconds, which comprised 4.58% of the total airtime dedicated to sports in the first sample. About 6 minutes were dedicated to women's team sports competitions, which was 4.07% of the total time dedicated to sports in the week analyzed as part of the sample preceding the Olympics.

During the Summer Olympics, it was not only the share of individual sports that increased in tune with the Olympic programme, as the share of women's individual sports competitions increased significantly as well. As shown in Figure 27, men and women in individual sports were almost equally represented: women competing in individual sports had a share of 38.13% (1 hour, 38 minutes and 27 seconds) in the overall sports programme in the sample covering the Olympics, while men received 41.08% of the airtime (1 hour, 46 minutes and 4 seconds). In team sports, however, men again remained visibly more interesting for the media outlet than women. Nevertheless, based on the distribution presented in Figure 27, it can still be concluded that the Sports Newsroom of *Alfa TV* allowed the offer of the Olympic programme to affect the gender balance significantly in terms of representation of women's and men's sports competitions in the sports programme.

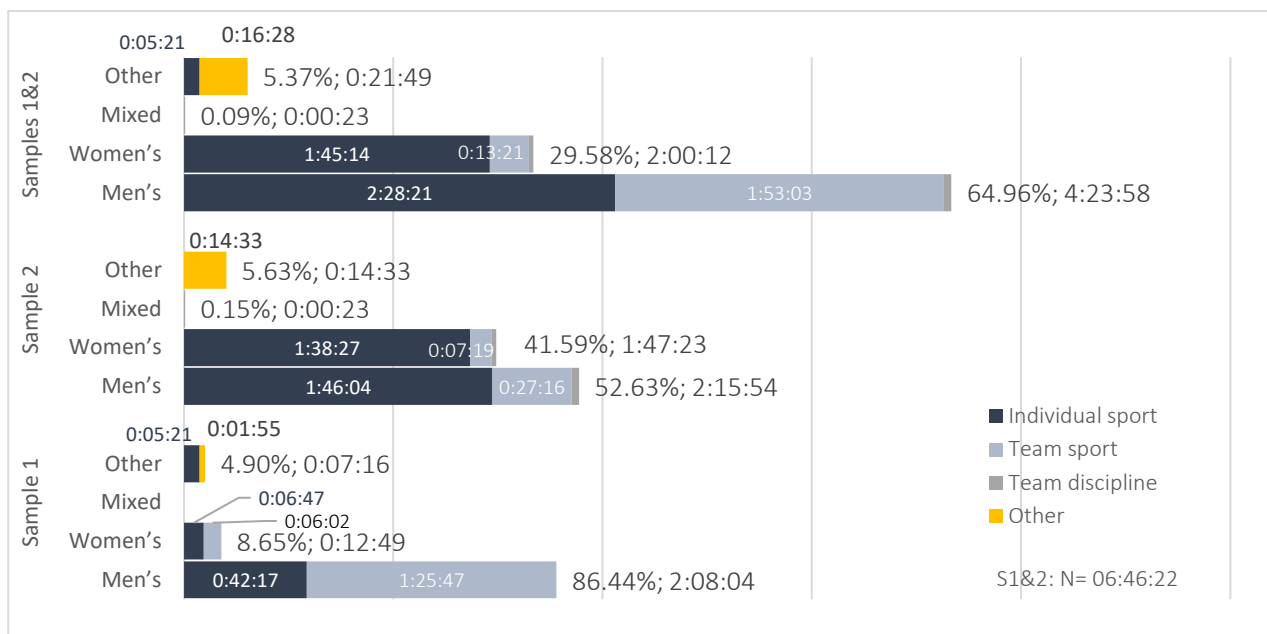


Figure 26: Share of men's and women's sports competitions, respectively, in the sports information programme on Alfa TV, segregated by type of sports

The representation of different sports and their correlation with male and female athletes also means that the sports programme, as expected, presented the male athletes longer and more frequently than the female athletes, but this still does not mean that the total number of male participants was higher than that of the females. Therefore, Figure 28 shows the frequency of appearance of male and female participants in Alpha TV's items, respectively, according to their roles in the programme. In total, 1,074 participants were registered in the entire content of the sports information programme that was analyzed (in 401 identified items),<sup>61</sup> of whom 791 or 73.65% were men, and 283, or 26.35%, were women. In the first sample, the difference between male and female participants in the programme was more pronounced than in the second sample. The frequency of appearance, as seen in Figure 28, is not evenly distributed across the roles. Thus, although there was a similar difference in the ratio between the male and female journalists, and between the male and female athletes, the difference in the ratio between male and female sports workers indicated men's absolute dominance.

An analysis of the frequency by which different-sex athletes appeared in the programme (Figure 28), shows that the presence of men and women did not fully correspond to the distribution of airtime to men's and women's sports competitions, respectively. Out of a total of 598 athletes (or sports teams)<sup>62</sup> represented in the two samples, 414 or 69.23% were men, while 184, or 30.77%,

<sup>61</sup> Specifically, these are instances of appearance by participants in the programme in the basic unit of analysis, and that is unit of item. This is not the number of unique participants, i.e. the same participant in the programme is counted more than once if he or she appears in multiple items in the same edition of the information programme.

<sup>62</sup> This figure does not include individuals who are part of team sports – for instance, where a football team is shown, it is coded once, as a men's team.

were women. This is an indicator that prevailing in the overall programme on TV Alfa, according to the frequency of appearance, are male athletes again.

Certainly, the distribution of male and female athletes in the two samples was not even. Thus, Figure 28 shows that, in the sample preceding the Olympics, in the items there was an absolute dominance of men among athletes, as out of a total of 173 male and female athletes who were presented in this TV's programme, 156 or 90.17% were men, and 17 or 9.83% were women. In the second sample, out of the total of 425 male and female athletes represented in the programme, 258, or 60.71%, were men and 167, or 39.29%, were women. Thus, the Summer Olympics, i.e. the nature of the sports that are most often part of the Olympic programme, significantly reduced, but did not completely eliminate, the difference in the ratio.

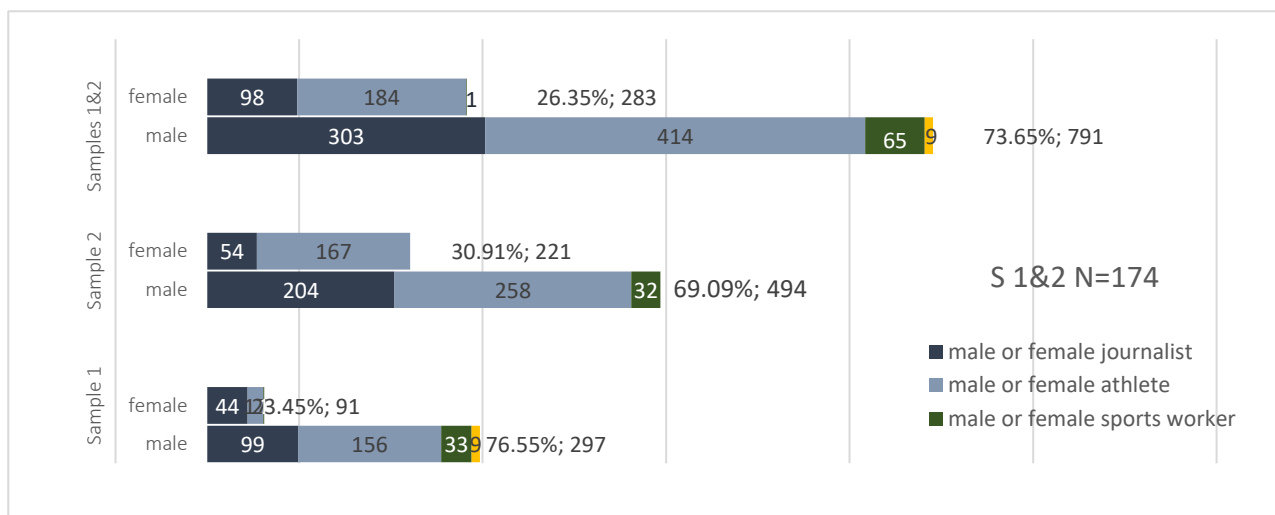


Figure 27: Frequency of appearance of male and female participants in the Alpha TV sports programme per unit of item, segregated by type of role

The frequency of appearance, however, does not immediately mean that male athletes were given a more active or dominant role in the items. Therefore, this research also collected data on how much of the total time in which different-sex athletes were presented in the programme was allocated to men, and how much – to women, in terms of both their visual and their verbal presentation (or, more simply, in what portion of the total airtime athletes of different sexes appeared on-camera in the aired items, and in what portion of the items they were allowed to speak).

Figure 29 shows that, at the level of both samples together, in the items, the female athletes were visually represented during 16.41% of the time, and the athletes – during 83.59%. Men also dominated in terms of the airtime allotted to them for their verbal presentation, as the time during which male and female athletes spoke, respectively, was distributed as follows: 75.34% of the total



airtime in which male and female athletes spoke in front of the camera to present themselves or to present a certain aspect of their work, was dedicated to men, while 24.66% – to women.

Again, the data in this parameter are not evenly distributed across the two samples. In the first sample, male athletes appeared in 95.18% of the airtime that included visual presentation of male and female athletes, and spoke in 79.09% of the total airtime that involved speech. In the second sample, the difference was still large, but was mitigated owing to the type of sports offer: in this sample, in 75.31% of the airtime involving visual presentation of male and female athletes the athletes presented were men, while in 73.75% of the airtime involving male and female athletes talking, the athletes presented talking in front of the camera were men.

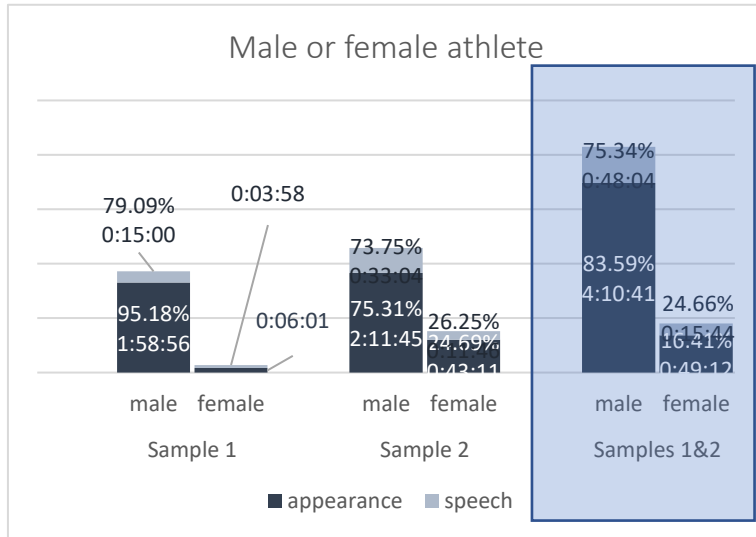


Figure 28: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of male and female athletes in the news programme of Alfa TV

As regards the first sample, the answer to the question about male dominance is clear, as all parameters of male dominance are evenly distributed: men’s team sports competitions prevailed to the same extent, while male athletes were absolutely dominant both in terms of their frequency of appearance and time in which they appeared visually in front of the camera, and in terms of the time allotted to them as speakers in front of the microphone. However, due to the “mitigating” effect that the Olympic offer had on the presentation of athletes of the opposite sexes, the data gathered on the second sample are more complex and, in this regard, more interesting to analyse, and there is a need for them to be presented visually.

Namely, while in the second sample (during the Summer Olympics), as we could see, the difference in the duration of presentation of men’s sports competitions (52.63%) as opposed to women’s sports competition (41,59%), although present, was significantly reduced,<sup>63</sup> the movements in the ratio in the other parameters relating to the male and female athletes, did not follow suit: (1) the frequency of appearance, (2) verbal presentation and (3) visual presentation. As can be seen from Figure 30, during the Summer Olympics, despite the increased presence of women’s sports competitions compared to men’s sports competitions, the male athletes were the

<sup>63</sup> The aggregation of values here is not 100 because the code frame includes other sports items as well, which do not mark any presence of men's or women's sports disciplines, and so they are marked as “other”. Such are, for example, the items that talk about Covid-19 and the Summer Olympics, or the ones that speak in general about the organization of the Summer Olympics, etc. Also, insignificant 0.15% of sports have been categorized as mixed competitions, and, thus, they cannot influence the conclusion of this finding significantly.

ones who had a rising frequency of appearance in the sports-related items and were the ones who had a visibly and significantly greater chance to appear in the aired items both visually and as speakers.

It can be seen from Figure 28 that, on Alpha TV, at the level of the two samples together, female journalists had 98 appearances in different items of the sports information programme,<sup>64</sup>

which constituted 24.44% of the total number of appearances of male and female journalists in various items in the sports programme. In contrast, male journalists had 303 appearances, which comprised 75.56%. Behind these appearances are several individual identities of *Alfa TV's* male and female journalists, as can be seen in Table 17. The highest frequency, as expected, was that of the three male journalists who are part of *Alfa TV's* Sports Newsroom that includes journalists of different genders, which is not the case with many of the television companies in the RNM.

The slightly lower frequency of appearances that the female journalist compared to each of the other two sports reporters, respectively, may be due to the random effect of the sample. However, in the first sample, the distribution was expected according to the ratio of male to female journalists.

These characteristics seem to be followed by the figures derived from the other measurement parameters of gender representation in the programme. As can be seen in Figure 31,

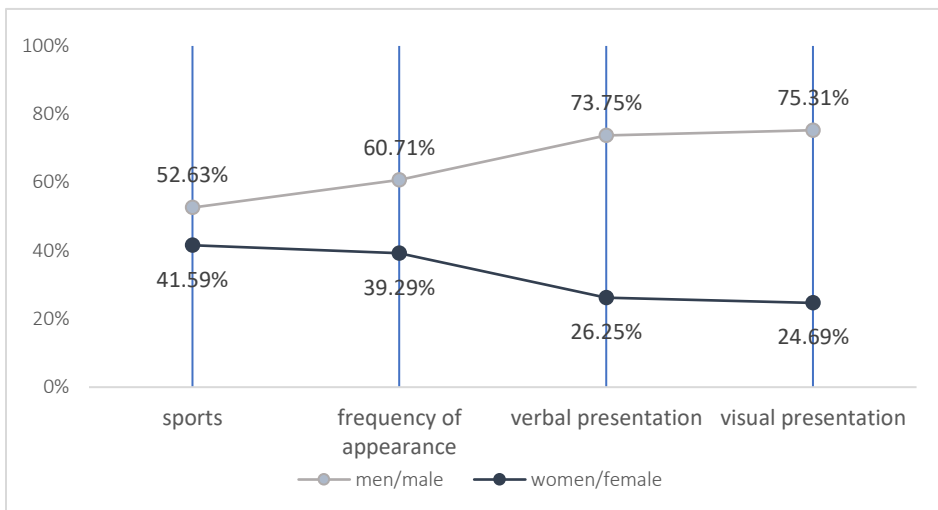


Figure 29: Ratio between the male and female athletes presented through four measuring parameters in the second sample taken during the Summer Olympics, on Alfa TV

Name	Sample 1	Sample 2	Total
Pero Momirovski	50	130	180
Sladjan Ivkovikj	48	73	121
Natasha Stanchikj	42	48	90
Ivana Krstevska Janevska	2	4	6
Cece Nikolova	1	1	2
Bojana Krstevska	0	1	1
Kole Chashule	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>401</b>

Table 17: Frequency of appearances by individual journalists on Alfa TV

<sup>64</sup> Specifically, these are instances of appearance by participants in the program in the basic unit of analysis, and that is the unit of item. This is not about the number of unique participants, i.e. when one participant appears multiple times, each appearance is coded individually.

the ratio between male and female journalists in the sports news coverage verbally and visually, roughly speaking, corresponded to their presence in the Newsroom. The ratio is stable in both samples separately, as well as in both samples together.

Allocated for female journalists' presentations involving speech, in the two samples together, were 31.32% of the programme, while male journalists received 68.68%. Male journalists appeared in 65.23% of the airtime involving visual presentation, while female journalists appeared in 34.77% of this type of programme. The data concerning male and female journalists show that women were constantly present at a 1:3 in men's favour, the same as the ratio of employees in the Sports Newsroom.

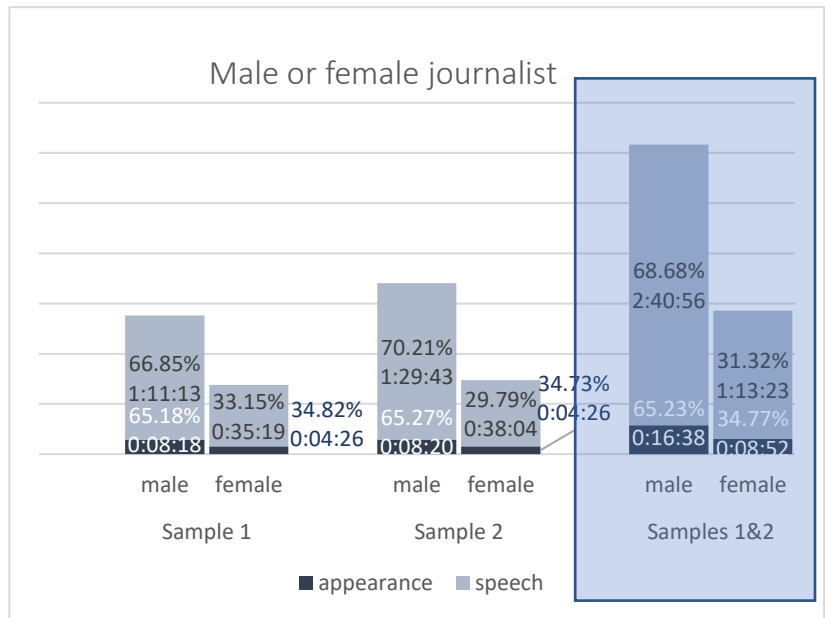


Figure 30: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of the male and female journalists in Alfa TV's information programme

In terms of the presence of sports workers of different sexes, the absolute dominance of men was visible. As can be seen in Figure 28, out of the 34 sports workers who appeared in the programme in the first sample, 33 were men and there was only one woman. All 32, who appeared in the second sample, were men as well.

The findings on the second sample are more interesting for analysis, as, there, women's sports competitions still took a more prominent place than in the first sample. Thus, it can be said that, during the 2020 Summer Olympics, it was predominantly male experts that spoke about both men's and women's sports competitions and both on behalf of the male and female athletes.

Despite this absolute dominance of male sports experts and sports workers, an analysis is still necessary of both the visual and verbal presentations so as to see – as in Figure 32 – how much time was dedicated to men, in order to obtain a complete picture about the genders' representation. (Figure 32)

In the 65 appearances by sports experts or sports workers on *Alfa TV*, in the total airtime of both samples, they showed up on camera for the duration of 37 minutes and 36 seconds. In contrast, the one woman in the category of sports experts or sports workers spoke for only 32 seconds. For speech, as can be seen in Figure 32, the sports workers received a total of 28 minutes and 6 seconds. In both samples together, men comprised above 98% of both the visual and verbal appearances of both sexes, as male or female sports experts: 69.57% of the total speech by the sports workers – as well as 51.64% of the visual presentation – came from the second sample.

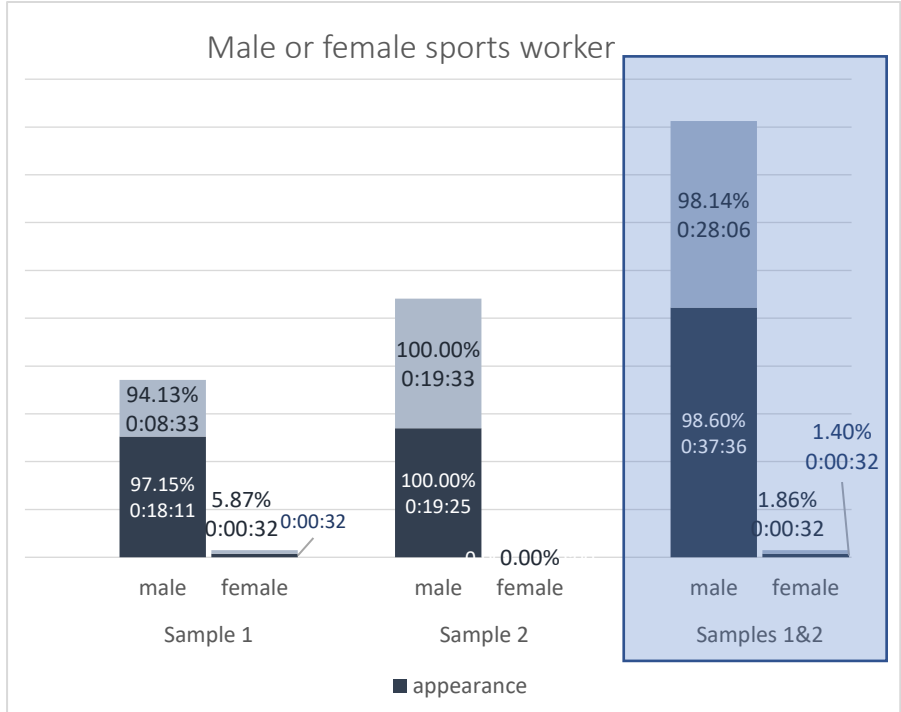


Figure 31: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of the male and female sports workers in the information programme of *Alfa TV*

The media coverage of the male and female athletes in the code frame was evaluated in terms of which aspect of their appearance in the respective sport had been highlighted by the journalist. Not a single instance was identified in either of the samples where, in the sports information programme on *Alfa TV*, the male or female athletes’ sexuality had been emphasized, whereas a huge number of announcements accentuated their achievements in sports.

Additionally, whenever female athletes appeared, with the exception of three instances in the second sample, their role was presented by using the feminine grammatical gender of the nouns.

In accordance with the style of the Sports Newsroom of this media outlet, which is more informative than analytical, the programme did not raise any intersectional topics that would go beyond conveying the results of and the atmosphere at the sports competitions. Gender or racial issues, in this regard, were not raised in the sports information programme.

Here too, the first sample detected no positive correlation between the competition to which the sport referred and the use of neutralizing or genderizing nouns for the respective sport category – the names of both men’s and female sports were used primarily in their respective generic forms and, here, one cannot draw any valid conclusion containing gender implications. However, this was not entirely the case with the second sample, where the names of men's sports were used in their generic form, whereas women’s sports were referred to by their genderizing

forms – ‘women’s handball’ or ‘women’s volleyball’, as opposed to just ‘volleyball’ or just ‘handball’, as was most often the case with men’s competitions.

In all the announcements, however, which referred to the Macedonian male and female athletes at the Olympics, the adjectival forms of “our” (masculine, plural forms) were used without exception. Nevertheless, one cannot say a discourse has been witnessed where the issue of gender was related to the issue of the nation in a triumphalistic way. Thus, the reporting was within the frameworks of what is typical for conveying information about sporting events that involve Macedonian male and female athletes.

### III.5. Alsat-M TV

#### Introduction

In the two selected periods for the samples - preceding the Summer Olympics (4 to 10 April) and during the Games (26 July to 1 August), Alsat-M TV broadcasted a total of 36 editions of sports shows, of which 35, or 97.22%, were editions of sports news, and there was one registered edition of a sports magazine. In the second time excerpt, which covered the 2020 Summer Olympics, there were more sporting events on offer, but there were no sports broadcasts. In this period, the TV outlet aired a few more editions of news programmes than in the sample preceding the start of the Summer Olympics (see Table 18 and Table 19). Out of a total of 36 editions of information programme (sports news and magazines), 55.56% were broadcast in the sample that coincided with the Olympics.

Show/ Sample	News	Magazine	Broadcast	Total	%
Sample 1	15	1	0	16	44.44%
Sample 2	20	0	0	20	55.56%
Total	35	1	0	36	100.00%

Table 18: Frequency of sports shows on Alsat-M TV by type

However, the analysis of the duration of this programme reveals a different picture about the distribution of sports content. Although in the sample that coincides with the Olympics, Alsat-M TV aired 5 news editions more than the ones in the first sample, on average, these lasted shorter. Thus, only 43.44% of the time devoted to sports programme was from the second sample. Nevertheless, it cannot be said that there was a significant difference between the way Alsat-M TV's Sports Newsroom covered the events during major sporting events on the one hand, and when there are no such events, on the other.

Type of programme/ Sample	Broadcast	Information programme	Total	%
Sample 1	0:00:00	1:43:36	1:43:36	56.56%
Sample 2	0:00:00	1:19:34	1:19:34	43.44%
Total	0:00:00	3:03:10	3:03:10	100%

Table 19: Duration of the sports shows on Alsat-M TV, by type

Alsat-M sports shows were dominated by classical journalistic genres such as news and reports (Table 20). A total of 118 items belonged to the news genre, which was 75.16% of the total frequency of items. Twenty-eight of the items belonged to the genre of reports, which constituted 17.83% of the total frequency of items. The research also registered a lower frequency of more analytical genres. For example, 6 articles were overviews and these all came from the sample coinciding with the Olympics. In the first sample, too, one interview and 4 group interviews or debates were registered. There was a significantly higher frequency of content of the news genre in the first sample compared to the second sample: 74 items, or 62.71%

of the total frequency of items of the news genre, were aired in the first sample, while 45 – which was 37.29% – were from the second sample. This was unexpected given the significantly larger offer of sporting events during the Olympics. In this, the number of reports was significantly increased, but, on the other hand, there were overviews – a genre in which sports journalists make daily analytical reviews of the day during major sports events.

