



# *Equality and Quality: Setting Standards for Women in Journalism*

IFJ Survey on the Status of Women Journalists

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## INTRODUCTION

Less than fifty years ago, journalism was an almost exclusively male profession. Female journalists were the exception and women were discouraged to enter the journalism. Today more and more women are employed as journalists. In some countries, for instance in parts of Central and Eastern Europe, women make up the majority of working journalists.

The number of female journalists' students worldwide confirms the trend towards more women in journalism. A study carried out in 26 countries in 1993 found that women in some cases account for up to 70% (USA, Bulgaria, Mexico) of the journalism students. The average percentage of female students of journalism is about 40%.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of great improvements achieved by and for women in journalism, many problems remain that must be addressed by journalists' unions at national, regional and global level. Women journalists are aware that because their movement has been successful in many areas there is the danger that journalists' unions may feel that enough has been done to ensure equality in media even though inequalities remain.

For journalists' organisations to improve the conditions for women journalists, they often have to reform their own structures to ensure female representation in the union's policy-making and governing bodies. Some have adopted equality policies aimed at improving the status of women in the profession and in the union.

The IFJ Women Working Party, which was established in 1992 and re-launched at the IFJ Congress in 1998, decided that in order for the IFJ to adopt a realistic and effective equality working programme for the next Congress period a survey of the current conditions of women journalists was needed.

Ten years ago the IFJ launched its first survey on women journalists and more than five years ago the United Nations adopted an ambitious programme for equality in the media at the Beijing Conference. It is time to take stock of the work carried out so far and to look for ways to continue our work for equality and quality in the media.

A questionnaire was sent to IFJ member unions, which addressed three key areas:

- 1) *Statistics: Women in journalism and women in the union;*
- 2) *Equal Pay: Law and practice;*
- 3) *Portrayal of Women: An issue for the union.*

Answers were received from 39 countries representing almost 70% of IFJ members and 37% of the countries represented in the IFJ<sup>2</sup>. Even though the number of answers received is limited they come from all regions and do give an indication about the current status of women journalists the world over.

The following report gives an overview of the current status of women journalists, shows differences in the approach adopted by unions to promote equality, and highlights areas for future action.

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<sup>1</sup> Slavko Splichal/Colin Sparks, *Journalists for the 21st Century*, New Jersey 1994.

<sup>2</sup> For the list of countries and IFJ member unions that replied to the questionnaire, see Appendix II.