Genre/ Sample	News	Report	Interview	Overview	Debate	Total	%
Sample 1	74	12	1	0	4	91	57.96%
Sample 2	44	16	0	6	0	66	42.04%
Total	118	28	1	6	4	157	100%

Table 14: Frequency of items on Alsat-M TV according to specific genres

As can be seen in Figure 33, the team sports on this television channel received greater prominence within the usual reporting on sports events. In the sample taken before the start of the Olympics, a total of 1 hour, 29 minutes and 25 seconds, which is 86.31% of the total sports programme that week, were dedicated to team sports. The findings suggest that, out of the entire actual offer of sports events during times when there are no major competitions, this TV outlet is more likely to be biased towards team sports. Conversely, the 2020 Summer Olympics were an event with a greater offer of individual rather than team sports. However, the difference between team sports and individual sports in the second sample does not have the same ratio as in the first sample. If, in the first sample, 86.31% of the airtime was allocated to team sports, in the second sample, 66.17% were allocated to individual sports. Nevertheless, the data show that this TV’s focus on the type of sports was determined by the Olympics’ offer.

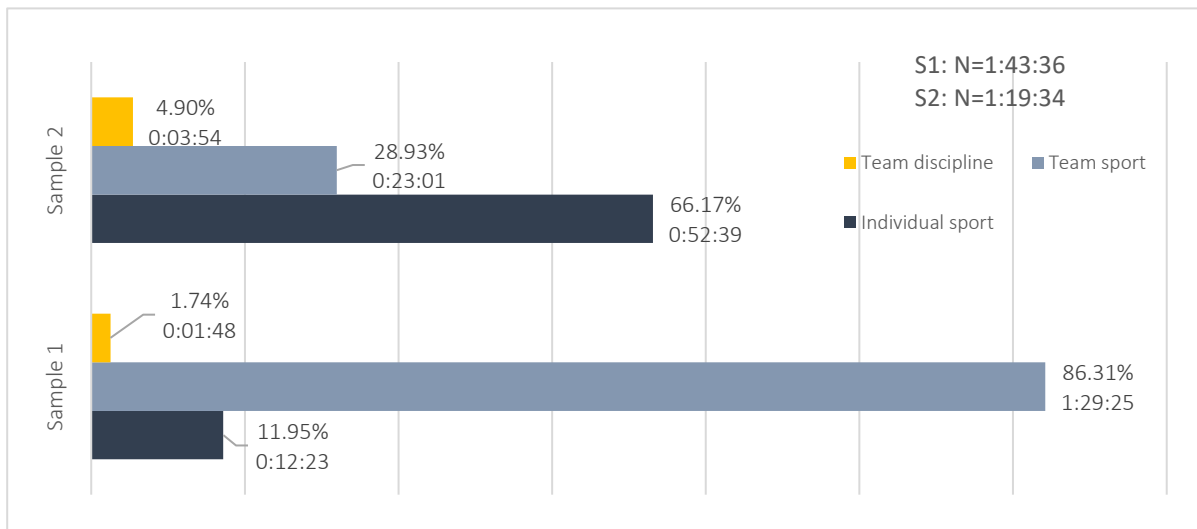


Figure 32: Share of the individual and team sports in the information programme of Alsat-M TV, in the respective samples

Football was given the most attention in both samples, although in the second sample it received nearly equal airtime as that given to swimming. This sport had an absolute dominance in the first sample, but not during the Summer Olympics, when football usually competes for media coverage with other sports, such as athletics or swimming, that traditionally occupy significant place in the Olympic programme. In the first sample, 1 hour, 13 minutes and 40 seconds were dedicated to football only, which was even 71.11% of the entire sports programme in the sample preceding the Summer Olympics. During the Olympics, football gained 17 minutes and 42 seconds, which was 22.25% of the total duration of the sports information programme in the second sample. At the level of the entire analyzed programme in both samples cumulatively, football got 1 hour, 31 minutes and 22 seconds, which comprised 49.88% of the programme.

Type of sports/ Sample	Sample 1	Sample 2	Total
Football	1:13:40	0:17:42	1:31:22
Swimming	0:00:00	0:17:29	0:17:29
Basketball	0:10:34	0:02:51	0:13:25
Taekwondo	0:02:04	0:08:20	0:10:24
Athletics	0:03:07	0:06:33	0:09:40
Tennis	0:04:18	0:04:48	0:09:06
Bikers	0:00:00	0:06:00	0:06:00
Handball	0:04:00	0:01:34	0:05:34
Judo	0:00:00	0:04:50	0:04:50
Formula	0:03:14	0:00:00	0:03:14
Lifting weights	0:00:00	0:03:00	0:03:00
Boxing	0:01:28	0:01:02	0:02:30
Wrestling	0:00:00	0:02:21	0:02:21
Triathlon	0:00:00	0:01:24	0:01:24
American football	0:01:11	0:00:00	0:01:11
Karate	0:00:00	0:00:58	0:00:58
Skateboard	0:00:00	0:00:42	0:00:42
<b>Total</b>	<b>1:43:36</b>	<b>1:19:34</b>	<b>3:03:10</b>

Table 21: Share of various types of sports in the entire analyzed sports programme on Alsat-M TV

In the programme of Alsat-M TV, the sport of taekwondo was given a prominent place owing to the success of the Macedonian athlete, while somewhat less time was dedicated to judo, in which a Kosovo female athlete won the gold medal. Yet, of the individual sports, this TV outlet showed the greatest interest in swimming.

## Analysis of the gender issues in the sports programme

The gender aspects analysis of the total sports information programme on Alsat-M TV indicates that the said programme is dominated by men's team sports competitions (primarily football). As shown in Figure 34, in both samples together, 2 hours, 33 minutes and 5 seconds were dedicated to men's sports, constituting 83.58% of the total length of the sports information programme. A total of 24 minutes and 23 seconds, or 13.31%, of the total information programme were dedicated to women's sports competitions, i.e. the dominance of men's sports competitions was obvious.

Of the total time dedicated to men's competitions, team sports received a total of 1 hour, 48 minutes and 41 seconds, or 71% of the total time devoted to sports with men competing



(comprising 59.34% of the total duration of the sports information programme in both samples together). Individual sports in men's category received a total airtime of 44 minutes and 24 seconds, which was 29% of the total programme dedicated to men's sports competitions (i.e. 24.24% of the total length of sports information programme in both samples together).

Of the total airtime allotted for women's sports, the coverage of individual sports was predominant. These received 20 minutes and 38 seconds, which represented 84.62% of the total airtime devoted to sports with women competing (this comprised, however, only 11.26% of the total duration of the sports information programme).

As expected, these data are not evenly distributed throughout the two samples, as the Summer Olympics still made visible pressure on the sports programme of Alsat-M TV. Due to the Games, the presence of individual sports competitions was larger, should one compare the samples of the programme taken before and during the 2020 Olympics. Before the Olympics, these sports in women's category had won only 44 seconds of television time, whereas in the sample coinciding with the Olympics, they received 19 minutes and 54 seconds. This means that 96.45% of the total airtime dedicated to individual sports in women's category had come from the second sample. Women's team sports competitions received little attention both during and before the Olympics, although the duration of the information related to women's team sports had increased by one minute.

Men's team sports competitions in the regular programme (in the sample taken from before the Olympics) prevailed, according to the attention that this TV paid to them. They were dedicated 1 hour and 28 minutes, which comprised 88.31% of the time allotted for men's sports competitions in general in the first sample. Of the total time dedicated to team sports in the first sample (1 hour, 29 minutes and 25 seconds), 98.42% were dedicated to men's team sports competitions. These were also given 84.94% of the total airtime set aside for sports information in both competition categories together, in the first sample. Finally, 80.97% of the aired contents' total duration relating to men's team sports competitions, conveyed in both copies, came from the sample taken before the Olympics. The focus on men's team sports competitions in the sample taken during the Olympics was visibly declined.

Although during the Summer Olympics, the presence of women's individual sports competitions was significantly higher compared to the sample preceding the Olympics, these were still allocated significantly less time than that allocated to men's individual sports competitions in the second sample. Out of the time dedicated to individual sports in the second sample, 62.20% went to men's competitions, while 37.80% – to women's.

It can be noticed that an analysis of the regular sports information programme on Alsat-M indicates that men's sports competitions in general, team sports in particular (especially football) dominate the programme. Then, it can be seen that the nature of the Summer Olympics, which featured a range of individual sports, diverted the TV outlet's focus towards individual sports in tune with the offer, and reduced the total difference in the airtime allocated to men and women. However, the difference between men and women remained significant even during the Olympics, when there were significantly more opportunities for airing women's individual and team sports competitions in the programme.

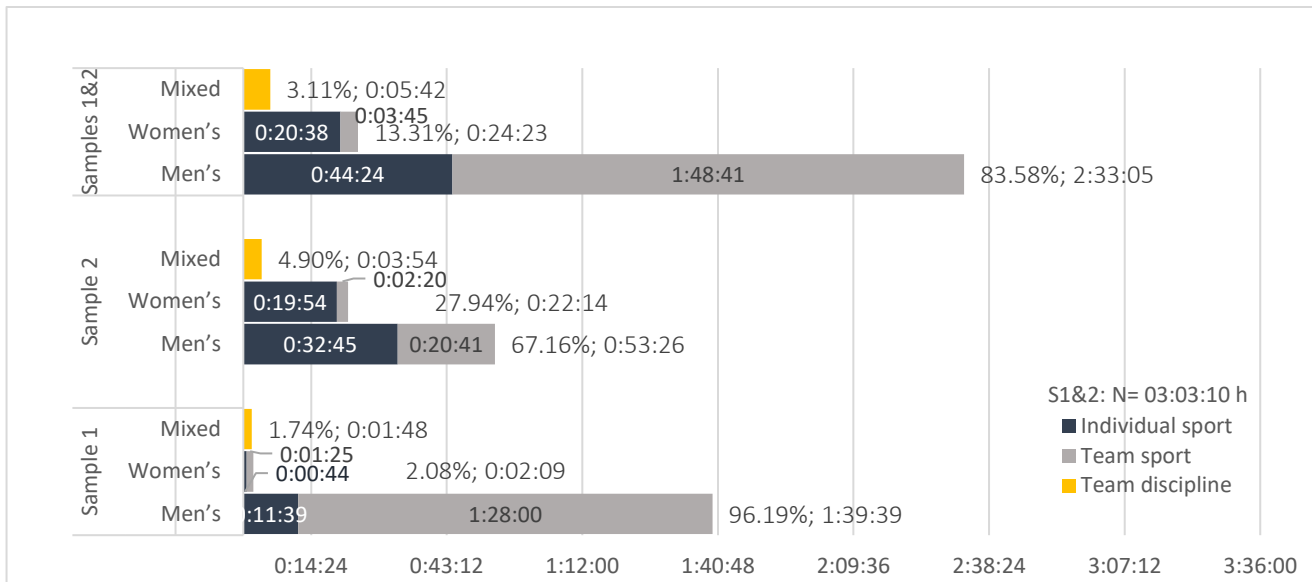


Figure 33: Share of men's and women's sports competitions, respectively in the sports information programme of Alsat-M TV, segregated by type of sports

The presentation of the different types of sports and their correlation with the men's and women's competitions, respectively, also means that one could expect that the sports programme would present, to a greater extent and more often, male athletes rather than female athletes. Figure 35 shows the frequency of appearance of male and female participants in Alsat-M TV's items, in accordance with their roles in the programme, here not counting the male and female editors whose identities – and, in this regard, gender distinction – the research was not able to determine with consistency.

In total, in the entire content of the sports information programme analyzed (in the 36 shows and through the 157 identified items), 396 participants in the programme were registered,<sup>65</sup> of which 266, or 67.17% were men, and 130 or 32.83% were women.

In terms of the frequency of appearance of the male and female participants in the programme, Alsat-M TV stands out compared to the other privately-owned television stations. In its case, the difference in the instances of presence of men and women under the influence of the Summer Olympics was visibly reduced. As can be seen from Figure 36, in the second sample, the presence of male and female participants in the programme was nearly equal. Nevertheless, a closer look at the graph reveals the structure of this presence, which immediately leads to the conclusion that the instances of appearance of the journalists were the element that reduced the difference, whereas the other parameters were similar to those of the other privately-owned television stations.

<sup>65</sup> More specifically, these are instances of appearance by participants in the programme per basic unit of analysis, and this is a unit of item. This is not the number of unique participants, i.e. if the same person appeared in more than one item, he or she is coded separately each time.

Out of a total of 181 instances of appearance of journalists in the sports information programme in the two samples together, 94, or 51.93%, were men and 87, or 48.07%, were women. These frequencies were not evenly distributed across the different samples. In the first sample, preceding the Olympics, there were a total of 108 journalists' appearances. Of these, 71 or 65.74% were men and 37 or 34.26% were women. Conversely, in the second sample (during the Olympics) there was an increased presence of female journalists: out of 73 journalists' appearances, 50, or 68.49%, were female journalists, while 23 appearances were by male journalists, which constituted 31.51% of all journalists' appearances in the second sample. These findings are unique to this television channel and should be seen in the context of the style of presentation of its information programme. The high frequency of female journalists' appearance in the programme was not due to a strong female presence in the Sports Newsroom of this TV, but because of the fact that the sports news are an integral part of the general information shows and, therefore, the same male and female presenters convey the sports news at the end of the daily news editions.

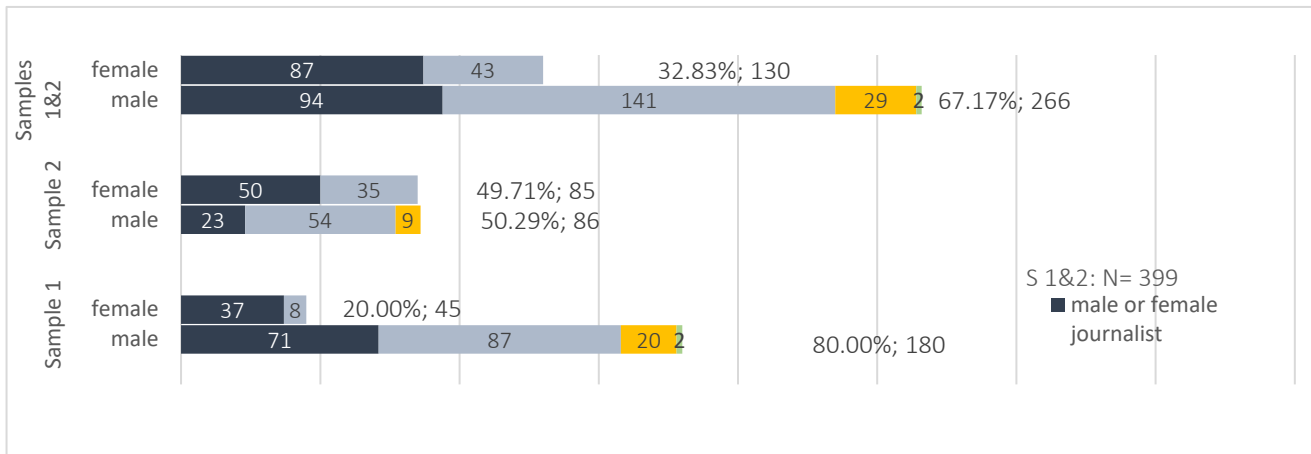


Figure 34: Frequency of appearance of the male and female participants in the sports programme of Alsat-M TV, per unit of item, segregated by types of role

As can be seen in Table 22, the relatively high frequency of appearances by the female journalists, compared to the appearances by male journalists, was owing to two female journalists of this TV, who present the daily news programmes ending with the sports news. On the other hand, the male journalist who had the highest frequency of appearances in general,

Name	Sample 1	Sample 2	Total
Mahir Thaci	52	9	61
Zejxhane Osmani	28	28	56
Evi Shkopi	5	20	25
Dragi Pavlevski	1	14	15
Valbon Bexheti	12	0	12
N/A women	4	2	6
N/A men	4	0	4
Vasko Popetreski	1	0	1
Aleksandar Dimitrievski	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>181</b>

Table 22: Frequency of appearances by individual male and female journalists on Alsat-M TV

received short airtime in the second sample – 85.25% of the instances of his appearance were from the first sample.

The measuring of the duration of the verbal and visual presentations of male and female journalists does not reveal any additional aspect than what has already been stated in the last few paragraphs – roughly speaking, the distribution of airtime allotted to male and female journalists seems consistent with the relative balance of the frequencies of appearance. At the level of verbal (but not visual) presentation, male journalists received a little more time than expected, i.e. than what the percentage of their instances of appearance suggested. If the share of male journalists' appearance was 51.93%, then the share of their verbal presentation was slightly higher and amounted to 56.20%. Conversely, female journalists received somewhat less speech time than expected according to their frequency of appearance.

Out of a total of 184 appearances by male and female athletes in the programme, 141 or 76.63% were men, while 43 or 23.37% were women (Figure 35).

Unlike the frequencies related to journalists' presence, with the athletes there was a clear dominance of men. Intuitively, one should expect that the higher frequency of instances of appearance of the female journalists and the high percentage of airtime allocated for their verbal presentation may lead to a greater presence of female sports' competitions and female athletes in the programme. But this finding suggests the opposite.

The frequencies of male and female athletes' appearance are not evenly distributed across the different samples. In the first sample preceding the Olympics, male dominance was more pronounced, as, out of 95 instances of male and female athletes' appearance, 87 or 91.58% were male athletes, whereas only 8, or 8.42%, were female athletes. In the second sample, under the pressure of the Olympics, there was a slightly greater balance: out of 89 instances of athletes' appearance, 54 or 60.67% were men and 35, or 39.33%, were women. Although in the second sample, too, there was a noticeable difference between the presence of male and female athletes, respectively, the effect of the Summer Olympics is clear.

Nevertheless, the frequency of instances of appearance is one of the several measurement parameters in this research. In addition, data were collected on the duration of the visual

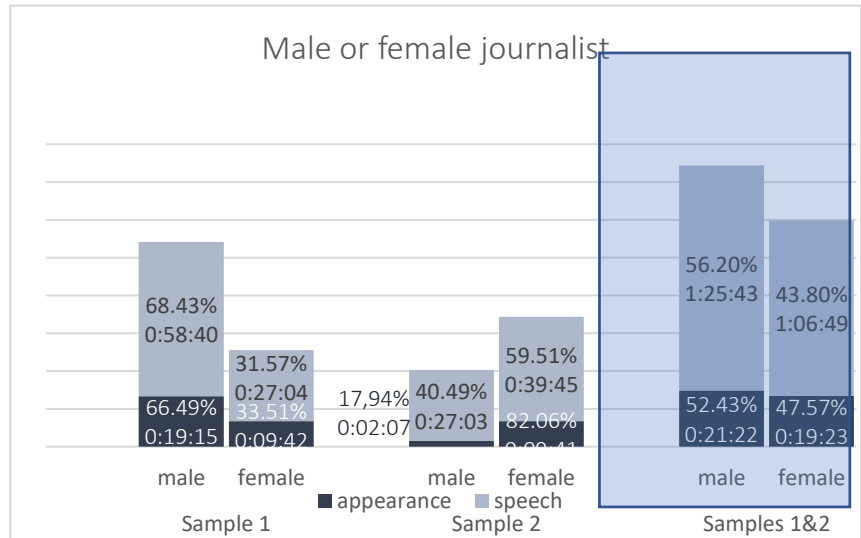


Figure 35: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of male and female journalists in the news programme of Alsat-M TV

presentation (the length of time during which male and female athletes' appeared on camera, respectively, in the information programme) and the verbal presentation (i.e. how much time was set aside for their respective speech presentations, such as statements), respectively.

Figure 37 shows the distribution of the airtime allocated for the verbal and visual presentations of male and female athletes, respectively. At the level of the two samples cumulatively, the Alsat-M TV's editorial desk set aside 1 hour, 30 minutes and 19 seconds for the visual presentation of men, which comprised 81.83% of the total appearance of male and female athletes. Female athletes received 20 minutes and 3 seconds, which comprised 18.17%. This means that the difference in the visual representation was slightly higher than the difference in the instances of appearance between men and women. Additionally, 7 minutes and 25 seconds were allocated for the male athletes' verbal presentation, which represented 73.55% of the total verbal presentation in both samples together. As for the female athletes, 2 minutes and 40 seconds were registered for their speech, or 26.45%. The difference shown by this parameter is slightly smaller than what the previous parameters suggested.

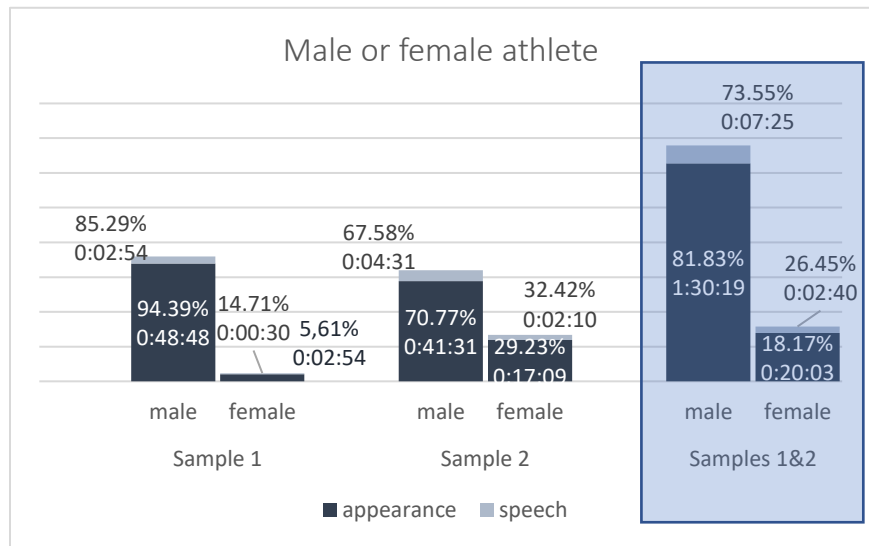


Figure 36: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of the male and female athletes in the Alsat-M TV's information programme

This shift in the different types of representation is shown in Figure 38. The figure shows, at the level of the four measurement parameters in both samples, the comparative pressure the presence of women's sports competitions had made during the Olympics.<sup>66</sup> In the first sample, there was a certain reduction in the difference between male and female athletes in terms of the duration of their respective verbal presentations. In the second sample, there was a somewhat higher frequency of the female athletes' instances of appearance, compared to the results yielded by the other parameters for measuring their presence. Nevertheless, this figure does not significantly alter the assessment that on Alsat-M TV, especially in its regular programme, one could expect considerable dominance of men's sports competitions

<sup>66</sup> The sum of the percentages of sports' participation does not equal 100%, because the figure does not show the participation of mixed sports competitions that have a share in the presentation.

and male athletes who are significantly more present both visually and verbally, compared to the female athletes.

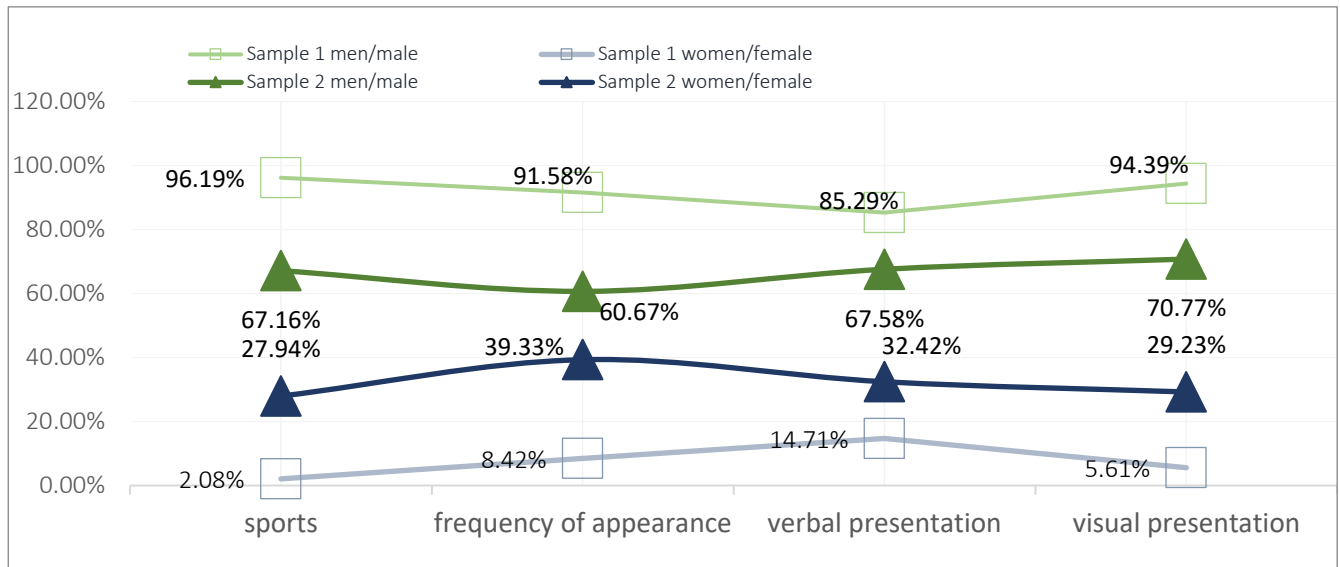


Figure 37: Ratio between male and female athletes in the sports programme of Alsat-M TV, presented through four measuring parameters comparatively in both samples

Finally, out of 29 sports experts or sports workers' instances of appearance, not a single woman appeared among them. Nine of these appearances – which is 31.03% – came from the second sample, while 20, or 68.97%, came from the first one. In this sense, the product of the Alsat-M TV's newsroom, despite having been presented evenly by both male and female journalists, had

the same characteristics as the products of all other analyzed television channels. The presence of sports experts leaves an impression that this is a programme in which men talk about both men's and women's sports competition, and speak on behalf of and analyze both male and female athletes. This finding suggests that there is both visual and verbal domination of men among the sports experts and sports workers, although, due to the limited sample, this cannot be

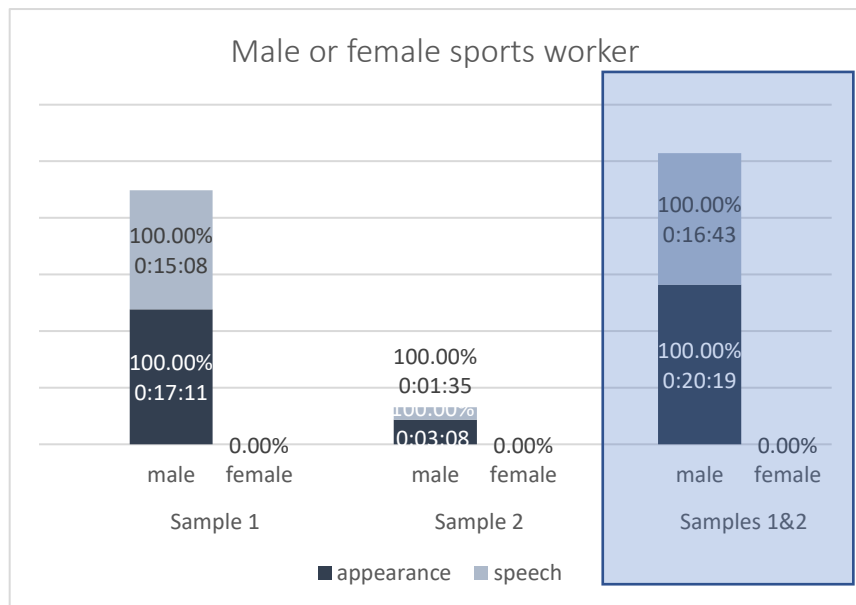


Figure 38: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of male and female sports workers/experts in the information programme of Alsat-M TV

expressed in the form of a generalization about the entire sports programme on this television channel.

In this research, the male and female athletes and the sports to which the reporting as part of the information programme refers, were coded from a gender perspective. One of the parameters refers to the discourse nodes through which media outlets construct male and female athletes within the frameworks of the feminizing or masculinistic stereotyping markers. Not a single instance was detected in Alsat-M TV's programme where words, syntagms or sentences were used for men's and women's sports competitions that marked them in a gender-stereotyping manner, such as when, for instance, the term "with the ladies" is used for the female athletes, or constructions such as "the mighty Vikings" – for the male athletes.

Also, no instances of reporting were detected in which intersectional topics such as gender and race or nation were raised. Male and female athletes were most often associated with their achievement and there were no instances of sexualization of their bodies. Also, when it comes to the female athletes, Alsat-M TV mostly used the feminine forms of the noun.

### III.6. Kanal 5 TV

#### Introduction

*Kanal 5 TV* had an extremely low frequency of sports programmes. In the two selected periods for the samples - from 4 to 10 April (preceding the Summer Olympics) and from 26 July to 1 August (during the Summer Olympics) – a total of 17 sports programmes were broadcast on this TV channel, 13 of which were news, 2 were sports magazines, and there were also 2 broadcasts that were registered (Table 23). Five

Show/ Sample	News	Magazine	Broadcast	Total	%
Sample 1	3	0	2	5	29.41%
Sample 2	10	2	0	12	70.59%
Total	13	2	2	17	100.00%

Table 23: Frequency of sports shows on Kanal 5 TV by type

editions, or 29.41% of the total sports programme analyzed, were published in the week selected for analysis, preceding the Olympic Games. Twelve editions, or 70.59%, were published in the sample covering the Olympics. Due to the already reserved broadcasting rights, *Kanal 5 TV* aired no Olympic broadcasts either. Ten of the 13 registered sports news (or 76.92%) on *Kanal 5 TV* were broadcast during the Olympics. Additionally, the two editions of sports magazines were broadcast during the Olympics. In fact, according to the frequency of airing contents in the first sample, *Kanal 5 TV* did not have any structured sports programme outside of its reporting on major sports events.

Analogous to the low frequency, genre diversity was small as well (Table 24). In the 17 editions of sports shows, 39 different genre units were broadcast, of which 33 – or 84.62% – were classical news. Only one report and two sports broadcasts were registered in the entire programme within the two weeks.<sup>67</sup> Not a single overview was registered in the sports programme – a genre that is not uncommon in

Genre/ Sample	News	Report	Broadcast	Other	Total	%
Sample 1	14	0	2	0	16	41.03%
Sample 2	19	1	0	3	23	58.97%
Total	33	1	2	3	39	100.00%

Table 24: Frequency of items on Kanal 5 TV by specific genres

sports journalism. The genre distribution also included three announcements that were marked as “other”. This is so because these were phone-in shows that let the viewers air their comments live. Discussed in these calls were sporting events – in this case, taekwondo primarily.

<sup>67</sup> In this research, the broadcast was double-coded, both as a specific genre in sports journalism and as a type of show of the media outlet. However, in the aggregation, it was processed as a unique unit.



Table 25, which reveals how much time was devoted to sports in the 17 sports shows that were registered, shows that in the news editions before the start of the Olympic Games, this TV channel had a negligible production of this type. Only 6 minutes and 55 seconds of programme were registered in one week, which means that one edition lasted, on average, just over 2 minutes. The short duration was due to the fact that the newsroom aired the sports information as a series of flash news, once a day.

Sample /Type of programme	Broadcast	Information programme	Total	%
Sample 1	1:13:09	0:06:55	1:20:04	47.66%
Sample 2	0:00:00	1:27:55	1:27:55	52.34%
Total	1:13:09	1:34:50	2:47:59	100%
%	43.55%	56.45%		

Table 25: Duration of the sports shows aired by Kanal 5 TV, by type

At first glance, the data from Figure 40 indicate that individual sports were given the same importance both before and during the Olympics. However, this balance was entirely due to two motor sports broadcasts that were aired on this TV's programme, which accounted for 91.36% of the total airtime dedicated to individual sports in the first sample. If we take into account only the information programme (Figure 41), it becomes clear that, before the Olympics, Kanal 5 TV was paying more attention to team sports. In the sample coinciding with the Olympic Games, however, the only sport that took a prominent place was taekwondo, which was covered in 87.68% of the entire sports programme on this channel during the Olympic Games. This means that, even during the Olympics, the dynamics of the low frequency of sports items remained unchanged, and the reason for the slightly increased duration of sports items was the participation and the success of a Macedonian national team athlete at the Olympic Games, i.e. the Macedonian taekwondo fighter.

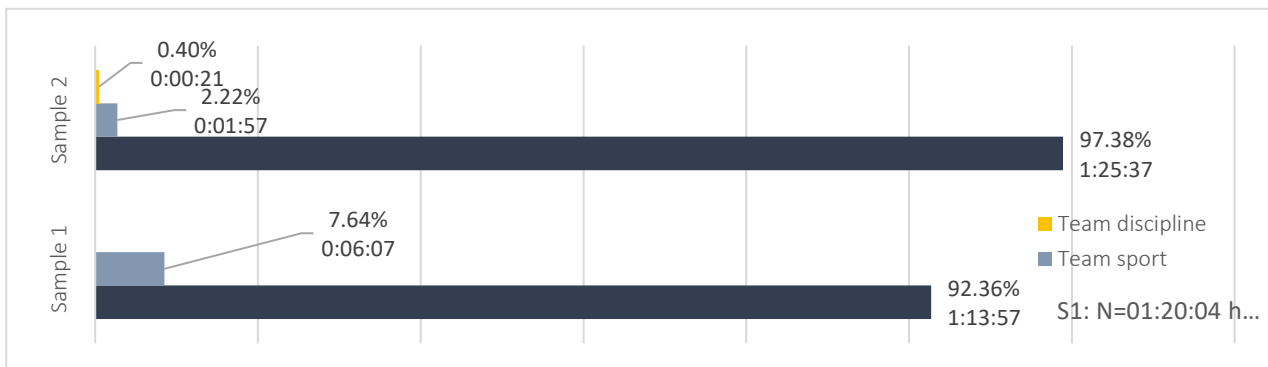


Figure 39: Share of the individual and team sports in the total sports programme on Kanal 5 TV, in the respective samples



Figure 41: Share of the individual and team sports in the respective samples of the Kanal 5 TV's sports information programme

As the data from Figure 41 and Table 26 show, as much as 90.03% of the total duration of items dedicated to individual sports during the Summer Olympics was actually airtime devoted to taekwondo. Only 10 minutes and 50 seconds were devoted to all other sports during the Summer Olympics.

Type of sports/ Sample	Sample 1	Sample 2	Total
Taekwondo	0:00:00	1:17:05	1:17:05
Car racing	1:13:09	0:00:00	1:13:09
Football	0:04:29	0:01:27	0:05:56
Lifting weights	0:00:00	0:02:00	0:02:00
Gymnastics	0:00:00	0:01:54	0:01:54
Athletics	0:00:00	0:01:48	0:01:48
Handball	0:01:38	0:00:00	0:01:38
Swimming	0:00:00	0:01:06	0:01:06
Tennis	0:00:00	0:00:53	0:00:53
Formula	0:00:48	0:00:00	0:00:48
Equestrian sports	0:00:00	0:00:38	0:00:38
Boxing	0:00:00	0:00:34	0:00:34
Basketball	0:00:00	0:00:30	0:00:30
Total	1:20:04	1:27:55	2:47:59

Table 26: Share of the different types of sports in Kanal 5 TV's total sports programme analyzed

## Analysis of the Gender Aspects in the Sports Programme

Figure 42 shows that the low frequency and short duration of Kanal 5 TV's sports information programme was mostly devoted to men's individual sports competitions. As much as 93.06% of the total duration of the sports information programme (which, in both samples together, amounted to 1 hour, 34 minutes and 50 seconds) were dedicated to men's sports competitions, within which individual sports had the longest duration, as 1 hour, 20 minutes and 11 seconds, or 90.86%, of the total airtime during which men's sports were covered, were information on individual sports. Women's sports competitions accounted for 6.57% of the total information programme in the two samples together and all information related to these were about individual sports. This finding

suggests (although it can not be generalized given the small sample) that the entire sports programme of *Kanal 5 TV* was, in fact, mostly “male”.

The analysis of data collected in both samples still does not mean that the findings were evenly distributed. Thus, in the sample taken in the week before the start of the Olympic Games, *Kanal 5 TV* did not broadcast any informative content at all related to women's sports, but did broadcast a 6-minute-and-55-second programme that referred, above all, to men's team sports competitions. Of these, 6 minutes and 7 seconds, or 88.43% of the duration of contents devoted to sports in which men competed, referred to team sports. This data covers only the information programme, while live broadcasts, as stated in the previous chapter, lasted a total of 1 hour, 13 minutes and 9 seconds and referred to an individual sport that involved only men (car racing).

Although in the programme of the Olympic Games, there were women's competitions in many sports categories, this still did not lead to an increased representation of women in sports by this media outlet. This can be seen clearly from Figure 42, which shows that 1 hour, 21 minutes and 20 seconds, or 92.51% of the duration of the total sports information programme in the second sample, were information on men's sports competitions. Although the duration of the selected programme was too short to draw generalized conclusions, the finding can still be taken as an indication of media bias<sup>68</sup> which, regardless of what the real offer of sports looks like, broadcasts content according to its own preference, which in this case may have gender-related implications.

The programme of the Olympics did not affect the frequency of gender representation too much, but Figure 42 shows that it probably did exert significant pressure on the choice of type of sports in the programme.<sup>69</sup> Thus, in the second sample in the information programme, individual sports prevailed among men's competitions as well, which was fully determined by the Olympic offer.

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<sup>68</sup> Media bias is the systematic bias of the newsroom or the journalist towards a certain selection of content.

<sup>69</sup> The division into team and individual sports is quite problematic due to the fact that in some traditionally individual sports there is team competition and, therefore, these should be considered as team sports because they involve coordinated action by a group of competitors. However, in order to ensure the validity of the data interpretation in this research, the category “team discipline” was added, which encodes specifically the sports that are traditionally considered as individual, but include team disciplines (for example, relay races in athletics).

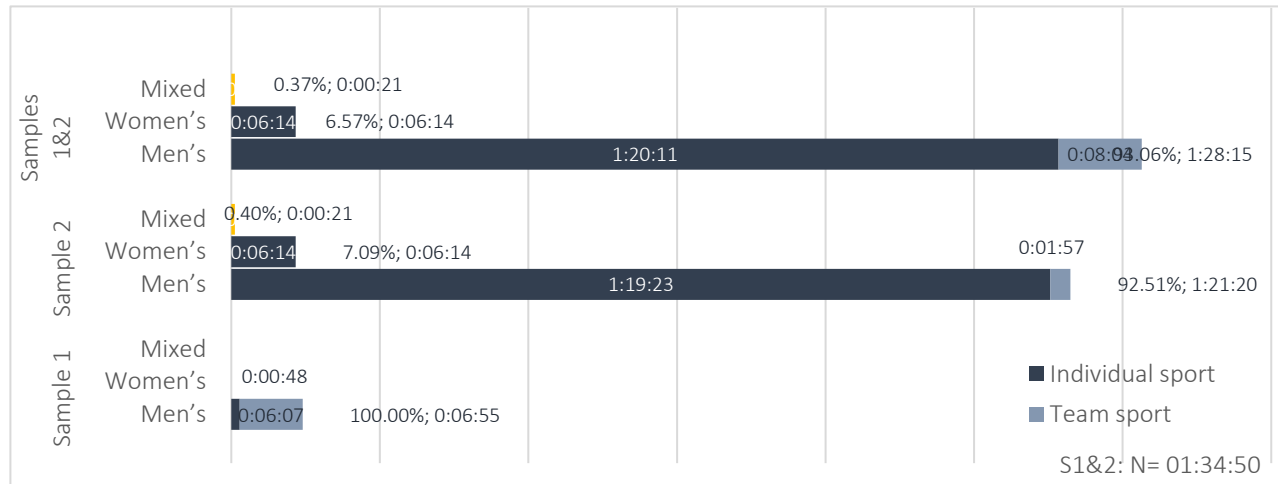


Figure 42: Share men's and women's sports competitions, respectively, in the information sports programme on Kanal 5 TV, segregated by type of sports

The presentation of various sports and their correlation with the male and female athletes also means that the sports programme on *Kanal 5 TV*, as expected, represented men to a greater extent and more often than women, but this still does not mean that the total number of male participants was higher than that of women. Hence, Figure 43 shows the frequencies of appearance of male and female participants, respectively, in the items of *Kanal 5 TV*, according to their roles in the programme. In total, in the overall analyzed content of the sports information programme (in the 40 identified items<sup>70</sup>), 85 appearances of participants in the programme were registered,<sup>71</sup> of which 71 – or 83.53% – were men, and 14 – or 16.47% – were women. In the first sample, no balance was made between men's and women's presence. Out of 31 participants in the programme, a total of 30 – or 96.77% – were men. Therefore, the impression that this programme left upon the audience of *Kanal 5 TV*, in the small number of registered items in this sample, was that male journalists talked about men's sports competitions.

<sup>70</sup> It should be noted that this number of items (40) includes both broadcasts of auto races on *Kanal 5 TV* in the first sample. However, only the commentators, and not the athletes, were encoded for the broadcasts in the code matrix. Given that these broadcasts were of sports involving dozens of male participants, this would have significantly increased the share of male athletes in the programme.

<sup>71</sup> As with all other analyzed television channels, here, too, we have instances of appearance of participants in the programme in the basic unit of analysis – the item. Consequently, this is not about the number of individual participants, but about the sum of appearances of a certain number of people in all encoded items.

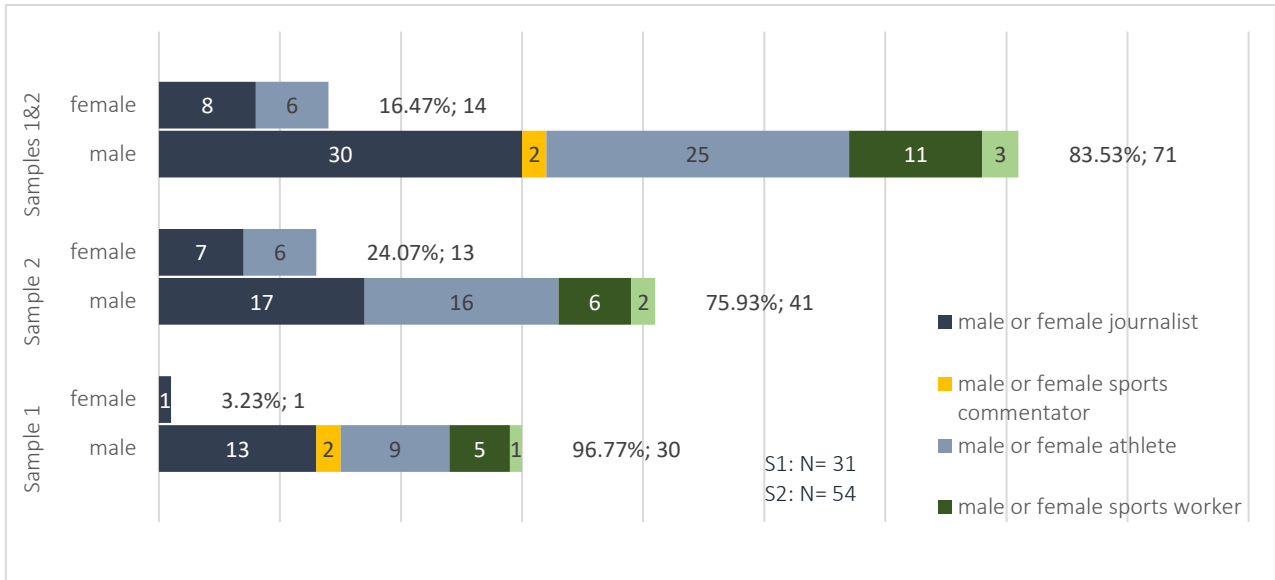


Figure 43: Frequency of appearances of male and female participants in the sports programme on Kanal 5 TV per unit of item, segregated by type of role

In the second sample, under a certain pressure from the Olympics’ programme, the number and relative importance of female participants was increased. Consequently, here there were six female athletes, representing 27.27% of the total frequency of male and female athletes during the excerpt from the Olympic Games, which comprised the second sample. For comparison, in the first sample the analysis registered 9 male athletes and not a single female athlete.

As the frequency of appearances does not inevitably mean a longer airtime reserved for the male and female athletes, this analysis aggregated the duration in which the latter appeared in the programme visually (when inserts of them appeared) and by speech (for example, when giving statements or interviews).

It follows that, in both samples, out of the total airtime in which, in the information programme (excluding the broadcasts), the athletes appeared visually, men were present in 79.84% of the time, while women –

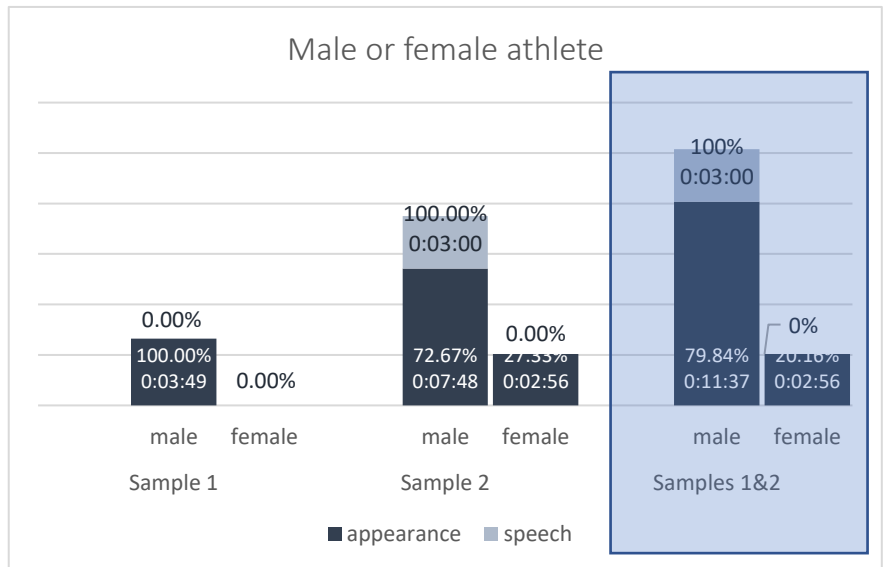


Figure 44: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of male and female athletes, respectively, in the information programme on Kanal 5 TV

in 20.16%. In the sample taken during the Olympics, the visual presence of women was obviously increased compared to the first sample where they were neither visually nor verbally present at all. Thus, in the second sample, female athletes were dedicated 27.33% of the airtime, and male athletes – 72.67%. Nevertheless, despite the increased visual presence of women in the second sample, it should be noted that the difference between them is large.

Even this minor visual presence of women in the second sample was obviously an effect of the Olympics’ programme. However, this explanation raises another problem as, in terms of verbal presentation, female athletes were completely absent from the information programme in both samples.

In the second sample, men prevailed among the journalists, but the number of appearances by female journalists covering sports news was increased. Although the constructed sample of the sports programme was not composite – which would provide the highest level of representativeness for the entire *Kanal 5 TV*’s sports programme – the data are indicative anyway. A total of 7, or 29.17%, of the total frequency of appearances by male and female journalists who conveyed different items – were women (Figure 43).

This figure should be analyzed in the light of the style of sports information programme on *Kanal 5 TV*.

Namely, the higher frequency of female journalists’ appearances, compared to the first sample, was due to the fact that sports news were briefly aired at the end of the complete information programme and, thus, in this case, these were not specialized female sports journalists who presented or reported on various sports events. As can be seen from Table 27, these were female journalists/presenters who presented the general daily news as well. Consequently, the increase was coincidental. Table

27 also shows that, in 24 instances of a sports journalist’s appearance (out of a total of 38 in the information programme), it was one and the same person.

An analysis of the visual and verbal presence of male and female journalists in the sports programme shows that, in both samples, in the 8 instances of

female journalists’ appearance, they were presented in speech for 3 minutes and 31 seconds, which

Name	Sample 1	Sample 2	Total
Zoran Cvetanovski	11	13	24
Tatjana Stojanovska	1	3	4
Ljubica Janevska	0	4	4
Robert Jankov	0	3	3
Borislav Tnokovski	1	1	2
Mihajlo Vidimski	0	1	1
Total	13	25	38

Table 27: Frequency of appearances by individual male and female journalists on *Kanal 5 TV*

was 20.83% of the total speech by male and female journalists in the information programme. Verbally, the 30 instances of appearance of journalists lasted 13 minutes and 22 seconds, which was 79.17% of all speech in the information programme (here excluding, of course, the broadcasts or the phone-in programmes registered in this sample). In terms of visual presentation, male and female journalists appeared almost equally in the program, which is an interesting finding because there were a total of 8 instances of female journalists and 30 instances of male journalists appearing. Judging from the style of the *Kanal 5 TV* programme, this suggests that when female journalists/presenters presented news, there was a greater probability of them being shown on camera, rather than the inserts. Conversely, when the news were presented by male journalists/presenters, their speech was more likely to be illustrated with inserts, due to which they appeared visually for a relatively shorter time.

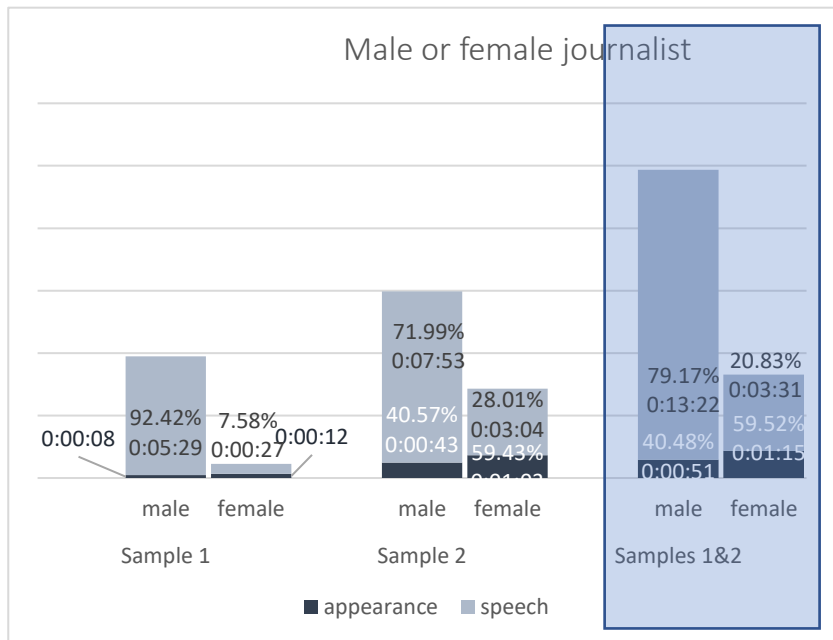


Figure 45: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of male and female journalists, respectively, in the *Kanal 5 TV*'s information programme

As regards the presence of male and female sports workers in the programme, the findings are interesting from a gender perspective. All 11 appearances by sports experts or sports workers in the programme on *Kanal 5 TV* were by men (see Figures 43 and 46). It turns out that in both samples of *Kanal 5 TV*, even during the Olympics, when one would expect the programme to feature female sports experts/sports workers, this was not the case. Sports workers (men), in

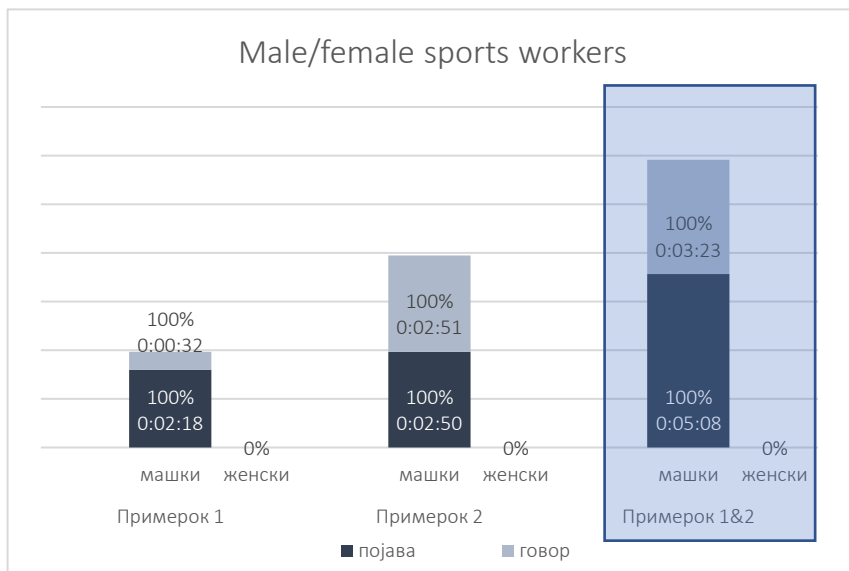


Figure 46: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of male and female sports workers in the information programme of *Kanal 5 TV*

both samples, appeared visually in the programme for 5 minutes and 8 seconds, and verbally – for 3 minutes and 23 seconds (Figure 46). This is yet another indicator - which should be taken into account with caution due to the low frequency of sports programme on this media outlet – of male predominance in the majority of segments in the programme of *Kanal 5 TV*.

From a qualitative point of view of the analysis, in both samples of *Kanal 5 TV*'s programme, in all instances of female athletes' appearance, feminine forms of the nouns referring to them were used. Additionally, no items were detected constructing the male or female athletes within the respective masculinistic or feminizing stereotyping markers. Some sort of exception was one edition of the show titled "Hello, Macedonia," which entered the sample due to the special presence of sports content. Viewers of the show **marked/praised** the success of the Macedonian national team taekwondo fighter as a heroic feat, which to a certain extent corresponded with the description of a national hero, as he would have been analyzed in an intersectional analysis between the sports and the nation.

The research in the phase of data collection encoded the way in which male and female journalists **marked/covered** different sports. It analyzed whether generic or genderizing strategies were used to mark the individual sports. The generic code was used for every item in which the name of the sport was used without a gender marker (for instance, when only 'football' or 'tennis' were used, as opposed to 'men's soccer' or 'women's tennis'). In contrast, a genderizing code was used for those items in which the sport was referred to *explicitly* as male or female (for example, when 'male basketball', 'male football', or 'men's high jump competition' were used explicitly). Out of the *Kanal 5 TV*'s 38 detected items about men's sports competitions, 35 addressed sports by their generic forma. In this sense, every use of the name of the men's team sports was in their generic form (only 'football', as opposed to 'men's football', only 'volleyball', as opposed to 'men's volleyball'), and this applied to the competitions that took place during the Olympics as well. Only in three cases of individual sports – swimming, athletics and tennis – was it emphasized that these were sports competitions in the men's category.

In *Kanal 5 TV*'s sports programme, the topic of gender was not detected in any of the items and there were no intersectional links between the topics such as gender and race, nation or discrimination. No cases were detected either of highlighting any characteristics of the male and female athletes other than their achievements. These conclusions are due to this TV channel's style of presentation, in which the sports programme was presented through short news, in the absence of analytical genres and in conditions where the length of the programme was extremely short.



### III.7. Sitel TV

#### Introduction

In the two periods selected as samples - before the Summer Olympic Games (from 4 to 10 April) and during the Olympic Games (from 26 July to 1 August), a total of 27 editions of sports shows were broadcast on *Sitel TV*, of which 23 – or 85.19% – were sports news editions, and there were four editions of sports magazines registered. Given that, in the second time span, there were more sports events on offer, and that there were no sports broadcasts on *Sitel TV*, this channel aired significantly more editions of information programme in this, than in the sample preceding the start of the 2020 Olympic Games (see Table 28 and Table 29).

Show/ Sample	News	Magazine	Broadcast	Total	%
Sample 1	7	2	0	9	33.33%
Sample 2	16	2	0	18	66.67%
Total	23	4	0	27	100.00%

Table 28: Frequency of sports shows on *Sitel TV* by type

Out of a total of 27 editions of the information programme (sports news and magazines), 66.67 %% were broadcast in the one week when the Olympics took place. During the sample preceding the Games, a total of 9 editions were aired, comprising 33.33% of the total number of editions in the two periods observed.

Also according to the duration of the sports information sports programme, the newsroom dedicated significantly more time to sports information during the Olympics. The difference in duration of the two samples, respectively, was, however, smaller than what the difference in the frequency of shows suggests in Table 28. In the first sample, the 9 broadcast editions were dedicated 1 hour, 2 minutes and 57 seconds (which was 40.18 % of the total duration in the two weeks of the respective samples). The 18 shows in the second sample were allocated 1 hour, 33 minutes and 44 seconds (which was 59.82% of the total duration of the sports information programme).

In terms of genre, a vast majority of sports contents were published as news or reports, and there was no genre diversity in this regard. It is visible that in both selected periods, two interviews were broadcast, and the research did not detect any analytical and commentary genres, such as the overview. It is also noticeable that no sports broadcast was aired in any of the two periods. For the sample coinciding with the Olympics, this fact is understandable – the rights

Sample / Genre	News	Report	Interview	Broadcast	Total	%
Sample 1	28	8	0	0	36	46.15%
Sample 2	18	22	2	0	42	53.85%
Total	46	30	2	0	78	100.00%

Table 29: Frequency of items aired on *Sitel TV*, by their specific genres

to air broadcasts from the Olympics had been purchased by another broadcaster, and this is why broadcasts of the Olympic events were missing. In the second sample, one could notice that the

number of items of the ‘news’ genre was reduced, while the number of items of the genre of reports was increased. This can be explained by the size of the Olympic offer, which the newsroom was covering, as expected, by airing longer journalistic forms than the news.

Figure 47, which compares the distribution of different types of sports in each of the two selected periods, shows the impact that the 2020 Summer Olympics had on the *Sitel TV*’s sports programme. In the sample preceding the Olympics, team sports prevailed, having received 53 minutes and 50 seconds, which was 85.52% of the total duration of the sports information programme. In contrast, only 8 minutes and 5 seconds, or 12.84%, of the sports information programme were dedicated to individual sports. However, in the offer during the Olympic Games, the abundance of individual sports gained a prominent place and this was, seemingly, fully reflected in the programme content which, in the second sample, set aside 13 minutes and 18 seconds for team sports, or 14.19% of the total duration of the sports information programme in this sample. On the other hand, individual sports now prevailed, occupying 1 hour, 20 minutes and 1 second, or 85.37%, of the total duration of the information programme in the second sample. This finding, with such a pronounced inverse proportionality between the two samples, is characteristic of the sports programme of *Sitel TV*, unlike the other privately-owned television channels where, even when individual sports gained more importance in the sample covering the Olympics, the contrast between them and team sports was not that big. With *Sitel TV*, team disciplines in the sphere of traditionally individual sports did not take any prominent place.

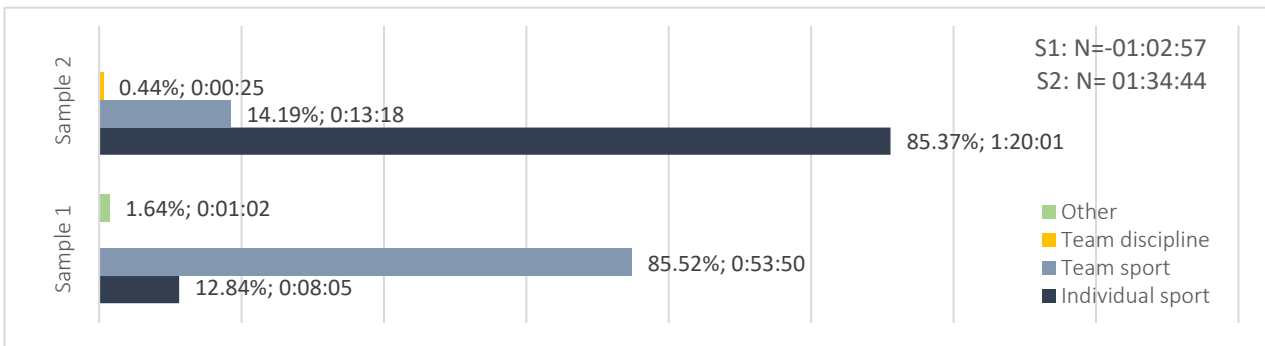


Figure 47: Share of the individual and team sports in the total sports programme on Sitel TV in the respective samples

However, a review of the distribution of the types of sports in both samples clarifies significantly the reasons for the pronounced inversely proportional distribution of types of sports in the two samples. Table 30 shows that on the list of sports in the second sample, taekwondo took a high place with its disproportionate participation in the overall programme in the second sample. A total of 1 hour, 9 minutes and 30 seconds were allocated only to taekwondo and only in the second sample, which represented 74.15% of the information programme in the sample covering the Olympics, or 44.36% of the total of the information programme selected for both samples together. Only football, in the sample preceding the Olympics, received such a significant length of the programme.

Type of sport/ Sample	Sample 1	Sample 2	Total
Taekwondo	0:03:02	1:09:30	1:12:32
Football	0:44:17	0:06:38	0:50:55
Basketball	0:06:29	0:02:45	0:09:14
Tennis	0:03:08	0:03:25	0:06:33
Handball	0:01:57	0:01:59	0:03:56
Swimming	0:00:00	0:03:38	0:03:38
Athletics	0:00:00	0:03:04	0:03:04
Volleyball	0:01:07	0:00:53	0:02:00
Formula	0:01:41	0:00:00	0:01:41
Water polo	0:00:00	0:01:03	0:01:03
Other	0:01:02	0:00:00	0:01:02
Wrestling	0:00:07	0:00:30	0:00:37
Judo	0:00:00	0:00:19	0:00:19
Karate	0:00:07	0:00:00	0:00:07
<b>Total</b>	<b>1:02:57</b>	<b>1:33:44</b>	<b>2:36:41</b>

Table 30: Share of the different types of sports in the total sports programme of Sitel TV analyzed

This means that the considerable share of individual sports in the second sample was

more an effect of the contingent fact that the Macedonian national team member competing in the individual sport of taekwondo achieved a great Olympic success, rather than an effect of the Olympic offer itself. Thus, the considerable duration set aside for individual sports is accidental.

## Analysis of the Gender Aspects in the Sports Programme

According to the analysis of the distribution of the duration of sports information programme across the two selected samples, segregated according to the type of sport and of competition, visible in the information programme of *Sitel TV* is an absolute male dominance.

In the two samples cumulatively, as can be seen in Figure 48, out of the total of 2 hours, 36 minutes and 41 seconds of sports information, the *Sitel TV* newsroom set aside 2 hours, 24 minutes and 15 seconds, or 92.06%, for men's sports competitions. At the level of both samples, individual sports received a more significant place, having received 1 hour, 21 minutes and 29 seconds for the

men's sports competitions – which represented 56.49% of the airtime devoted to men's sports competitions, or 52.01% of the overall sports programme in general. Team sports received 1 hour, 2 minutes and 46 seconds, when they had men competing, which was 43.51% of the airtime dedicated to men's sports competitions, or 40.06% of the sports programme in general. All in all, information on the women's sports competitions received only 10 minutes and 59 seconds, which comprised 7.01% of the total sports programme.

The virtually absolute numerical dominance is evident in each of the two samples. However, the ratio between men's and women's sports competitions in terms of their type reveals additional details. In the sample preceding the Olympic Games, men's team sports occupied an extremely long airtime. They were given 51 minutes and 53 seconds, which represented 88.21% of the total airtime dedicated to men's sports competitions before the Olympics, or 82.42% of the total airtime dedicated to sports in the information programme. The largest portion of airtime dedicated to men's team sports competitions came from broadcasting football-related content: 44 minutes and 17 seconds were set aside for information about this sport, of which strictly competitions between men's teams were aired. This represented 85.35% of the total airtime devoted to team sports in which men competed, 82.26% of the total airtime for team sports, or 70.35% of the total airtime dedicated to sports in general in the first sample. This fact in itself does not mean that the newsroom has a systematic bias towards men's team sports, since the sample from which it originated does not allow generalization. Nevertheless, it can be considered to indicate that the regular sports programme on *Site1 TV* is likely to be mostly dedicated to men, assigning a prominent place to team sports in it, of which football occupies a dominant position.

If, in the first sample, the airtime dedicated to football was the reason for the prominence of men's team sports competitions, then, in the second sample, the types of sports exchanged places. Thus, men's individual sports competitions gained the greatest importance, and this due to the effect created by the success of the Macedonian taekwondo competitor at the Olympics. This time, individual sports received 1 hour, 14 minutes and 33 seconds, which comprised 87.26% of the **airtime for** sports in which men competed during the sample covering the Olympics, 93.17% of the total airtime devoted to individual sports in that sample, or 79.53% of the total airtime devoted to sports information in the second sample. This finding is entirely due to the reporting on the success of the Macedonian athlete, as noted earlier.

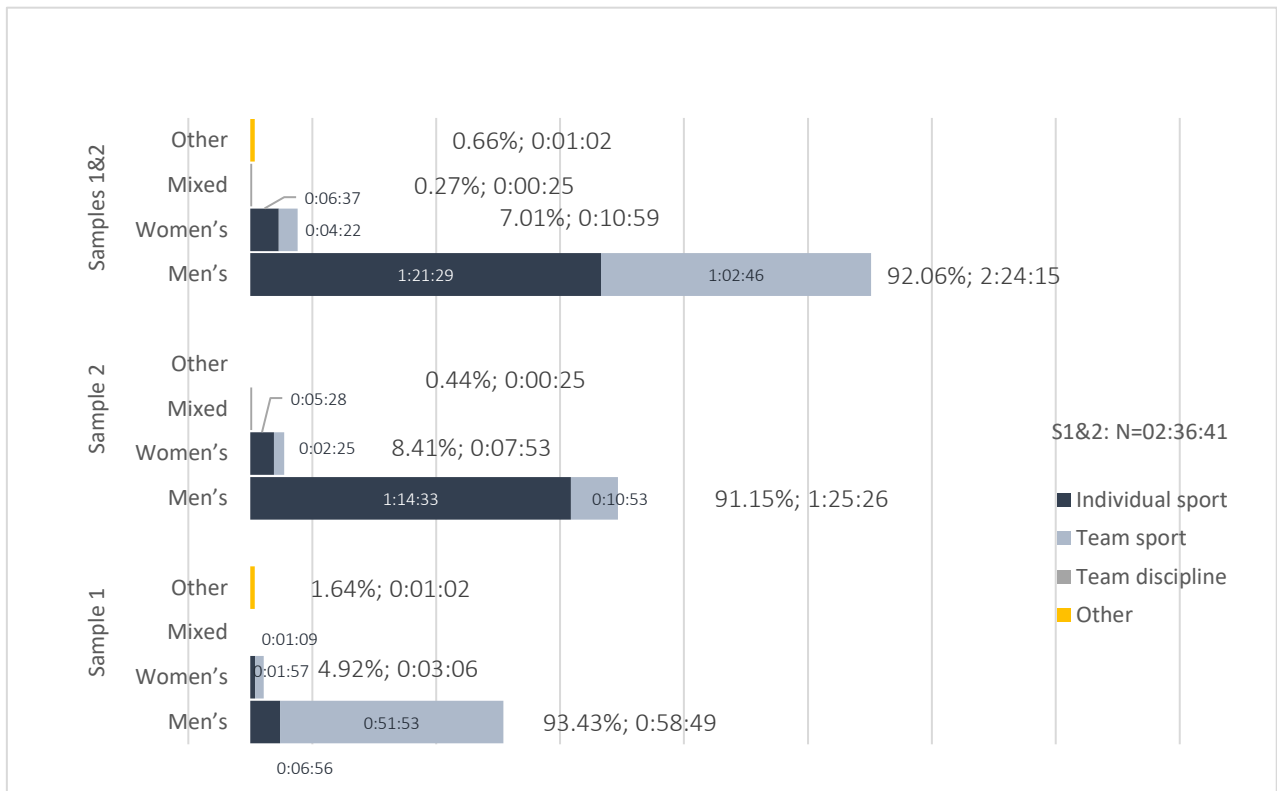


Figure 48: Share of the men's and women's sports competitions in the sports information programme of Sitel TV, segregated by type of sports

The presentation of the different types of sports and their correlation with the male and female competitions, respectively, also means that the sports programme can be expected to present male rather than female athletes to a greater extent and more often. Figure 49 shows the frequencies of male and female participants' appearance in *Sitel TV's* items, according to their respective roles in the programme, here not counting the editors whose identities and – in this regard, their gender distinction – could not be determined consistently in the research. In total, registered in the entire analyzed content of the sports information programme (in the 27 shows and the 78 items identified), were 221 participants in the programme,<sup>72</sup> of whom 186 or 84.16% were men, while 35 or 15.84% were women.

Out of a total of 85 instances of male and female journalists' appearances in various items, 78 of these the appearances were those of male journalists – which comprised 91.76%. Out of a total of 107 instances of male and female athletes (or sports teams)' appearances in various items in both samples cumulatively, 82 or 76.64% were appearances by men, while 25 or 23.36% were appearances by women. Finally, in the entire sports programme analyzed, a total of 18 sports

<sup>72</sup> This reflects, more precisely, the instances of appearance by participants in the programme in the item taken as the basic unit of analysis, and not the number of unique participants. The appearance of one and the same person in different items was always coded separately.

workers or sports experts were registered, of whom 15 or 83.33% were men and 3, or 16.67%, were women. Consequently, the predominance of male participants is visible in all measurement parameters related to the participants' frequency of appearance.

However, this difference is much more expressed in the first sample where, out of a total of 85 male and female participants in the programme, 78 – or 94.12% – were men, and only 5 – or 5.88% – were women. Of the 39 journalists that appeared in the sports programme in this sample, all were male. Out of 39 male and female athletes, 34 – or 87.18% – were men. The imprint that this programme leaves on *Sitel TV*'s audience, in the small number of registered items in this sample, is that male journalists talk about sports in men category.

In the second sample, the considerably larger number is mitigated compared to the first sample, but it still remains significant. Out of 136 registered male and female participants, 106 – or 77.94% – were men, while 30 – or 22.06% – were women. The nature of the Olympic programme put a certain amount of pressure onto the sports programme of *Sitel TV* in terms of a greater presence of female athletes in the programme. Out of a total of 68 registered male and female athletes who appeared in the programme in this sample, 48 – or 70.59% – were men, and 20 – or 29.41% – were women. The difference between the instances of the male and female journalists' appearance also decreased, but still remained significant, as out of 46 instances of appearance by both male and female journalists in total, 39 were men, which represents 84.78%. There was also an expressed difference in the appearances of male and female sports experts in the programme: in the two samples together, there were a total of three female experts – all from the second sample – while, out of a total of 15 male experts, 12 were from the second sample.

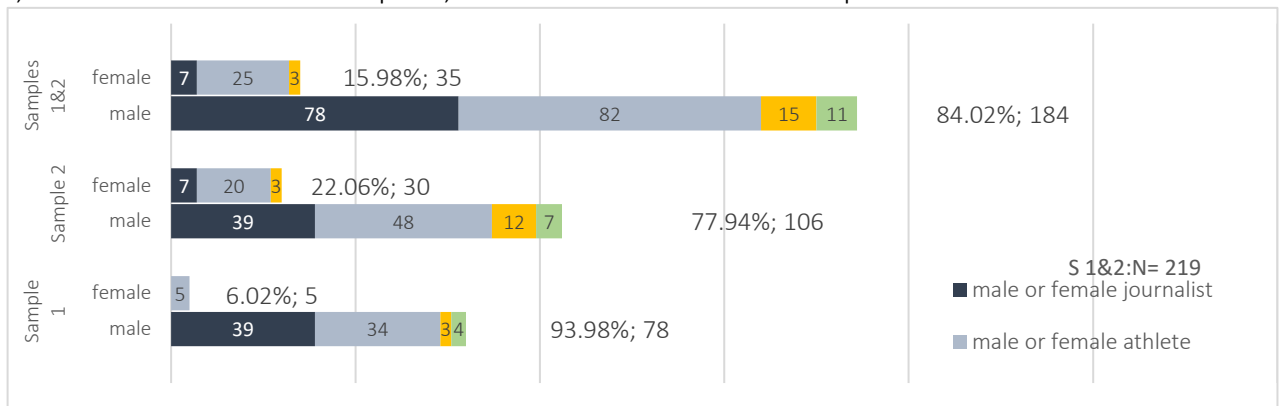


Figure 49: Frequencies of appearance of the male and female participants, respectively, in the sports programme on *Sitel TV* per unit of item, segregated by type of role

As the frequency of appearance does not inevitably mean a longer airtime reserved for the participants in the programme, this analysis aggregated the duration for which they appeared in the programme visually (when inserts of them on camera appeared) and by speech (for example, by means of statements or interviews) was aggregated. It measured the time during which the male and female athletes, journalists and sports workers and experts spoke or appeared visually in the programme.

The analysis of data collected by measuring this parameter with the female athletes indicates there is an obvious tendency on the part of *Sitel TV's* newsroom to show greater interest in the male rather than the female athletes in the programme, and this applies not only to the first sample, which includes the regular sports programme, but to the second sample as well, where, under the influence of the structure and frequency of the Olympic offer, one could expect a more frequent appearance, a longer visual presentation (appearance) and a longer verbal presentation (speech) of the female athletes, compared to the male athletes.

As can be seen from Figure 50, in both samples together, male athletes' visual presentation in the *Sitel TV* programme totaled 1 hour, 18 minutes and 40 seconds, which comprised 88.24% of the duration of the total visual representation of male and female athletes in the programme. The female athletes were given 10 minutes and 29 seconds, or 11.76% of the time. As for the verbal presentation at the level of both samples, male athletes dominated even more, because a total of 41 minutes and 35 seconds, or 99.01% of the time during which male and female athletes spoke, was dedicated to men.

The significantly longer duration of the visual and verbal presentations of the male athletes in the programme is also evident when looked at the two samples separately. In the first sample, the female athletes had 2 minutes and 36 seconds, or 5.51% of the total time during which male and female athletes appeared on camera. Male athletes, by contrast, had 44 minutes and 36 seconds, which was 94.49% of the time. In the same sample, male athletes received 25 minutes and 25 seconds of the speech time (which represented 98.39% of the total duration of the speech by male and female athletes), while female athletes received only 25 seconds, i.e. 1.61%. Thus, it can be said that, in the first sample, the time set aside for visual and verbal presentation of the female athletes was negligible, compared to that of the male athletes.

Although in the second sample, there was a somewhat longer visual presence of female athletes – 7 minutes and 53 seconds, or 18.79% – still, the complete absence of their verbal presentation was yet another indicator of male dominance in covering sporting events, even those in which female athletes are featured.

It is interesting to look at the distribution of male and female markers in all measurement parameters presented so far: (1) men's and women's sports competitions (2) frequency of male and female athletes' appearance in

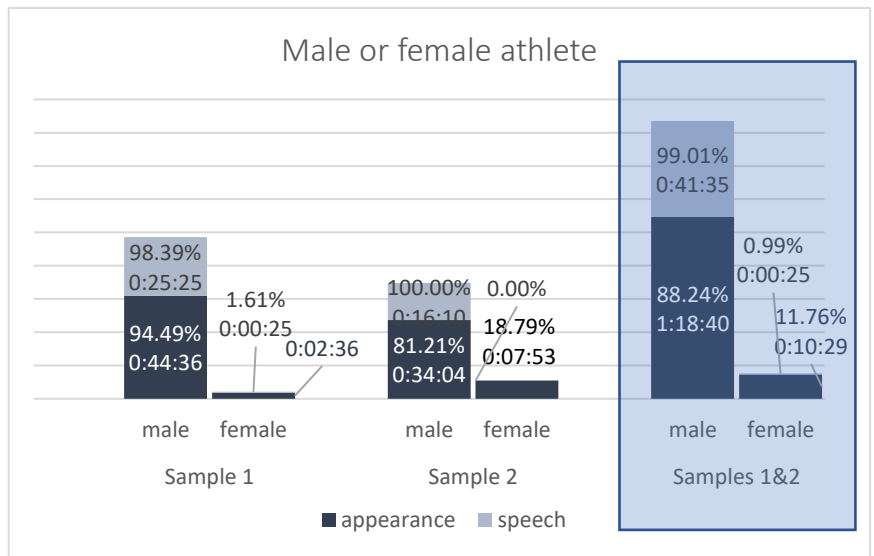


Figure 50: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of male and female athletes in the information programme of *Sitel TV*

the programme, and the duration of their verbal(3) and visual (4) presentations. Figure 51 shows how these markers are distributed comparatively in the two samples of the analysis.

The curves according to the data on the four parameters from the first sample are more stable than those depicting the data from the second sample in which there is a slight increase in the participation of women in terms of their frequency of appearance and duration of visual presentation. Although these figures are small, it still seems interesting to note that women’s participation increases in the visual parameters, but not in those referring to speech or the frequency of types of sports.

As mentioned, Figure 51 shows that on *Sitel TV* at the level of the two samples together, male journalists had 78 instances of appearance out of a total of 85, which constituted 91.76%. Female journalists had a total of 7 appearances, which was 8.24% of the total frequency of instances of appearance by male and female journalists in the sports information programme. In this case as well, in the second sample there was a slightly higher frequency of appearances, but still the number of female journalists is negligible in the sports programme on *Sitel TV*.

According to the review of the unique identities of male and female journalists in the programme, which can be seen in Table 31, 76.47% come from two male sports journalists. The other appearances are by journalists from other newsrooms, who were accidentally covered in both samples. Out of the 9 journalists who were appearing in the samples of the sports programme during and preceding the Olympics, 3 were women, while the other 6 were men. In this, the three female journalists appeared only in the second sample.

Name	Sample 1	Sample 2	Total
Zoran Nikolovski	10	23	33
Igor Trpevski	27	5	32
Mirjana Davidovska	0	3	3
Branislav Janevski	0	5	5
Marjan Nikolov	2	1	3
Despina Todorovska	0	3	3
Ivan Kuzmanovski	0	3	3
Kiril Stojanov	0	2	2
Aleksandra Kostovska	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>85</b>

Table 31: Frequency of appearances by individual male and female journalists on *Sitel TV*

Measuring the duration of the verbal and visual presentation of male and female journalists does not reveal any additional aspect than what was rendered in the last few paragraphs. The numerical dominance of men among the journalistic staff in the sports programme of *Sitel TV* is clear. The only thing worth noting is the slightly lower share of male journalists in the total visual presentation, compared to their share in the frequency of appearances. The other parameters are self-explanatory. According to the frequency of appearances, male journalists in the total sports programme appeared in 91.76% of the cases.



However, when it came to the duration of their visual presentation, male journalists were represented in 77.48%. Conversely, female journalists, according to the frequency of appearances, were represented by 8.24%, and their share in terms of visual presentation was 22.52%. This is not a generalized finding, but it is indicative that female journalists appeared less often, and when they did appear, the camera was turned towards them for a longer time, and *vice versa* – male journalists appeared more frequently, but their visual appearances lasted shorter.

As regards the presence of male and female sports workers in the programme, on *Sitel TV*, as was the case with most of the other television channels, female sports experts or sports workers appeared extremely rarely.

At the level of both samples, as presented, out of a total of 18 appearances, 3 or 16.67% were women. However, this percentage of participation was not reflected in the duration of the visual and verbal presentations of female experts in the programme. The airtime allotted to the three female sports experts for verbal presentation comprised 9.70% of the total time during which male and female sports experts spoke on camera. Similarly, their visual presentation accounted for 9.30% of the total visual presentation of male and female sports workers in both samples together.

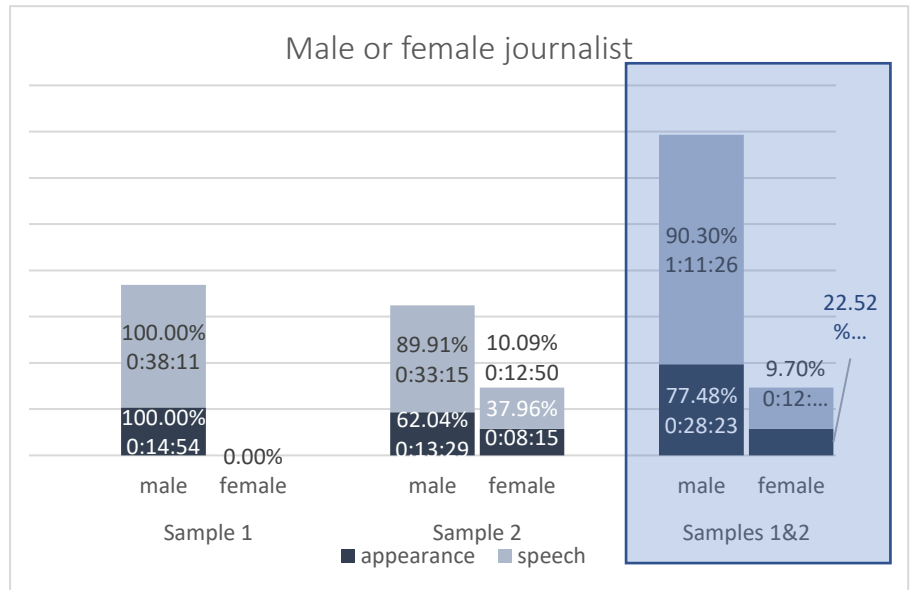


Figure 52: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of male and female journalists in the information programme of *Sitel TV*

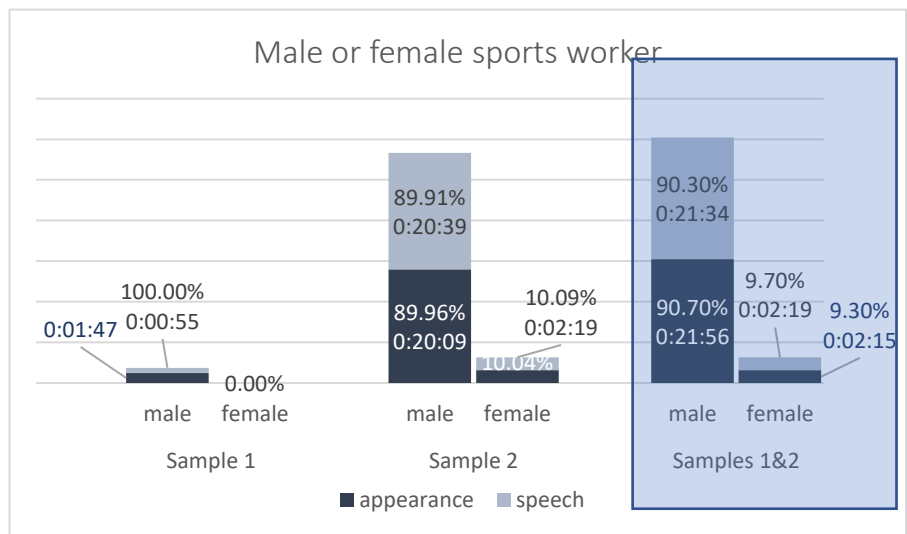


Figure 53: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of male and female sports workers and experts in the information programme of *Sitel TV*

This research, from a gender perspective, coded the male and female athletes to whom, and the sports to which, the reporting in the information programme referred. One of the parameters referred to the discourse nodes with which the male and female athletes were construed within the frameworks of the feminizing or masculinistic stereotyping markers. In this part of the research, three instances were detected in the programme of *Sitel TV* where the term “ladies” was used for three women’s sports competitions (tennis, handball and volleyball), which is, otherwise, often used as a feminizing marker among male and female sports journalists. No masculinizing markers were detected for male athletes.

This research also coded the rhetorical compositions that referred to the way male and female journalists construed sports. In sports reporting, it is common for men’s sports to be called by their generic name, thus naturalizing the male competition. But when the same sports appear in women category, they are often labeled as “female”. Thus, football in men’s category is referred to merely as “football”, whereas women’s football competitions are referred to by emphasizing that this is “football in women’s category”. This phenomenon, as much as it has its roots in the systematic naturalization of male markers, also stems from the development of the sports offer in some of the sports. Thus, in conditions where a certain sport is dominated by a certain gender – such as football is by men – there is a tendency to use the generic name for the male category when referring to it. Still, sports such as volleyball, basketball, handball and the multitude of individual sports that are highly developed in both men and women category are often differentiated into both men’s and women’s competitions. On *Sitel TV*, in the first sample, a genderizing discourse was detected in 5 instances, marking these women’s sports competitions as female, but at the same time there were nearly as many instances in which men’s individual and team sports were construed in a genderizing manner. Yet, in most cases (36), men’s sports were used in their generic form. In the second sample, as can be seen from Table 32, in 59 instances, sports, when men competed, were referred by the generic form, whereas 3 – by the genderizing form. What is obvious is that there was no instance of information about women’s sports competitions which did not point out that this was women’s sports competition. Thus, in the case of women’s sports it is more likely that the journalist will emphasize that this is women’s sports competition. Conversely, men’s sports are more likely to be referred to by the generic form.

This research did not detect any instances of reporting that raised intersectional topics such as gender and race or nation. Also, male and female athletes were most often associated with their achievements and there were no instances of sexualization of their bodies. Finally, *Sitel TV* mostly used the feminine forms of the nouns when referring to female athletes.

Gender/construct	Sample 1		Sample 2	
	generic	genderizing	generic	genderizing
male	36	5	59	3
female	0	6	0	19

Table 32: Frequency of types of constructs regarding men’s and women’s sports on *Sitel TV*

### III.8. *Telma TV*

#### Introduction

*Telma TV* is one of the two privately-owned television stations that air sports information programme rich in content and with a high frequency. In the two selected periods for the samples – from 4 to 10 April (before the Summer Olympics) and from 26 July to 1 August (during the Summer Olympics) – a total of 62 editions of sports shows were broadcast, of which 60 were sports news, and 2 were editions of sports magazines.<sup>73</sup>

Table 33 shows that this television channel aired nearly the same number of sports shows in each of the two samples, but given the fact that the second sample lacks data for one of the days of broadcasting, it can be expected that the second sample had a slightly higher frequency of sports shows. Sports magazines were registered only in the first sample. On *Telma TV*, no sports broadcasts<sup>74</sup> were registered in any of the two weeks taken as samples – either the week preceding the Olympic Games, or the one during the Games.

Show/ Sample	News	Magazine	Broadcast	Total	%
Sample 1	28	2	0	30	48.39%
Sample 2	32	0	0	32	51.61%
Total	60	2	0	62	100%

Table 33: Frequency of sports shows on *Telma TV* by type

From the analysis of the duration of the sports programme in both samples, it appears, again, that this television channel devoted equal airtime to the sports programme in both samples. Nevertheless, one could expect that, in the second sample, more time was set aside to cover the Summer Olympics which still had an effect on the media scheme.

In the first sample, as shown in Table 34, sports information were given 3 hours, 54 minutes and 22 seconds. On average, sports programme of 33 minutes and 29 seconds was broadcast per day. In the second sample, an average of 39 minutes and 4 seconds was aired daily. This difference may be an indicator of the actual difference in duration between the two samples.

Type of show/ Sample	Broadcast	Information programme	Total	%
Sample 1	0:00:00	3:54:22	3:54:22	50.00%
Sample 2	0:00:00	3:54:23	3:54:23	50.00%
Total	0:00:00	7:48:45	7:48:45	100%

Table 15: Duration of the sports shows on *Telma TV* by type

<sup>73</sup> With this television channel, an entire day from the sample taken during the Summer Olympics had not been coded due to damages to the recording. Thus, the second sample of *Telma TV* is shorter than those of the other television channels.

<sup>74</sup> In this research, the broadcast was double-coded, both as a specific genre in sports journalism and as a type of show aired by the media outlet. However, in the aggregation, it was processed as a unique unit.

It can be said that the sports information programme on *Telma TV* is diverse in terms of genre, with the classic journalistic forms – the news and the report – predominating. The news as a genre is the most frequent, as a total of 222 items, or 45.03%, of the programme were actually news items (of which the vast majority came from the second sample), while as many as 217, or 44.02%, of the items were reports. Overviews took a significant place in *Telma TV*'s programme, as 45 items, or 9.13%, of the total number of items recorded belonged to this analytical and commentary genre, typical of sports journalism. The number of aired interviews was higher, compared to other privately-owned

television stations. No sports broadcasts were registered in *Telma TV*'s programme either, which is understandable when it comes to the sample including the Summer Olympics, considering the **broadcasting** rights.

Genre/ Sample	News	Report	Interview	Overview	Broadcast	Total	%
Sample 1	27	113	7	29	0	176	35.70%
Sample 2	195	104	2	16	0	317	64.30%
Total	222	217	9	45	0	493	100%

Table 35: Frequency of items on *Telma TV* by specific genres

The pressure that the Olympics made on *Telma TV*'s programme is obvious, judging by the distribution of different types of sports across the two samples. As can be seen in Figure 54, team sports prevailed in the sample of *Telma TV*'s regular sports programme before the Olympics. Out of a total of 3 hours, 54 minutes and 22 seconds dedicated to sports in the first sample, *Telma TV* newsroom for set aside 2 hours, 49 minutes and 34 seconds, or 72.35%, for team sports. One hour, 1 minute and 15 seconds were allocated for individual sports, which comprised 26.13% of the total sports programme in that sample.

This predominance of team sports in the regular programme, in the sample covering the Olympics, turned into a significantly higher presence of the individual sports. This transformation is understandable, taking into account the fact that individual sports occupy a considerably important place in the Olympic offer during the Summer Olympics, and the distribution shown in Figure 54 is a reflection of this offer. From a total of 3 hours, 54 minutes and 23 seconds dedicated to sports in the second sample, the newsroom of *Telma TV* set aside 2 hours, 10 minutes and 2 seconds, or 55.48%, for individual sports. Set aside for team sports were 1 hour, 13 minutes and 42 seconds, which was 31.44% of the total sports programme in that sample.

Additionally, the emergence of team competitions within the frameworks of the traditionally individual sports, in the second sample, was yet another manifestation of the influence of the Olympics on the sports programme.<sup>75</sup> This television channel dedicated 7% of the duration of the sports programme to this type of sports. In the regular programme of *Telma TV*, reflected in the first sample, there was no coverage of team disciplines in the traditionally individual sports.

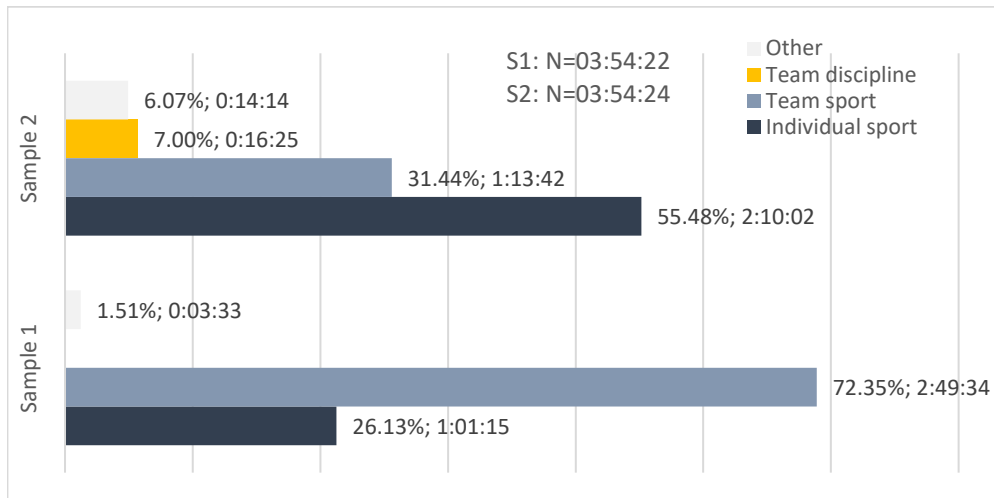


Figure 54: Share of the individual and team sports in the information programme of *Telma TV* in the two respective samples

The sample in this study does not allow any generalizations about whether the regular sports programme of *Telma TV* has a systematic bias towards team sports. However, this finding is indicative that by far the greatest duration of team sports comes from the coverage of football. As can be seen from Figure 55, which shows the absolute and relative airtimes devoted to each of the sports in both samples, football received 2 hours, 12 minutes and 28 seconds in the two weeks, during and before the Olympics, which comprised 28.26% of the total sports programme in both samples.

<sup>75</sup> As pointed out already, these are sports disciplines such as relay races in athletics, etc.

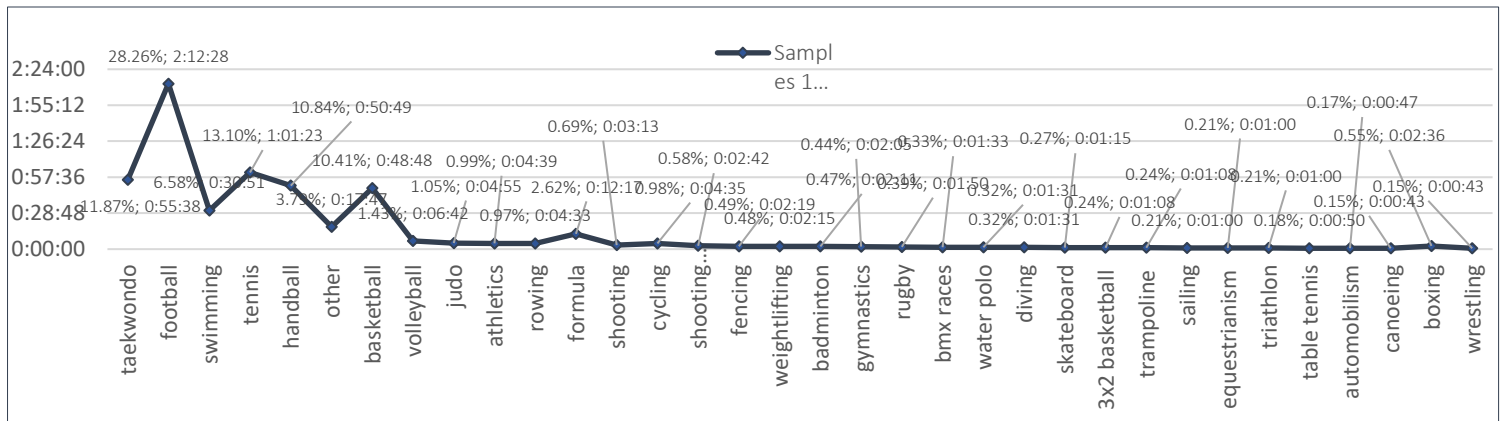


Figure 55: Share of different types of sports in the total sports programme of Telma TV analyzed, in the two respective samples

The fluctuations in the relative duration of both types of sports, in both samples, can be explained by the data contained in Figure 56, which shows this TV channel's change of interest according to the types of sports, before and during the Summer Olympics. During the Olympics, the duration of sports such as taekwondo (due to the success of the Macedonian national team member), swimming (due to the traditionally strong interest in this sport during the Games) and tennis, increased significantly. On the other hand, the duration of frequently aired contents related to football, basketball, volleyball, etc., decreased considerably. The airtime devoted to football was reduced by just over one hour: if, in the first sample, 41.15% of the programme were, in fact, football, then, in the second sample, football took up 15.37% of the total programme.

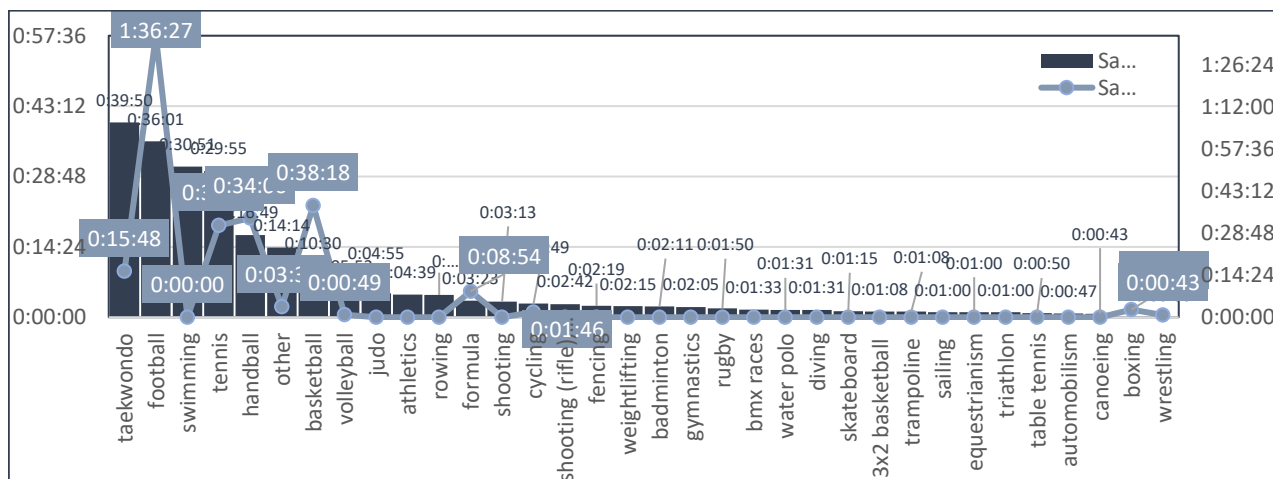


Figure 56: Share of different types of sports in the total sports programme of Telma TV analyzed, in each respective sample

## Analysis of the Gender Aspects in the Sports Programme

Taking into account the overall sports information programme of *Telma TV* (see Figure 57), men's sports competitions received the longest airtime in the programme – a total of 5 hours, 50 minutes and 19 seconds, which was 74.73% of the total time devoted to sports in both weeks analyzed. Women's sports competitions (here including both team and individual sports), received 1 hour 36 minutes and 58 seconds, which comprised 20.69% of the programme. Less than 1% of the programme was dedicated to the mixed sports competitions, and during 3.93% of the duration of the sports programme, the *Telma TV* newsroom reported on contents related to sports, but not on a specific sport or discipline. This included content that referred to the Covid-19 crisis and the Summer Olympics, or information regarding the organization and preparation of the Olympics. This ratio of sports in men and women categories in general, is indicative of the stronger accent that *Telma TV* gives to men's sports competitions in general and in its regular programme, as well as during important sports events in which there is a high frequency of women's sports competitions on the offer, but the latter is not reflected in the programme.

The distribution of men's and women's sports competitions across the different types of sports and across the two periods analyzed in the respective samples, leads to conclusions similar to those drawn about the complete programme aired in both samples. There are still differences, because in the sample of sports information taken from the regular programme, the difference between men and women represented in the programme was visibly larger. In the sample preceding the Summer Olympics, the sports in which women competed received a negligible airtime of 28 minutes and 16 seconds, compared to that given to men, of 3 hours, 21 minutes and 56 seconds, comprising even 86.16% of the sports information programme aired before the Olympics. Although the sample from a randomly selected week before the Olympics is limited and does not allow one to draw generalizing conclusions from it, this finding may still suggest that *Telma TV's* usual sports programme is predominated by sports in men's category, team sports above all and, judging from Figure 55, with football prevailing.

The distribution presented in the first sample by type of sports shows that, in individual sports, men received a significantly longer airtime, and in team sports, they occupied a dominant place. Out of a total of 1 hour, 1 minute and 15 seconds set aside for individual sports in the regular programme, 18 minutes and 10 seconds were dedicated to women's individual sports competitions, which comprised 29.96%, while 42 minutes and 28 minutes, or 69.33%, were dedicated to men's those in men's category. The difference in the area of team sports was far greater, as, from a total of 2 hours, 49 minutes and 34 seconds of programme dedicated to team sports, women received only 5.96%, whereas men received 94.04%. Men's team sports competitions accounted for 68.04% of the total programme in the first sample. Given that 41.15% of the programme in the first sample was men's football, this figure is not counterintuitive.

In the second sample, it is evident that the offer of the Summer Olympics significantly mitigated the differences between the representation of sports in men’s and women’s category, respectively. Out of a total of 3 hours, 54 minutes and 23 seconds dedicated to the sports information programme in the second sample, 2 hours, 28 minutes and 23 seconds, or 63.31% referred to competitions among men, and 1 hour 8 minutes and 42 seconds, or 29.31% – among women. This significantly reduced difference is also reflected in team sports: out of a total of 1 hour, 13 minutes and 42 seconds set aside for team sports, 55 minutes and 49 seconds, or 75.73%, were set aside for men, while 17 minutes and 53 seconds, or 24.27% – for women. This difference is significant, but still significantly smaller than that in the first sample, in the context of gender distribution of team sports. With individual sports, out of a total of 2 hours, 10 minutes and 2 seconds, 67.19% was the airtime dedicated to men’s competitions, and 32.81% - to women’s competitions.

The ratio between the duration of reporting on sports in women and men categories in the second sample is, thus, mitigated primarily due to the increase in the share of team sports in women’s category during the Olympics.

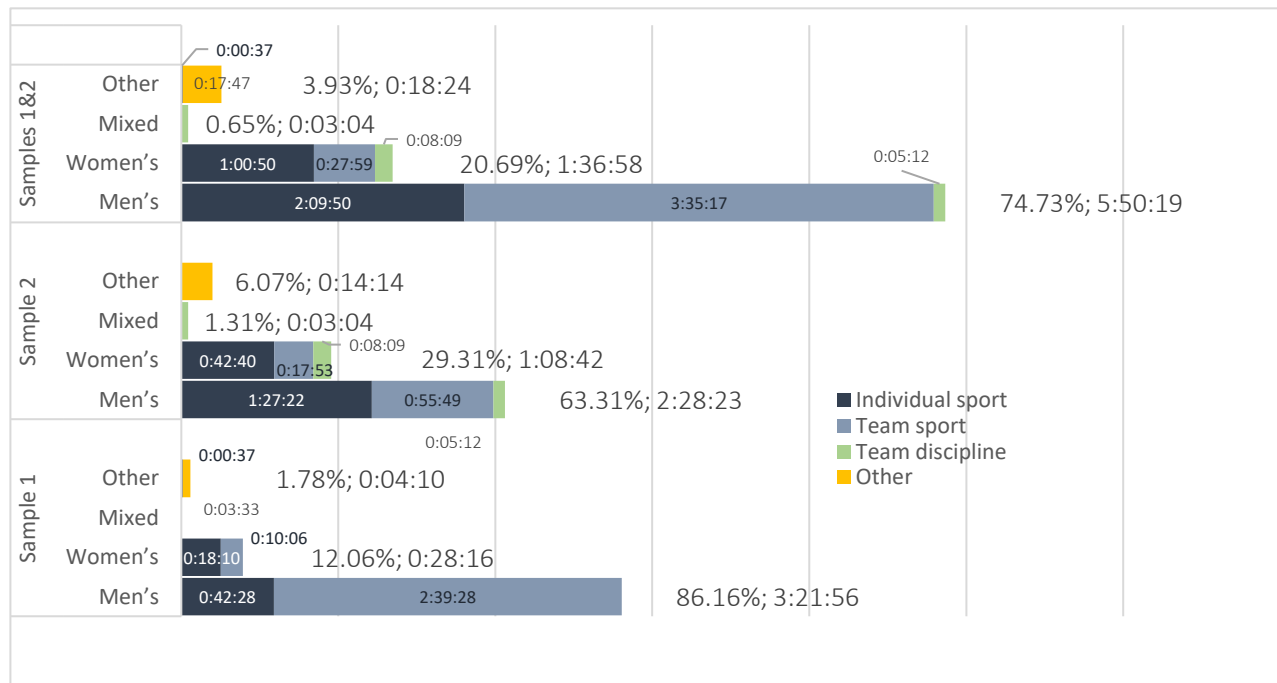


Figure 57: Share of men’s and women’s sports competitions in the sports information programme of Telma TV, segregated by types of sports



According to the duration allocated to sports in men’s and women’s categories, it should be expected that the sports programme represented male athletes to a greater extent and more often than female athletes, but this still does not mean that the total number of men in the programme was significantly higher than that of women. Therefore, Figure 58 depicts the frequency of instances of appearance<sup>76</sup> of male and female participants in the items of *Telma TV*.

In the two samples together, a total of 1,277 instances of appearance by participants in the program were analyzed, of whom 997 – or 78.07% – were men, and 280 – or 21.93% – were women. This numerical domination of men is not evenly distributed across the types of participants. The most obvious difference is in the male and female journalists’ instances of appearance.

Out of a total of 493 instances of journalists’ appearing in both samples together, 478, or 96.96%, were of male journalists. Only 15 appearances – which comprised 3.04% of the total frequency – were appearances of female journalists. This ratio is the same within each of the two

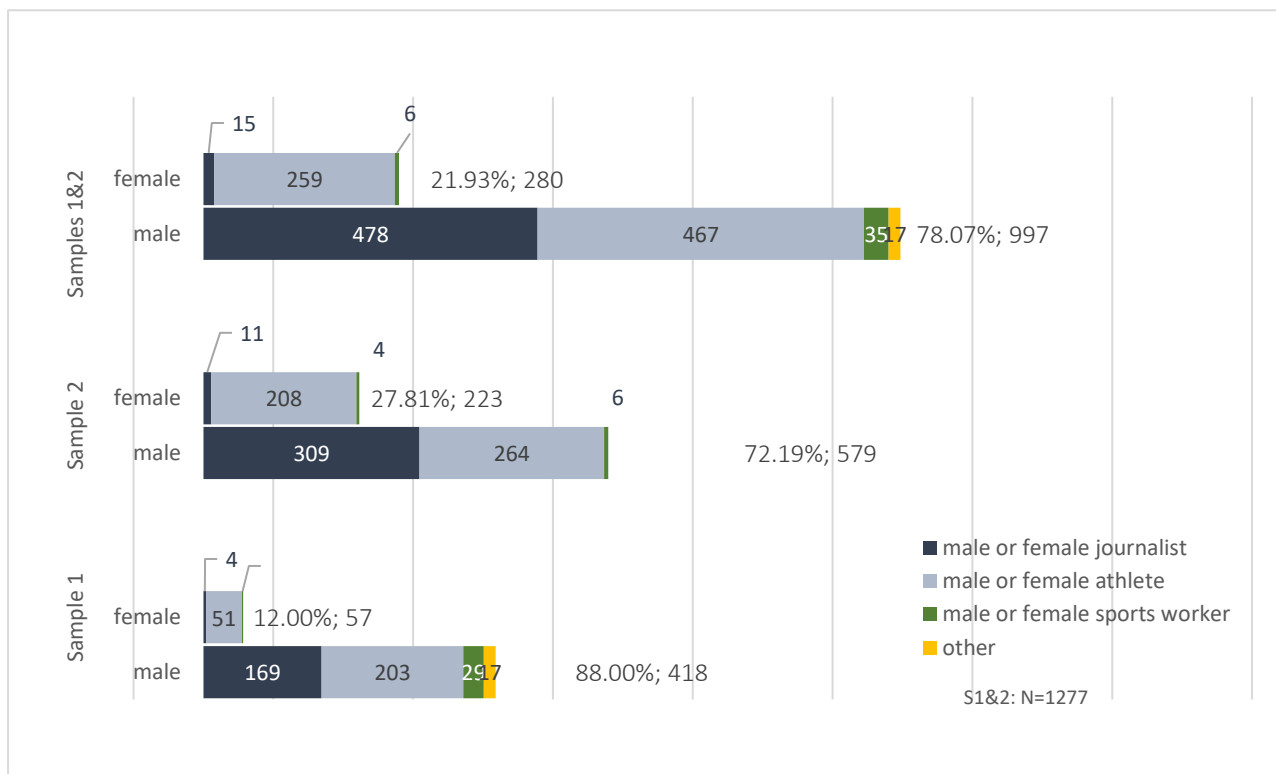


Figure 58: Frequency of instances of appearance by male and female participants in the sports programme of *Telma TV*, per unit of item, segregated by type of role

<sup>76</sup> The concept of “instance of appearance” is used here to make a distinction between what was measured in the research and the actual “participants in the programme”, and this has been done for analytical reasons. “Instances of appearance” are units of visual or verbal presentation of a participant in the programme at the level of unit of item. For example, if one news edition airs 5 news items, and one and the same journalist appears in all of them, then this journalist is marked 5 times in the code matrix, i.e. he or she is a participant with 5 instances of appearance at the level of unit of item.

samples analyzed separately. Of the 173 appearances in the sample preceding the Olympics, 169 were of men, which represented 97.69% of the instances of journalists' appearing in that sample. In the week coinciding with the Summer Olympics that was subject to analysis, out of 320 instances of appearance, 309 – or 96.56% – were of men.

At the time of the preparation of this study, *Telma TV* had one female sports journalist, which was not the case at the time when the sample had been taken. Therefore, the instances of female journalists' appearances, as can be seen in Table 36, are linked to the identities of female journalists who do not normally do sports reporting. The two male journalists who appeared in the programme come from the Sports Newsroom and they yield the overall frequency of appearances.

Name	Sample 1	Sample 2	Total
Igor Panevski	88	230	318
Branko Kazakovski	81	79	160
Natasha Stojanovska	0	10	10
Nikolina Slavkovska	2	0	2
Eva Jakimovska	2	0	2
Nina Stefanova	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>493</b>

Table 36: Frequency of appearances by individual male and female journalists on *Telma TV*

Even from the finding arising from the frequencies of male and female journalists' instances of appearance itself, it is clear that the airtime dedicated to the respective genders indicates male predominance. As can be seen from Figure 59, the duration of the male and female journalists' verbal and visual presentations also reflects the frequency of their appearances.

In terms of the presence of sports workers of different sexes, the dominance of men is visible. As can be seen in Figure 58, out of a total of 41 instances of appearance by male and female sports experts in the items of *Telma TV*, 35, or 85.37%, were men and 6, or 14.63%, were women. The distribution of appearances is not uniform across the two samples. In the second sample, out of 10 instances, 4 were of women and 6 – of men, but in the first sample the male dominance is visible: out of 31 instances of appearance, 29 were of male sports experts, whereas 2 were of female sports experts.

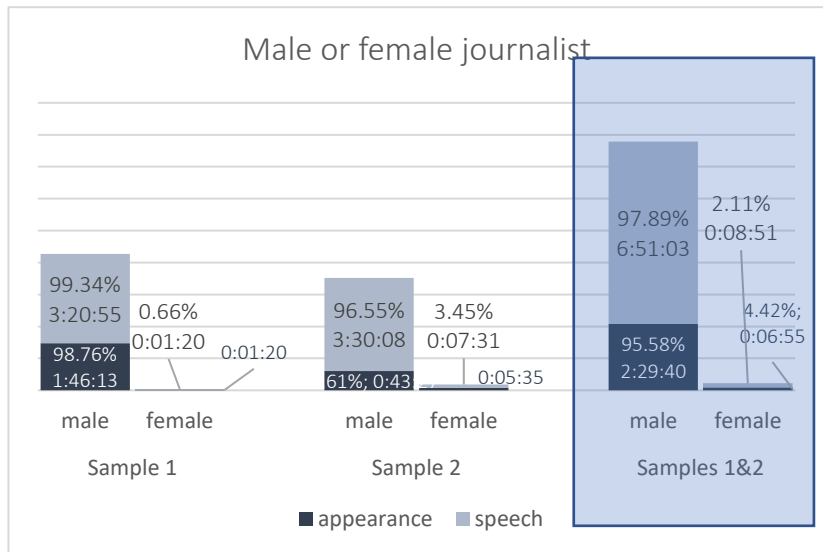


Figure 59: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of male and female journalists in the information programme of *Telma TV*

This ratio is reflected in the visual appearance of the male and female experts, but not in the scope of their verbal presentation (speech on camera). At the level of the two samples together, out of a total of 19 minutes and 57 seconds during which male and female sports experts appeared visually on camera, in 84.13% of this airtime it was men that appeared, while 15.87% were women. However, the distribution of speech does not follow the ratio of instances of appearance: the six instances of female sports experts' appearance occupied 27.83% of the duration of the male and female sports workers' verbal presentation, while male sports experts were present by speech in 72.17% of this airtime.

It can be seen in Figure 60, however, that in the four instances of appearance in the second sample, the female sports experts were allocated cumulatively more time for their verbal presentations. The duration of their visual appearances is nearly equal to that of men. Consequently, although the women had two instances of appearing less than the men, they generally spoke longer, and were shown on camera for as long as men were. Of course, the limited sample and the figures with which this conclusion operates do not allow any generalizations about the overall programme.

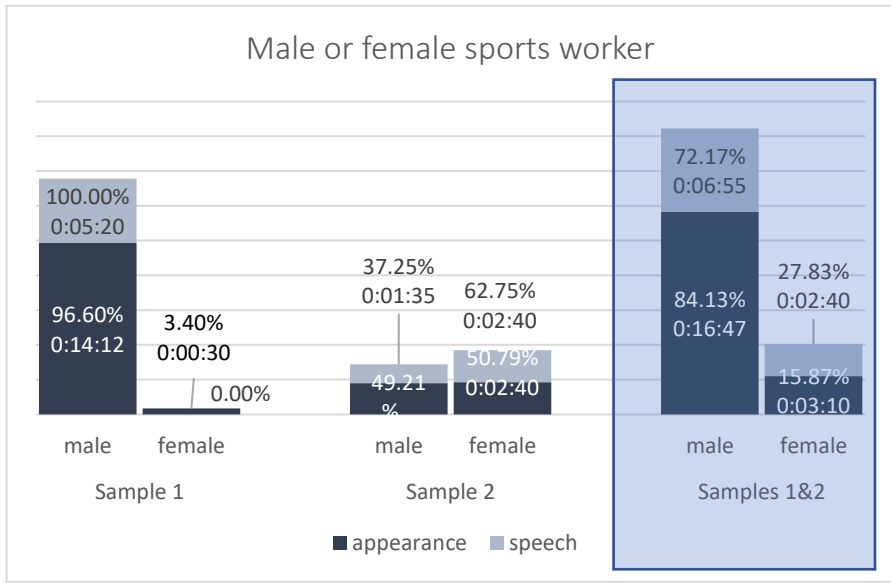


Figure 60: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of male and female sports experts in the information programme on Telma TV

An analysis of the frequency by which the athletes of different sexes appeared in the programme (Figure 58), shows that the presence of men and women does not fully correspond to the distribution of airtime between men's and women's sports competitions, while the two – as shall become clear – do not correspond with the duration of the verbal and visual presentations (see Figure 61).

Out of a total of 726 male and female athletes (or sports teams)<sup>77</sup> represented in both samples, 467 or 64.33% were men and 259 or 35.67% were women. This finding also incorporates the data about an event of global importance in which there is a large presence of women's sports, so that, although this finding cannot be considered as generalizing, it is still sufficiently indicative to

<sup>77</sup> This figure does not include individuals who are part of the team sports. For example, where football teams were shown, they were coded once, as a men's team.

conclude that, in *Telma TV*'s overall programme (beyond the selected samples), male athletes dominate in frequency and in the duration of their appearance.

Certainly, the distribution of male and female athletes in the two samples, respectively, as expected on the basis of the previously presented data, is not balanced. Thus, Figure 58 shows that, in the sample preceding the Olympics, in the items of the Sports Newsroom there was an absolute dominance by male athletes: out of a total of 254 instances of male and female athletes' appearance, presented on this television channel, 203 – or 79.92% – were men, and 51 – or 20.08% – were women. In the second sample, however, a much greater balance is noticeable, as, out of the total of 472 male and female athletes in the programme, 264 – or 55.93% – were men, and 208 – or 44.07% – were women. This means that the Summer Olympics, that is, the nature of the sports that are most often part of the Olympic programme, reduced the difference in the ratio visibly and significantly, albeit not completely.

The frequency of appearance, however, does not immediately mean that male athletes were given a more active or dominant role in the items. Therefore, this study collected data on how much of the total airtime during which athletes of different sexes were presented in the programme was allocated to men, and how much to women, in terms of their visual and verbal presentations (or, in simpler terms, in what portions of the total airtime, the athletes of different sexes appeared visually in the items that were aired, and in what shares of the items they could speak).

Figure 61 shows that, at the level of the two samples together, out of the total time of 4 hours, 19 minutes and 28 seconds in the sports-related items - in which male and female athletes appeared visually on camera – the visual representation of female athletes lasted 1 hour, 9 minutes and 58 seconds, which was 26.97% of the time. Male athletes were given 3 hours, 9 minutes and 30 seconds, which comprised 73.03% of the time. Men also dominated in terms of the airtime allotted to them for their verbal presentation, i.e. the airtime during which they spoke. Out of a total of 22 minutes and 1 second set aside for speech, by which male and female athletes could introduce themselves or present a certain aspect of their work in the programme, 77.21% were set aside for men and 22.79% – for women. This measuring parameter, which this research uses to evaluate the participation of male and female athletes in the sports programme, reveals male dominance in sports in the programme of *Telma TV*.

Of course, as expected, this difference in the visual and verbal presentations of the athletes of different sexes is far

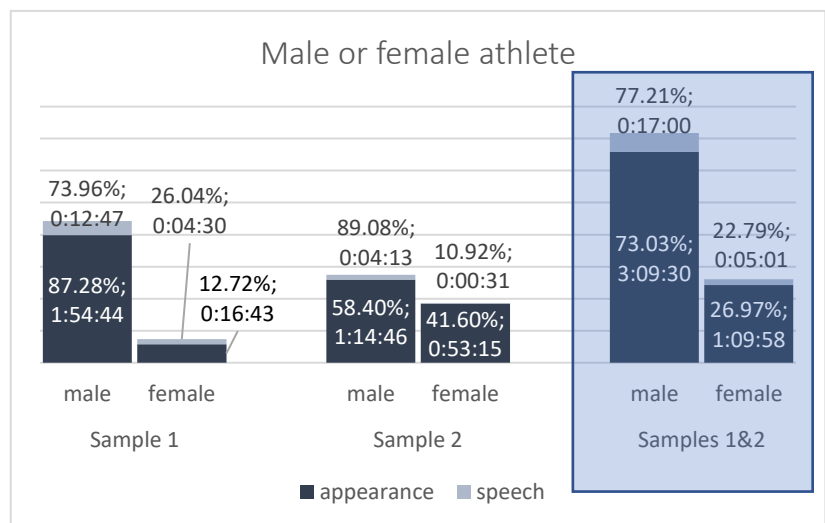


Figure 61: Duration of the visual and verbal presentations of female and male athletes in the information programme of *Telma TV*

more pronounced in the first than in the second sample – an effect of the offer of the Summer Olympics. In the sample preceding the Olympics, out of the total time of 2 hours, 11 minutes and 27 seconds, allocated for the athletes' visual presentation, 1 hour, 54 minutes and 44 seconds – or 87.28% – were given to male athletes, and 12.72% – to female athletes. In the first sample, visually, men dominated the screen. With the verbal presentation, there was a significant difference. Of the 17 minutes and 17 seconds of speech by male and female athletes, 73.96% was speech by male athletes, while 26.04% was speech by female athletes. In the second sample, there was a smaller, yet still worth mentioning, difference in the lengths of the visual and verbal presentations of athletes of different sexes. One hour, 14 minutes and 46 seconds, or 58.40%, of the airtime were allocated for the male athletes' visual presentation, while female athletes received 53 minutes and 15 seconds, or 41.60%, of airtime. Four minutes and 13 seconds were allocated for speech to male athletes, which was 89.08% of the airtime, while female athletes received only 31 seconds, or 10.92%, of the airtime, for speech. These figures are too small to be able to draw generalizing conclusions, but they are still a sufficient orientating indicator of the gender-related (im)balance in the sports programme.

In the analysis so far, data were presented from four measurement parameters about the representation of male and female athletes in the information programme. Figure 62 shows how much their shares fluctuate in the total values on the basis of which **both were defined**. In this way, one can compare whether the respective shares of instances of appearance by male and female athletes and the durations of their visual and verbal presentations are appropriate to the shares of men's and women's sports competitions' durations in the information programme of *Telma TV*. And, of course, one can compare how these values fluctuated in the two samples comparatively.

Thus, from the first sample it can be seen that the ratio of the respective shares of men's and women's sports competition roughly corresponds to the ratio of the respective shares of visual male and female athletes' presentation in the information programme. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the ratio of their verbal presentations is reduced because the participation of male and female athletes does not follow the share of airtimes dedicated to men's and women's sports competitions. Conversely, in the second sample, there is a visible small difference between the share of sports in which women competed and the frequency of instances of appearance between men and women, as well as a small difference in their visual presentation, but the difference in airtimes set aside for the male and female athletes' speech, respectively, is incompatible with these parameters.

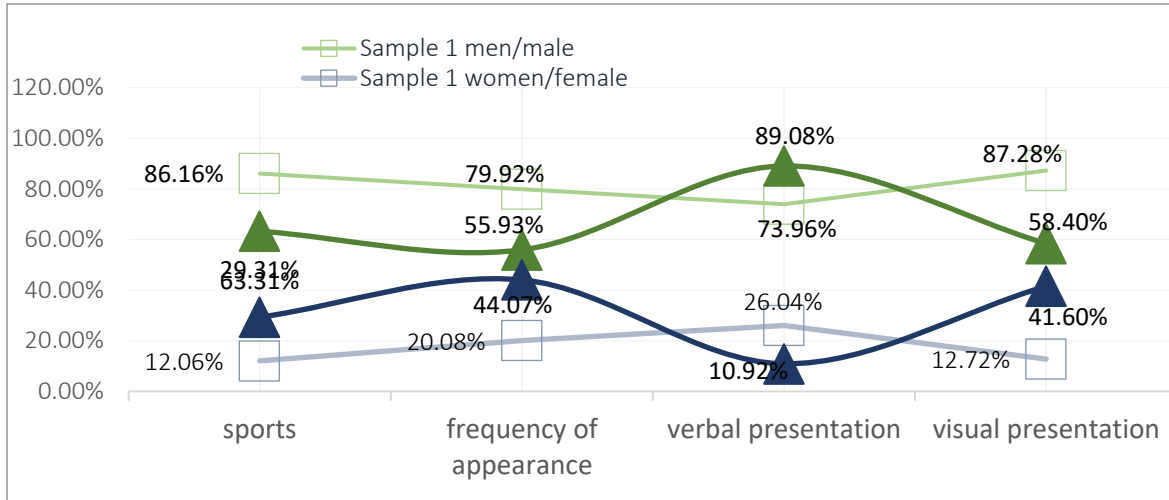


Figure 62: Ratio between men and women in sports presented against four measurement parameters comparatively in the two samples of Telma TV

In this research, coded from a gender perspective were the male and female athletes and the sports to which the reporting in the information programme referred. One of the parameters refers to the discourse nodes with which the media outlet constructed the male and female athletes within the framework of feminizing or masculinistic stereotyping markers. This research detected 17 instances in the *Telma TV* programme in which masculinizing reporting styles were used, of which 7 were in the first sample, and 10 – in the second one. In the information programme in the first sample, several of these intentions were related to matches of the “Vardar” handball club, in which the reporter asked: “Is there a hero who will save the Macedonian pride from total collapse?”. Statements like this are interesting for intersectional analysis, because they discursively construct the sports match within the field of antagonism where, as in the national mythologies, the power of “salvation” is located messianically in the myth, i.e. the hero who should come and save the nation. In this case, as the statement suggests, the term “Macedonian pride” does not only verbally evoke nationally-constructed memories of the mythical time when “pride was first established,” but also turns the sporting event into a symbolic re-ritualization of that mythical time. Here, as in any antagonizing discourse, the threat of “total collapse” is explicit.

In the second sample, interesting from this same **aspect** are several instances of reporting related to the success of the Macedonian taekwondo national team member, who was said to be “our Olympic hero,” “the Macedonian golden boy” who had a “heroic welcome in Skopje.” This type of discourse is rooted in the reporting styles of sports journalists globally as well, and has gender-

related implications because they often construct male athletes as national heroes. No obvious feminizing markers were detected with regard to the female athletes.

This research also coded the rhetorical compositions that refer to the way male and female journalists construct sports. In sports reporting, men’s sports are often referred to by their generic name, thus naturalizing men’s category. When these sports have women competing, they are often gender-labeled as “women’s”. Thus, men’s football is referred to only as “football”, whereas football in women’s category is indicated as “women’s football competition”. This phenomenon, as mentioned above, has its roots in the systematic naturalization of masculine markers, and in the development of the sports offer in some of the sports, because when a certain gender dominates in any of them – as is the case with football and men – there is a tendency to use the generic name for men’s category when referring to it. On the other hand, sports such as volleyball, basketball, handball and a number of individual sports that are highly developed in both men’s and women’s categories, are often differentiated. On *Telma TV*, one can see that, in the first sample, the use of genderizing marking of women’s sports competitions was more common than of the generic one, and in the second sample this was somewhat more significant.

In this research, no instances of reporting were detected on *Telma TV* that raised intersectional topics, such as gender and race or nation. Also, male and female athletes were mostly associated with their achievements and there were no instances of sexualization of their bodies. When it came to female athletes, *Telma TV* used mostly the feminine forms of the nouns.

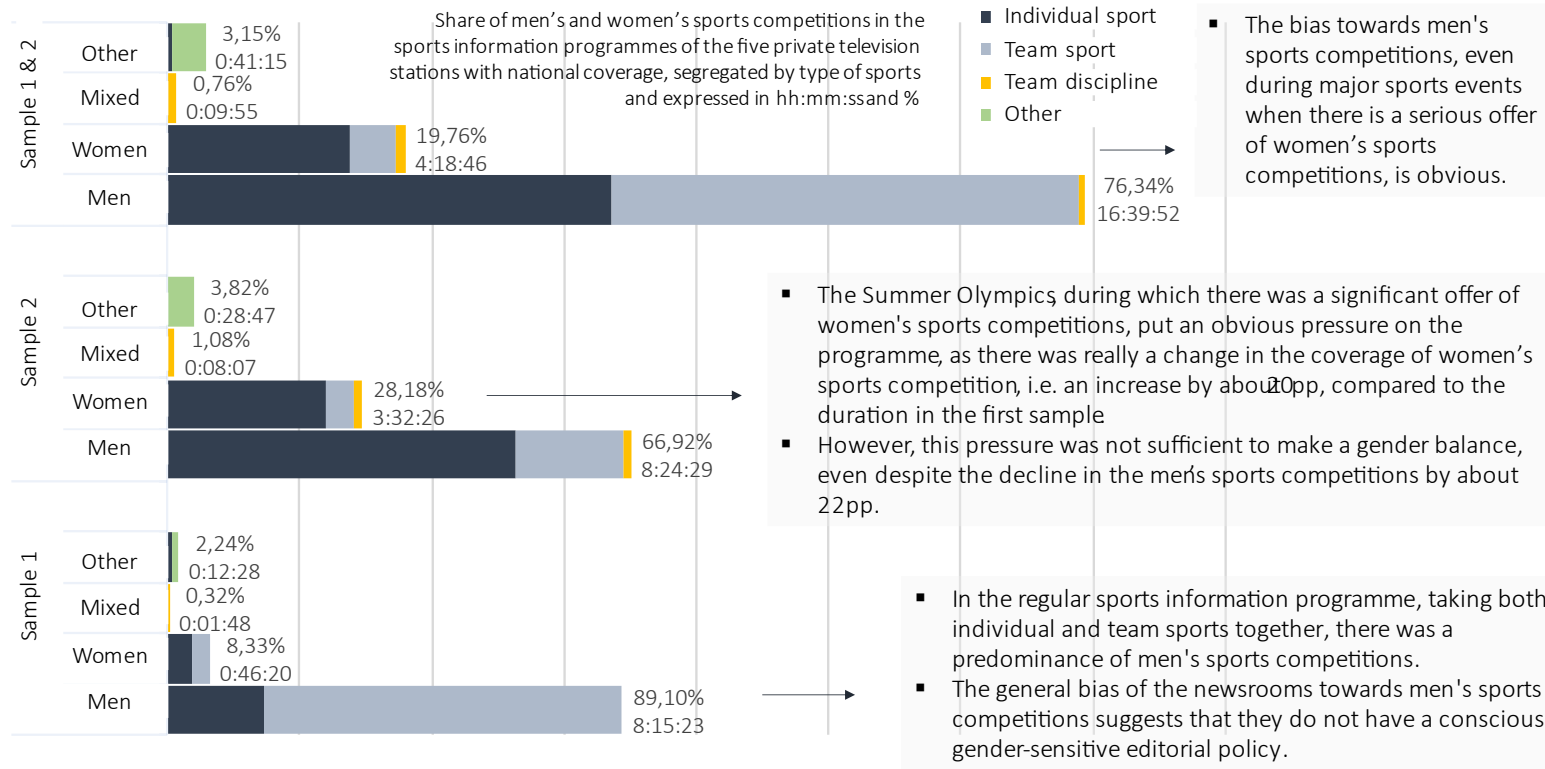
Gender/construct	Sample 1		Sample 2	
	generic	genderizing	generic	genderizing
male	266	10	255	41
female	18	25	119	67

*Table 37: Frequency of types of constructs for men’s and women’s sports on Telma TV*

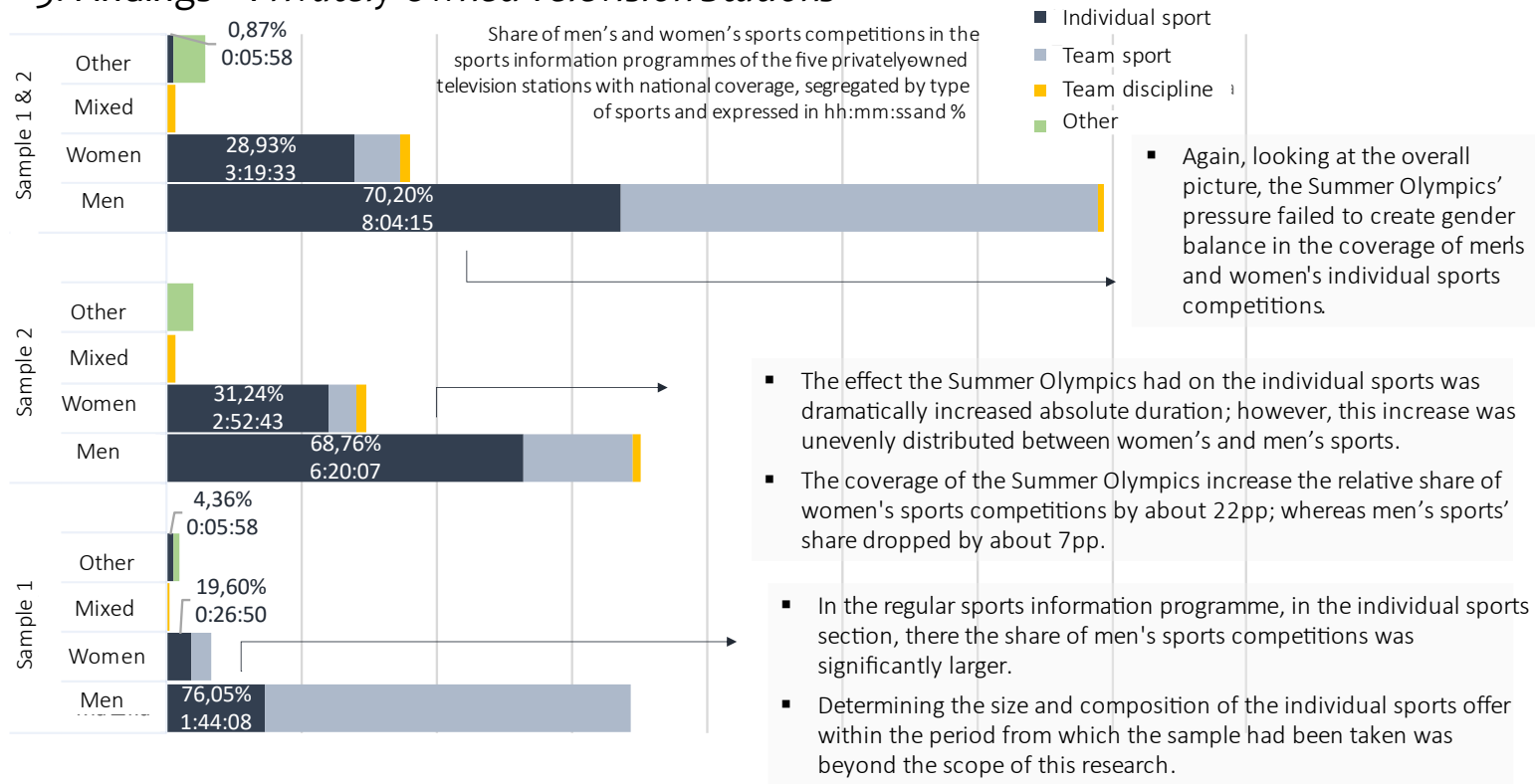
## COLLECTIVE FINDINGS



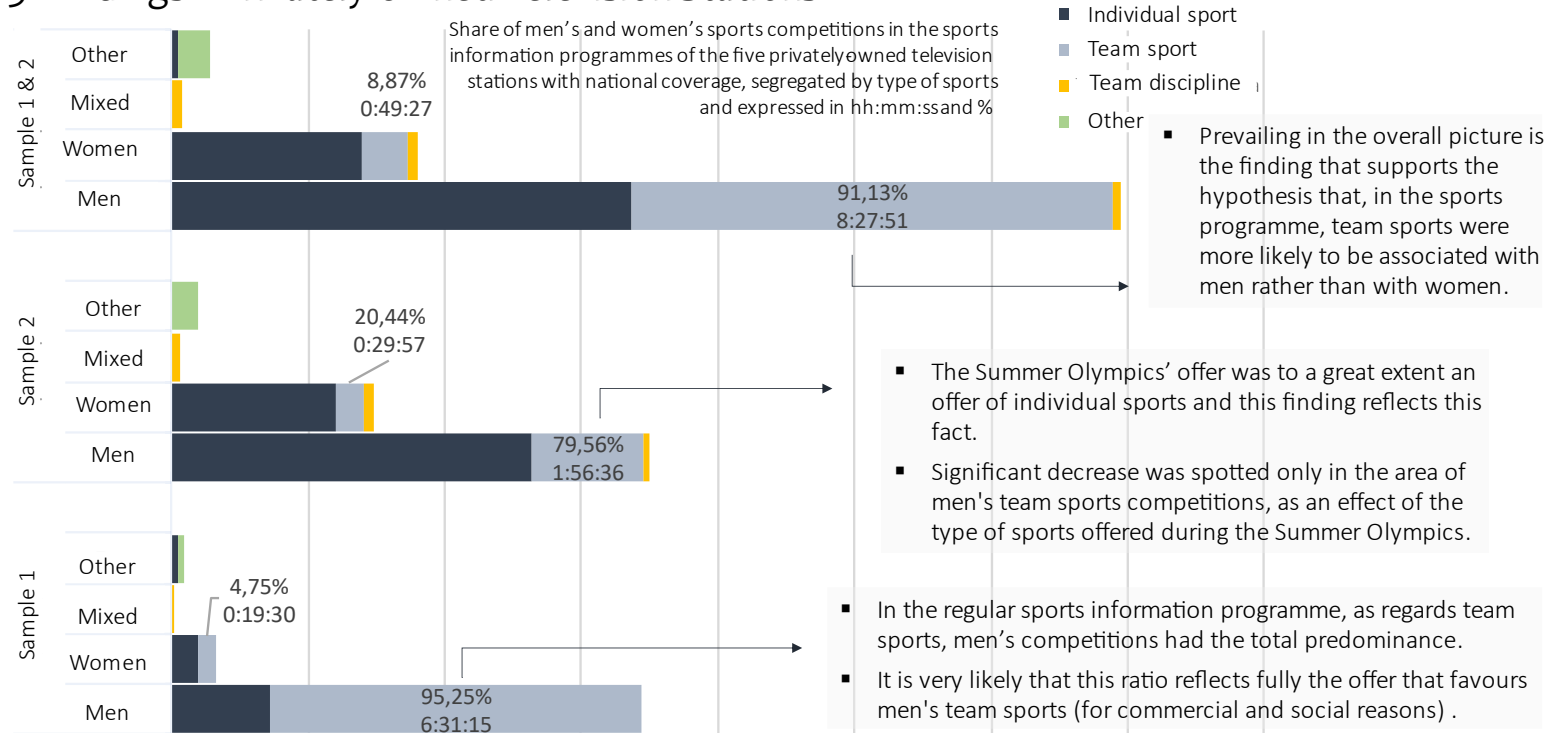
## Privately-Owned Television Stations



### 3. Findings – Privately-Owned Television Stations



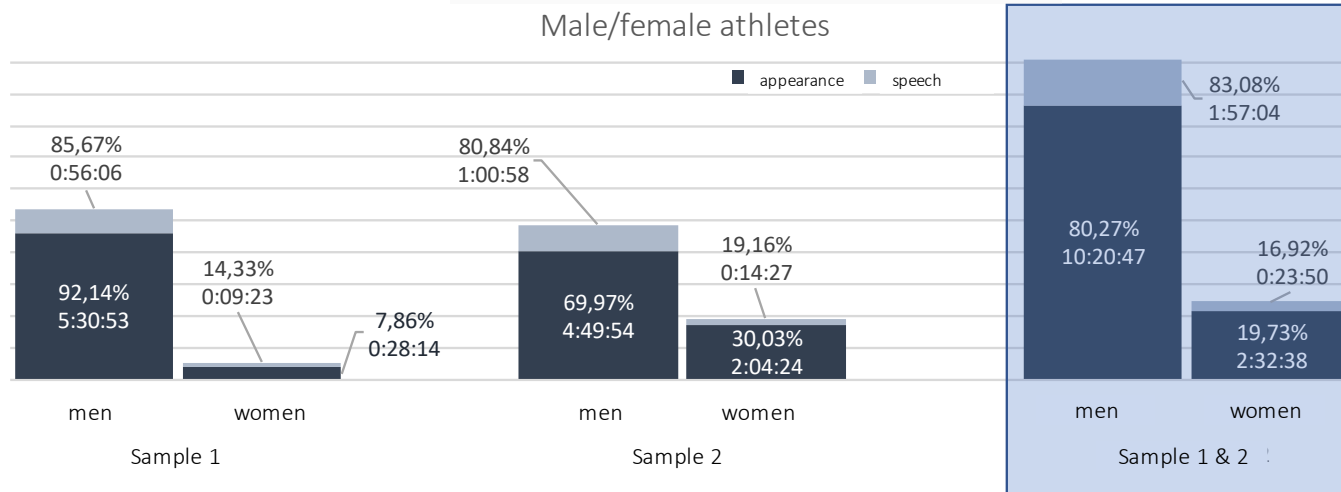
### 3. Findings – Privately-Owned Television Stations



## Findings – Privately-Owned Television Stations

- The share of men's sports competitions in the first sample was 89.10%, which, roughly speaking, corresponds to the presence of male athletes in the programme and to their visual and verbal representations.

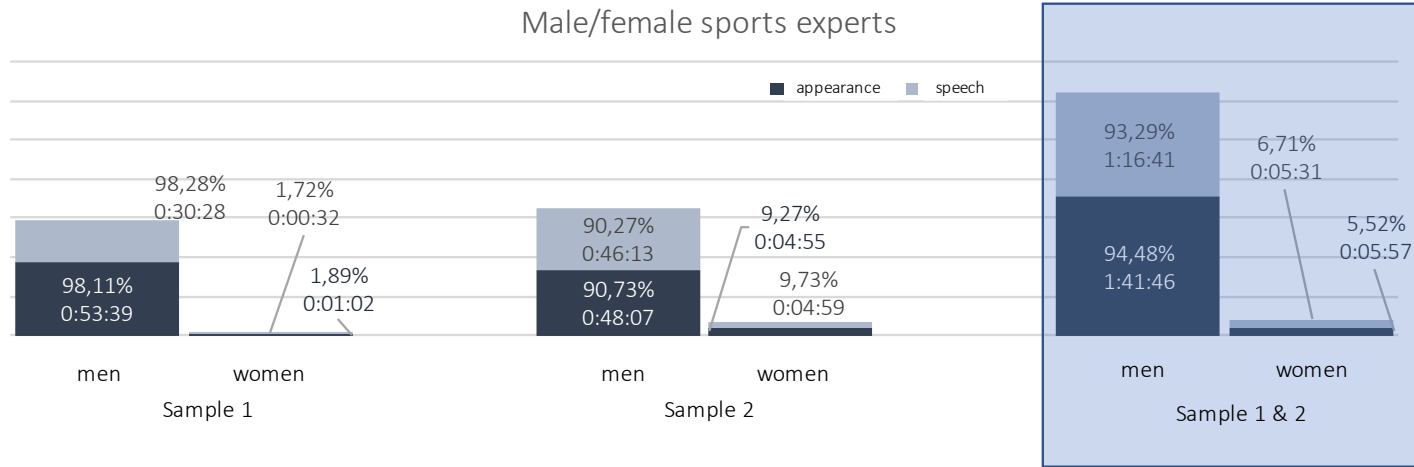
- The share of men's sports competitions in the second sample was 66.92%, however, as regards male athletes' verbal presentation, the newsrooms of the privately-owned TV stations had allocated 80.84% of the time set aside for male and female athletes' verbal presentation. Male athletes were more likely to be shown speaking in the programme than the female athletes.



## Findings – Privately-Owned Television Stations

- Female sports experts are virtually completely absent from the regular programme of the privately owned television stations.
- The newsrooms sought opinions about and analyses of the sports events mainly from male sports workers.

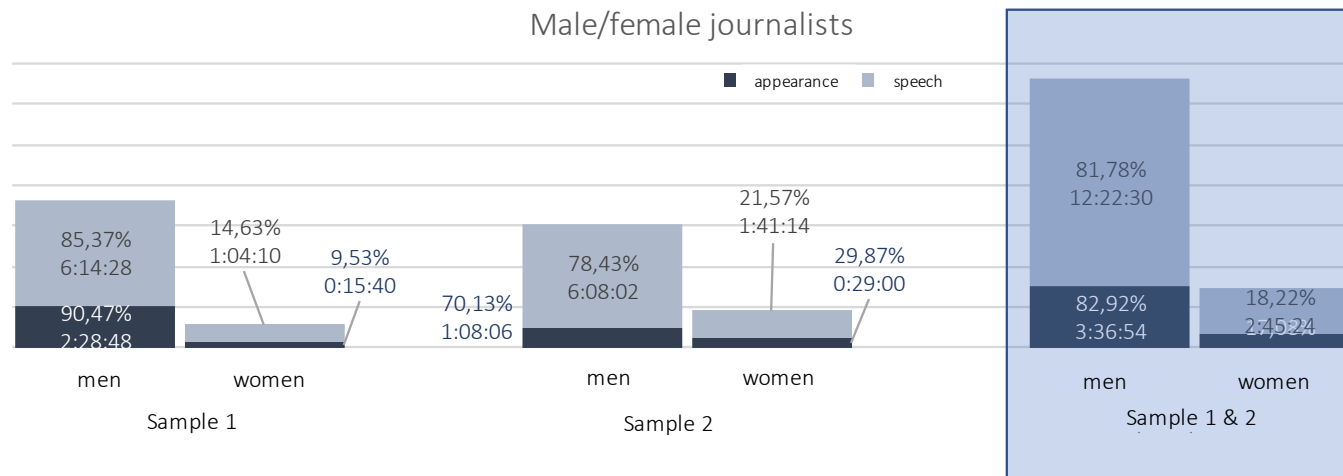
- The Summer Olympics increased the share of female sports experts in the information programme, but this was far from ensuring gender balance.



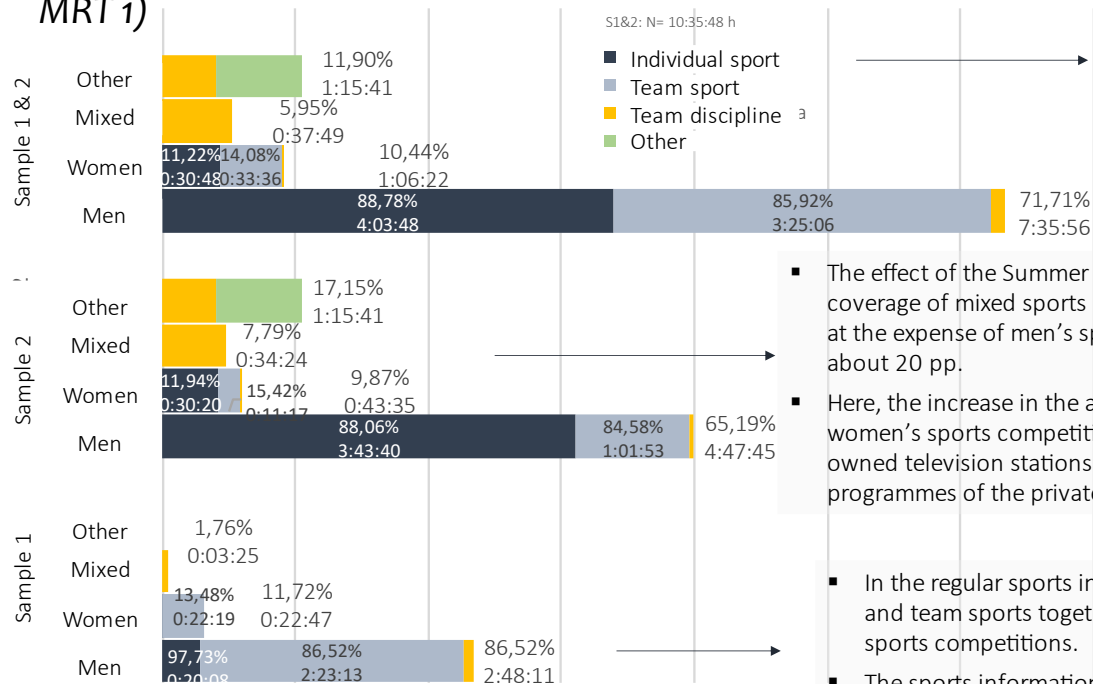
## Findings – Privately-Owned Television Stations

- In the news programmes of the privately owned television channels, male journalists were more likely to appear by speech only, but not in picture- and this goes for both samples.

- With two of the five privately owned television stations, female specialized sports journalists appeared in the programme. However, the findings for both samples together suggest predominant share of male journalists' verbal and visual presentations in the sports programme.



## Findings – Public Broadcasting Service (First Programme Service MRT 1)



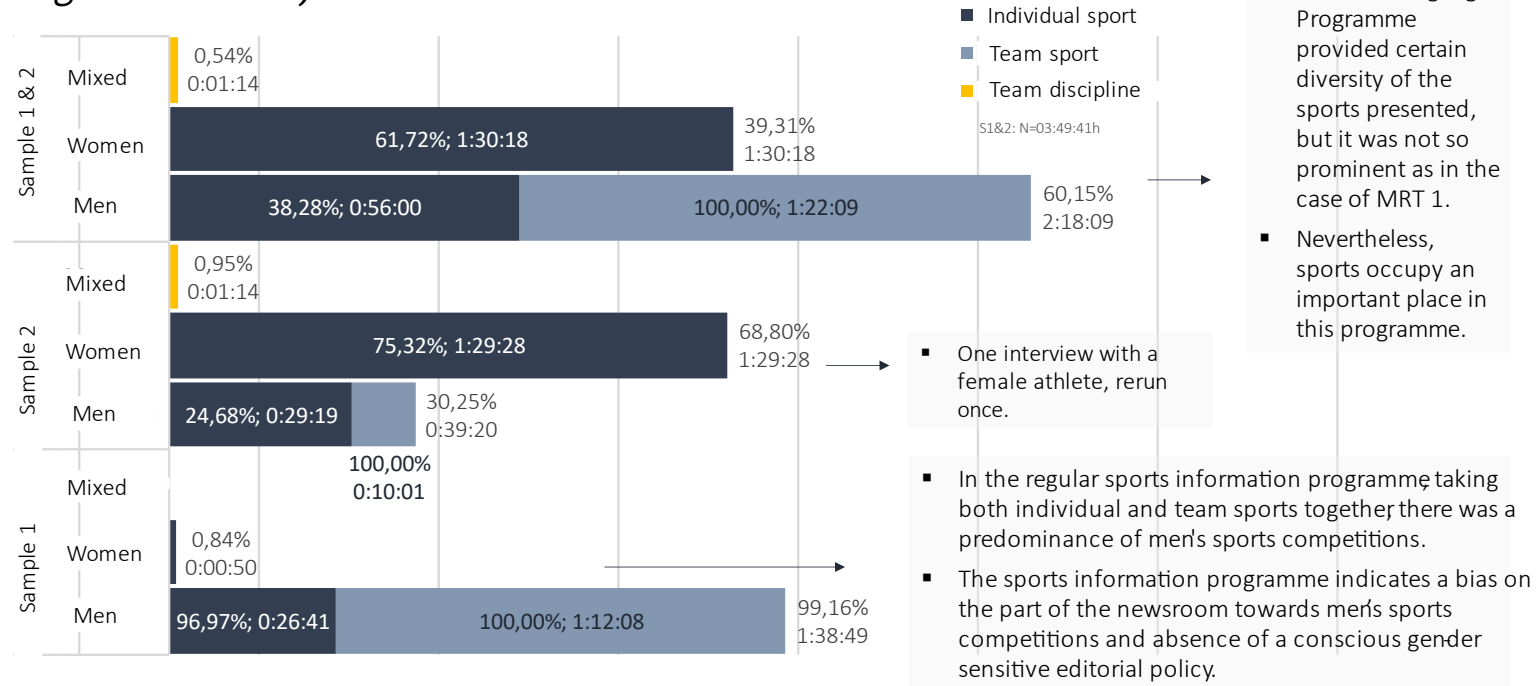
Share of men's and women's sports competitions in the sports information programme of MRT 1, segregated by type of sports and expressed in hh:mm:ss and %

- The First Programme Service of MRT had presented an extremely large diversity of sports, as well as genre diversity
- Sports occupies an important place in this programme.
- However, during major competitions, this carries the risk for the remaining MRT's functions.

- The effect of the Summer Olympics was mostly seen in the increased coverage of mixed sports competitions and other sports content (mostly at the expense of men's sports competitions, whose share decreased by about 20 pp).
- Here, the increase in the absolute duration of information on men's and women's sports competitions was not as large as with the privately owned television stations and was more evenly distributed than in the programmes of the private television channels.

- In the regular sports information programme, counting individual and team sports together, there was a predominance of men's sports competitions.
- The sports information programme reflected the newsrooms' bias of towards men's sports competitions and the absence of a conscious gender-sensitive editorial policy.

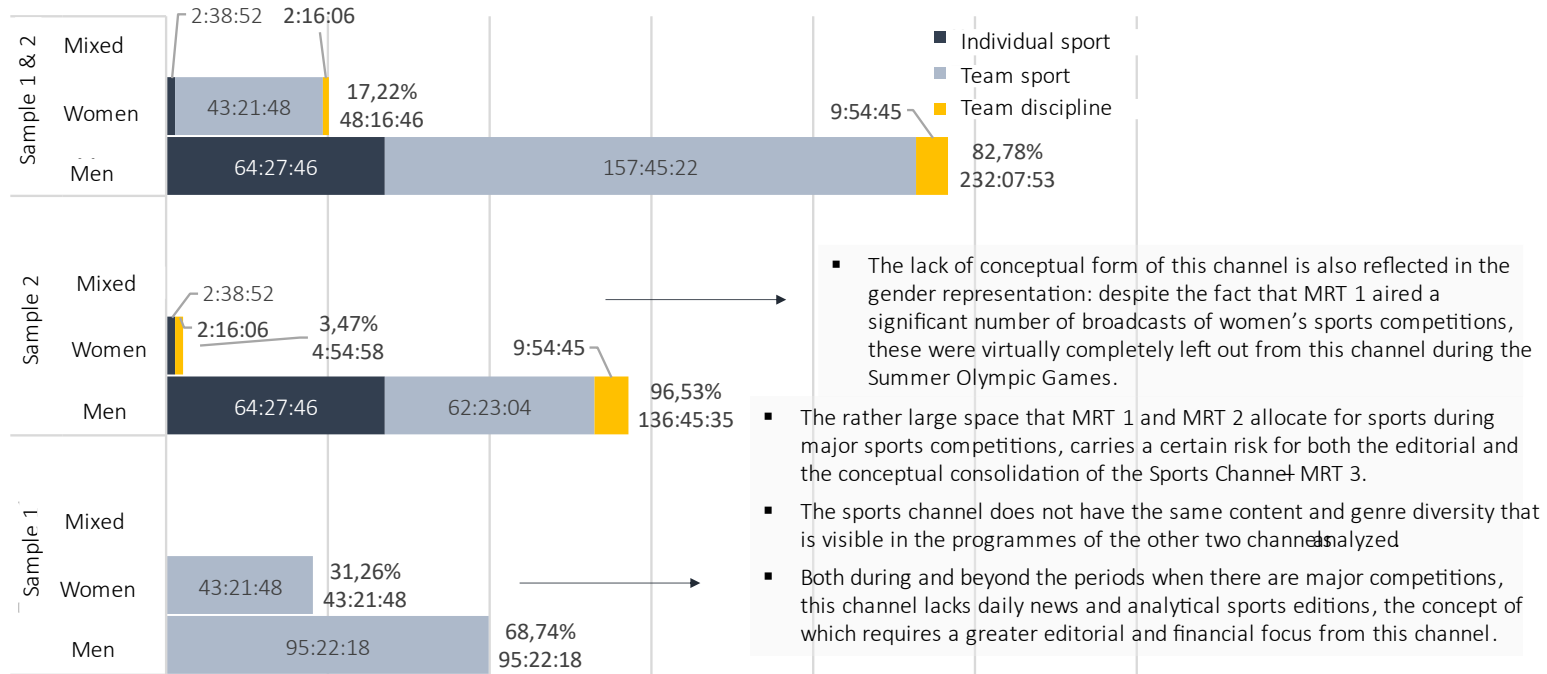
## Findings – Public Broadcasting Service (Albanian-Language Programme MRT 2)



Share of men's and women's sports competitions in the sports information programme MRT 2, Albanian-language Programme segregated by type of sports and expressed in hh:mm:ss and %



## Findings – Public Broadcasting Service (Sports Channel MRT 3 - Broadcasts)



## IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Public Broadcasting Service

Informing about sports and sporting events and broadcasting sports competitions plays an important part in the overall programme scheme of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). Generally speaking, the results of this research indicate that the Public Broadcaster seeks to pursue a well-thought-through and consistent editorial policy related to sports. It provides a verstility of genres and obviously a great diversity of represented sports, which have been given remarkable airtime, in accordance with Article 110 of the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services, according to which the PBS should “promote sports and recreational activities and broadcast sports events from the country and abroad in which Macedonian national teams or athletes participate, as well as the less represented sports, i.e. sports events”. However, this research illuminated several structural and content-related weaknesses:

1. As regards the First Programme Service of MRT, as well as the MRT 2 in the Albanian language, sport plays an important part in their regular programme. This is especially emphasized during large sports competitions such as, in this particular case, the Summer Olympic Games. This should be considered a positive trend. However, during major sporting events, this trend threatens to squeeze out the rest of the PBS’s programme and thus disrupt its other functions and its programme diversity. Consequently, in the period analyzed, in the one week on MRT 1 during the Olympics, 68.50% of the 168 possible hours of airtime during that week were sports programme, which means that the remaining contents received, on average, somewhat less than 8 hours per day, including the reruns. In conditions where the Public Broadcaster has a separate programming service specialized in sports, the “burdening” of the content of the daily information channels should not be large.

#### **Recommendation 1:**

The stakeholders in the Public Broadcasting Service should structurally and precisely define the position and the role of the Sports Channel (MRT 3) within the frameworks of the overall structure of *Makedonska Radio Televizija*. This undertaking should give the Public Broadcaster the feature of a unique and integrated system, as opposed to the concept within which the PBS is a set of loosely connected media units. This may, in turn, be expected to improve the functioning of the Sports Channel, ease the First Programme Service from the pressure of the large sports offer by paving the way for a better-quality, current and diverse programme, increase the efficiency of the sports newsrooms’ work, and improve the quality of the sports programme.

2. The significantly large space on MRT 1 and MRT 2 allocated to sports during major sports competitions, brings about a certain risk for the editorial and conceptual consolidation of the Sports Channel (MRT 3) as well. The research revealed that the Sports Channel does not have the same content and genre diversity that is visible in the programmes of the other two analyzed channels. It was established that, both during and beyond the periods of major competitions, this channel predominately aired broadcasts, which was an expected trend, but, on the other hand, it lacked daily information and analytical sports editions, the concept of which requires greater editorial and financial focus on this channel. There is no visible diversity in terms of the sports represented in the sports broadcasts either. The research showed that in its programme, both during and beyond the major competitions, there was a special focus on only a few types of team sports: football, basketball, volleyball and handball. As regards individual sports, tennis was an exception, as it gained a prominent spot in this programme during the Olympics.

### **Recommendation 2:**

The establishment of new channels within the frameworks of the Public Broadcasting Service brings with it the obligation for their detailed design, consolidation and sustainability. For that to happen with the MRT 3, it is necessary that (I) the Programme Council and the editorial team of MRT develop initiatives and ideas for content-related consolidation of this channel and that (II) adequate financial support be provided for this purpose.

3. In all channels of the Public Service analyzed, this research established that there was dominant presence of men among the journalists, as opposed to the marginal participation of female journalists. The study detected dominance of male journalists in the sports information programme as well, based on three measurement parameters. First, on the three channels analyzed, male journalists had significantly more instances of appearance than the female journalists: on MRT 1, nearly 81% of the instances of appearance were appearances by men; this percentage was even higher on the MRT 2 and neared 88%. On MRT 3, all sports broadcasts were commented by men. Second, the measuring of the airtimes during which male and female journalists appeared visually in the programme, respectively, showed that, on MRT 1, counting the two samples together, male journalists' visual presentation was somewhat above 73% of the total airtime in which there was visual presentation, while on the Albanian-language channel, that percentage was close to 68%. Third, the measuring of the airtimes during which male and female journalists were present in the programme by speech, respectively, showed an even greater domination by male journalists: on MRT 1, over 84% of the time allocated for speech by male or female journalists was given to men, while, on MRT 2, this percentage was even higher and reached

nearly 91%. In contrast, the women's presence among sports journalists was negligible. Even the small share of female journalists in the sports programme was not owing to the participation of the single female journalist who is part of MRT 1's Sports Newsroom, but to the female journalists who conveyed one or few information related to sports at the end of the general news broadcasts. Thus, judging from the situation within the Public Service, sports journalism is a gender-determined profession, i.e. a male profession.

### **Recommendation 3:**

*Makedonska Radio Televizija* should make efforts to increase the presence of female journalists in its sports programme, i.e. reduce the difference in the ratio of male and female journalists specialized in sports. This goal may apply to various courses of action, including (I) making efforts on the PBS's part to communicate with the universities and schools of journalism in order to stimulate the students' interest in this type of journalism; (II) establishing a criterion for the new employments in the future that would **require** balance between male and female journalists, (III) making efforts on the Programme Council and the PBS editorial staff's part to provide trainings for women journalists, especially in the field of commenting sports broadcasts.

4. Male athletes dominated in the programme of MRT 1 and MRT 2.<sup>78</sup> The Summer Olympics, however, put a certain pressure in terms of the presence of female athletes on the PBS's **channels**, due to the large offer of women's sports competitions. The study detected the dominance of male athletes in the sports information programme based on three measurement parameters: First, on the two channels analyzed, male athletes had a significantly higher frequency of instances of appearance. Out of the total frequency of instances of appearance on MRT 1, male athletes occupied somewhat more than 77%, while on MRT 2 this percentage was somewhat more than 64%, in both samples analyzed together. It should be emphasized that, with MRT 2, the overall frequency of female athletes' appearances came from the coverage of the Summer Olympics, which means that in the usual programme that was included in the first sample, there was not a single instance of appearance by a female athlete. Second, the measuring of the respective airtimes during which male and female athletes appeared visually in the programme, showed that in both samples of the First Programme Service together, male athletes appeared in the footages in nearly 83% of the total airtime. On MRT 2, this percentage was somewhat over 54%, but this was owing to an accidental distortion, as, in the programme in the second sample, the Service conducted an interview with a female athlete that was rerun and that accounted for somewhat more than 63% of the total visual presentation. Third, this interview also occupied 100% of the overall verbal presentation of female athletes on MRT 2. On MRT 1, more than 82% of the overall verbal presentation was men's

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<sup>78</sup> Due to its programme's nature, MRT 3 was not included in this segment of the research.

speech. It may be said that these findings point to a conclusion that the Public Service is biased towards male athletes in the sports programme.<sup>79</sup>

#### **Recommendation 4:**

The editorial teams in the sports newsrooms of the Public Service should ensure gender balance in the sports programme, i.e. more events should be broadcast that are about female athletes, giving them more **airspace** to visually and verbally present themselves and their sports.

5. On MRT 1 and MRT 2,<sup>80</sup> there was absolute dominance of male sports workers, i.e. sports experts. At no time in its programme did MRT 2 consult any female sports experts. The Summer Olympics did not change this fact. The study showed that it had not only failed to invite female experts to analyze men's sports competitions, but it had not invited them to analyze women's sports competitions either, despite the daily and broad offer of such competitions at the Olympics. Although there were appearances by female sports experts on MRT 1, their number was small, whereas men among the sports experts took up over 96% of the airtime for verbal and visual presentations.

#### **Recommendation 5:**

The editorial teams in the sports newsrooms of the Public Service should ensure gender balance in terms of the presence of male and female sports experts in the sports programme. The Public Service must provide a diversity of views on and analyses of the sports it covers, and this diversity also refers to the representation of women in this programme in the role of sports workers or sports experts.

6. Men's team sports competitions dominated in the regular programme of the three channels of *Makedonska Radio Televizija* that were analyzed, which suggests that the Public Service has a systematic bias towards these sports. The Summer Olympics mitigated this conclusion because the Olympic offer of individual sports – as this study showed – made obvious pressure on the editors' choice and significantly increased the share of individual sports and women's sports competitions. This applies both to the information programme and to broadcasts. MRT 2 significantly increased the participation of women's individual sports during the Olympics, but this was the same effect that was highlighted in the previous points and was entirely due to only one interview that had one rerun.

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<sup>79</sup> Although, due to the reasons stated, in the case of MRT 2 this conclusion requires additional evidence.

<sup>80</sup> Due to its programme's nature, MRT 3 was not included in this segment of the research.

## Recommendation 6:

The sports newsrooms of the Public Broadcasting Service need to establish a balance in their representation of different types of sports in different gender categories. Care should be taken to ensure that women's sports competitions be represented both during major competitions and within the regular sports programme. The PBS must ensure representation of the different types of sports both in its information programme and in the sports broadcasts. An exception to this should be the periods when there is no adequate sports offer to achieve that balance, but a conscious editorial policy can and should mitigate the difference in the representation between men's and women's sports competitions.

## Privately-owned television channels

Privately-owned television stations that broadcast programme nationally via digital terrestrial multiplex dedicate significantly less time to sports, compared to the Public Broadcaster. This finding was totally expected, given that, due to the already purchased broadcasting rights, the private television channels did not air any broadcasts from the Summer Olympics. Nevertheless, among the five private television stations that broadcast programme via terrestrial digital multiplex and that were the subjects of this study, there are visible differences in the ways they cover sports events and the attention they dedicate to sports. Some of these television channels pay certain attention to sports, judging from the duration and frequency of their items. Yet, the remaining ones have virtually unnoticeable sports programme.<sup>81</sup>

7. In the programme of almost all analyzed national private television channels covered by this research, there was a dominating presence of men among the journalists. However, on some of the privately-owned television channels this domination was more distinct than on the others. The study established there was male journalists' dominance in the sports information programme based on three measurement parameters: frequency of appearance, duration of the journalists' verbal presentation and duration of their visual presentation. Men in this category dominated mostly the programmes of *Telma TV* and *Sitel TV*, while *Alsat-M TV* had established a balanced presence of men and women journalists. Generally speaking, sports journalism is a male profession for the privately-owned television stations, too.
  - On *Alpha TV*, out of the total number of instances of appearance by male and female journalists, counted in the two samples together, more than 75% were appearances of male

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<sup>81</sup> According to the research findings related to the frequency and duration of the sports programme, these five television channels can be classified into two groups: first, television channels that, in the two weeks covered by the samples, aired an average of about half an hour of sports programme per day and, second, television channels that aired about 15 minutes of sports programme on average per day. The first group includes *Telma TV*, which had a total of somewhat above 8 hours of sports information programme aired in the two sampled weeks, and *Alpha TV* - with somewhat less than 7 hours, whereas the second group includes *Alsat-M TV* with a total of about 3 hours of sports programme in the two sampled weeks, and *Kanal 5 TV* and *Sitel TV*, with less than 3 hours of sports programme each.

journalists. On this television channel, nearly 69% of the total verbal presentation of male and female journalists together was of men, as was about 65% of the visual presentation. Nevertheless, it is positive that this television station employs a female journalist in its Sports Newsroom.

- As regards *Alsat-M TV*, the numbers suggest that this television channel achieved relatively balanced presence of men and women among the journalists in the conveying of sports information. Of the total number of instances of appearance by male and female journalists, counted in the two samples together, almost 52% were appearances of men. On this television channel, somewhat more than 56% of the total verbal presentation of male and female journalists together was of men, as was somewhat more than 52% of the visual presentation. However, what should be noted about *Alsat-M TV* is that the female journalists that yielded the high total share in the sports programme, were not part of the sports newsroom. This television station employs a concept where sports news are not to be aired as part of a separate sports section and, therefore, the female presenters of the general news present the sports news as well. Consequently, this balance comes from the fact that in the daily information programme of *Alsat-M* in general there is a balance between men and women.
- On *Kanal 5 TV*, out of the total number of instances of appearances by male and female journalists counted in the two samples together, almost 79% were appearances of men. Accordingly, on this television channel, more than 79% of the total verbal presentation of male and female journalists together – went to men. Particularly interesting is the finding according to which, based on the duration of their visual presentation, men were represented by only somewhat more than 40%. Thus, female journalists were more likely to appear visually on camera, which was not the case with the male journalists. This may be an effect of this television station's style, as its sports newsroom hires only male journalists whose reports were illustrated by footages without them appearing on screen. On several occasions, though, these reports were announced by female presenters who appeared on the screen.
- On *Sitel TV*, out of the total number of instances of appearance by male and female journalists in both samples together, nearly 92% were appearances by men. On this television channel, about 87% of the total verbal presentation of male and female journalists together belonged to men, as did somewhat over 77% of the visual presentation.
- On *Telma TV*, out of the total number of instances of male and female journalists' appearances in the two samples together, slightly less than 97% were male appearances. On this television channel, nearly 98% of the total verbal presentation of male and female journalists together belonged to men, as did somewhat less than 96% of the visual

presentation. This television station hires a female journalist in its sports newsroom, but this was not reflected in the programme aired during the two analyzed weeks.

### **Recommendation 7:**

More private television stations need to make efforts to increase the presence of female journalists in their sports programme, i.e. reduce the difference in the ratio of men and women specialized in sports journalism. The human resources management should establish gender-sensitive protocols for their television crews and introduce a criterion for the future employments that **would require** a balance between men and women among journalists. Additionally, the editorial teams in those television stations that already employ female sports journalists in their newsrooms should enable the latter to participate more in the programme.

8. The research found that there was a dominant presence of men among the athletes in the samples of the programmes of all privately-owned television stations. The study determined the dominance of male athletes in the sports information programme based on three measurement parameters: frequency of appearance, duration of the male and female athletes' verbal presentation and duration of their visual presentation.
  - On Alpha TV, out of the total number of instances of male and female athletes' appearances, counted in both samples together, slightly more than 69% were men's appearances. An interesting finding about this television channel was that the participation of male athletes in its programme according to the duration of their visual presentation was far higher than their participation measured according to the instances of their appearance. On this television channel, somewhat more than 75% of the total duration of male and female athletes' verbal presentation was presentation of men, as were slightly less than 84% of the visual presentation. Additionally, the presence of male athletes according to the duration of their visual presentation in the sample preceding the Summer Olympics was about 95%. This means that the findings suggest that in the regular sports programme there is bias towards male athletes, as well as total neglect of the female athletes.
  - On Alsat-M TV, out of the total number of instances of male and female athletes' appearances, counted in the two samples together, slightly less than 77% were appearances by men. On this television channel, above 74% of the total duration of male and female athletes' verbal presentation was of male athletes, as were slightly less than 82% of the visual presentation. Alsat-M TV, too, distributed unevenly the ratio between male and female athletes in both samples in a way that, in the first sample, there was a particularly visible dominance of male athletes in terms of their visual presentation, as they appeared in more than 94% of the airtime allocated for



the appearance of male and female athletes on the screen. The pressure of the Olympic programme in the second sample reduced this difference, but it still remained significant.

- On *Kanal 5 TV*, out of the total number of instances of male and female athletes appearances, counted in the two samples together, nearly 81% were appearances of men. It must be noted that this television channel had an extremely small number of male and female athletes' appearances (a total of 38 instances were registered in both samples). The total verbal presentation (100%) was of male athletes, who also took up somewhat less than 80% of the visual presentation.
- On *Sitel TV*, out of the total number of instances of male and female athletes' appearances, counted in the two samples together, nearly 77% were appearances of male athletes. On this television channel, 99% of the total duration of the male and female athletes' verbal presentation went to men, as did above 88% of the visual presentation. *Sitel TV* distributed these ratios almost identically in the two respective samples, which means that the Olympic Games had made an insignificant pressure on the male and female sports-related presence in the programme.
- On *Telma TV*, out of the total number of instances of male and female athletes' appearances, counted in the two samples together, somewhat above 64% were appearances of men. On this television channel, over 77% of the total duration of both the male and female athletes' verbal presentation was presentation of male athletes, as was the case with about 73% of the visual presentation. *Telma TV* had an unequal distribution of the ratio between male and female athletes in terms of the duration of the verbal presentation. The Summer Olympics, in this regard, made serious pressure and reduced the participation of male athletes (in favour of the female athletes) from above 87% in the first sample to 58% in the second. Consequently, when there are major competitions that offer of sports in women's category, these affect the information programme of this television channel. However, during the periods of regular sports reporting, male athletes are likely to be represented visually and verbally to a greater extent than female athletes.

#### **Recommendation 8:**

The sports newsrooms of the five privately-owned national terrestrial television stations should ensure gender balance within their sports programmes, broadcast more events related to women's sports competitions and provide female athletes with more space to visually and verbally present themselves and their sports. Such a gender-sensitive transformation should be ensured by a conscious and consistent editorial policy.

9. In the program of all five analyzed private televisions, it was established that the sports workers, i.e. experts, occupy a negligible place. Women rarely appeared in the sports program in the role of sports experts, whether it was informing about sports in men's or women's competition.
- On Alpha TV, out of the total number of male and female sports workers and experts' instances of appearance, counted in the two samples together, above 98% were appearances of men. On this television channel, somewhat more than 98% of the total airtime allocated for the male and female sports workers and experts' verbal presentation, was presentation of men, as were slightly less than 99% of the visual presentation.
  - On Alsat-M TV, there was not a single woman who appeared in the role of a sports expert in the programme in the two samples analyzed.
  - On Kanal 5 TV, there was not a single female sports expert in the programme in both analyzed samples.
  - On Site1 TV, out of the total number of instances of male and female sports experts or workers' appearances, counted in the two samples together, above 83% were appearances of men. All instances of the appearance by male and female sports experts were registered in the sample that coincided with the Summer Olympics. Men appeared as sports experts by speech and by image in over 90% of the airtime during which sports experts appeared on screen.
  - On Telma TV, out of the total number of instances of male and female sports workers or experts' appearances, counted in the two samples together, more than 85% were appearances of men. In the programme of this television channel, somewhat above 72% of the total airtime allocated for the verbal presentation of male and female sports workers, i.e. experts, was presentation of men, and somewhat above 84% of the visual presentation went to men among the sports experts.

#### **Recommendation 9:**

The sports newsrooms of the five privately-owned television stations should pay more attention to the gender balance with regard to the presence of male and female sports experts in the sports programme. The obvious and deeply rooted bias of the sports newsrooms towards men as sports experts can be overcome if these media outlets use a consistent and conscious approach to promote the idea that men are not the only ones eligible to be sports analysts.

## ANNEX

Table of Recommendations

Public Broadcaster	<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b> The stakeholders in the Public Broadcasting Service should structurally and precisely define the position and the role of the Sports Channel within the frameworks of the overall structure of <i>Makedonska Radio Televizija</i>. This undertaking should give the Public Broadcaster the feature of a unique and integrated system, as opposed to the concept whereby the PBS is a set of loosely connected media units. This may, in turn, be expected to improve the functioning of the Sports Channel, ease the First Programme Service from the pressure of the large sports offer by paving the way for a better-quality, current and versatile programme, increase the efficiency of the sports newsrooms' operations, and improve the quality of the sports programme.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> The establishment of new channels within the frameworks of the Public Broadcasting Service brings about an obligation for their detailed design, consolidation and sustainability. For this to happen with the MRT 3, it is necessary that (I) the Programme Council and the editorial team of MRT develop initiatives and ideas for content-related consolidation of this channel and that (II) adequate financial support be provided for this purpose.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> <i>Makedonska Radio Televizija</i> should make efforts to increase the presence of female journalists in its sports programme, i.e. reduce the difference in the ratio of male and female journalists specialized in sports. This goal may apply to various courses of action, including (I) making efforts on the PBS's part to communicate with the universities and schools of journalism in order to stimulate the students' interest in this type of journalism; (II) establishing a criterion for the new employments in the future that would require balance between male and female journalists, (III) making efforts on the Programme Council and the PBS editorial staff's part to provide trainings for women journalists, especially in the field of commenting sports broadcasts.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 4:</b> The editorial teams in the sports newsrooms of the Public Service should ensure gender balance in the sports programme, i.e. broadcast a greater number of events that are about female athletes, giving them more airspace to visually and verbally present themselves and their sports.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 5:</b> The editorial teams in the sports newsrooms of the Public Service should ensure gender balance in terms of the presence of male and female sports experts in the sports programme. The Public Service must provide a diversity of views on and analyses of the sports it covers, and this diversity also refers to the representation of women in this programme in the role of sports workers or sports experts.</p>

	<p><b>Recommendation 6:</b> The sports newsrooms of the Public Broadcasting Service need to establish a balance in their representation of different types of sports in different gender categories. Care should be taken to ensure that women’s sports competitions be represented both during major competitions and within the regular sports programme. The PBS must ensure representation of the different types of sports both in its information programme and in the sports broadcasts. An exception to this should be the periods when there is no adequate sports offer to achieve that balance, but a conscious editorial policy can and should mitigate the difference in the representation between men’s and women’s sports competitions.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Privately-owned television stations</p>	<p><b>Recommendation 7:</b> More private television stations need to make efforts to increase the presence of female journalists in their sports programme, i.e. reduce the difference in the ratio of men and women specialized in sports journalism. The human resources management should establish gender-sensitive protocols for their television crews and introduce a criterion for the future employments that <b>would require</b> a balance between men and women among journalists. Additionally, the editorial teams in those television stations that already employ female sports journalists in their newsrooms should enable the latter to participate more in the programme.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 8:</b> The sports newsrooms of the five privately-owned national terrestrial television stations should ensure gender balance within their sports programmes, broadcast more events related to women’s sports competitions and provide female athletes with more space to visually and verbally present themselves and their sports. Such a gender-sensitive transformation should be ensured by a conscious and consistent editorial policy.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 9:</b> The sports newsrooms of the five privately-owned television stations should pay more attention to the gender balance with regard to the presence of male and female sports experts in the sports programme. The obvious and deeply rooted bias of the sports newsrooms towards men as sports experts can be overcome if these media outlets use a consistent and conscious approach to promote the idea that men are not the only ones eligible to be sports analysts.</p>

## RESEARCH TEAM

**Igor Micevski, M.A.**, is a researcher at the RESIS Research Institute on Social Development. He is a doctoral candidate in the field of political sociology and communicology at “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” University in Skopje. The subject of his academic focus is research into the social movements and hegemonic discourses in the public sphere. Micevski has a master’s degree in Comparative Politics, focusing on the study of nationalism and ethnicity. He obtained his Master's degree from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). In this study, Micevski played the role of a chief researcher and author of the analysis.

**Snezana Trpevska, PhD**, is an expert in social research methodology and Chairperson of the RESIS Research Institute on Social Development. Trpevska is a PhD in sociological sciences and a longtime expert in the field of media policy. Over the past years, she has participated in a number of academic and applied research projects related to freedom of expression and media pluralism, media literacy, audience attitudes and behaviour towards media content, media concentration and broadcasting-related regulation, journalism ethics, etc. In this study, Trpevska performed the role of a methodology consultant.

**Konstantin Minoski, PHD**, is a fulltime professor at the Institute of Sociology, Faculty of Philosophy – Skopje, at the “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” University. His teaching and research activities focus on the fields of sociology of sports, sociological theories and the sociology of ethnic groups. Currently, Minoski is the Head of the Institute of Sociology and of the Polling and Research Center of the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje. He has participated in the realization of a number of scholarly, research and application projects, as a researcher or a project manager, whose subjects of research have been in the field of interethnic relations, children and youth’s development, sports in the youth’s leisure time, values and value systems. In this study, Minoski played the role of methodology consultant.

**Sotir Risto** is a researcher, an expert in the Albanian language. He is a publicist, translator and media content researcher associated with the members of the RESIS team since 2012. Until now, as a researcher he has participated in projects that have employed the method of Content Analysis and Discourse Analysis, in which he was the key figure in the team for Albanian-language media content analysis. Some major projects in which he participated are the series of research on ethno-nationalist hegemonies in sports media content, within the frameworks of the Regional Programme for Promoting Research in the Western Balkans, and Monitoring of Democracy (MODEM),

implemented by the Institute of Communication Studies. Risto, in this study, played the role of coder / content analyst.

**Julijana Mladenovska** is a researcher, a philologist in general and comparative literature. She is a project assistant at the RESIS Research Institute on Social Development. She graduated from the Department of General and Comparative Literature at the “Blaze Koneski” Faculty of Philology in Skopje, in the field of comparative literary studies. She has participated in the research on “Gender in the Media in 2019: Analysis of the Gender Aspects in Children’s Programmes of the National Terrestrial Television Channels”. In this study, Mladenovska performed the tasks of a coder/content analyst.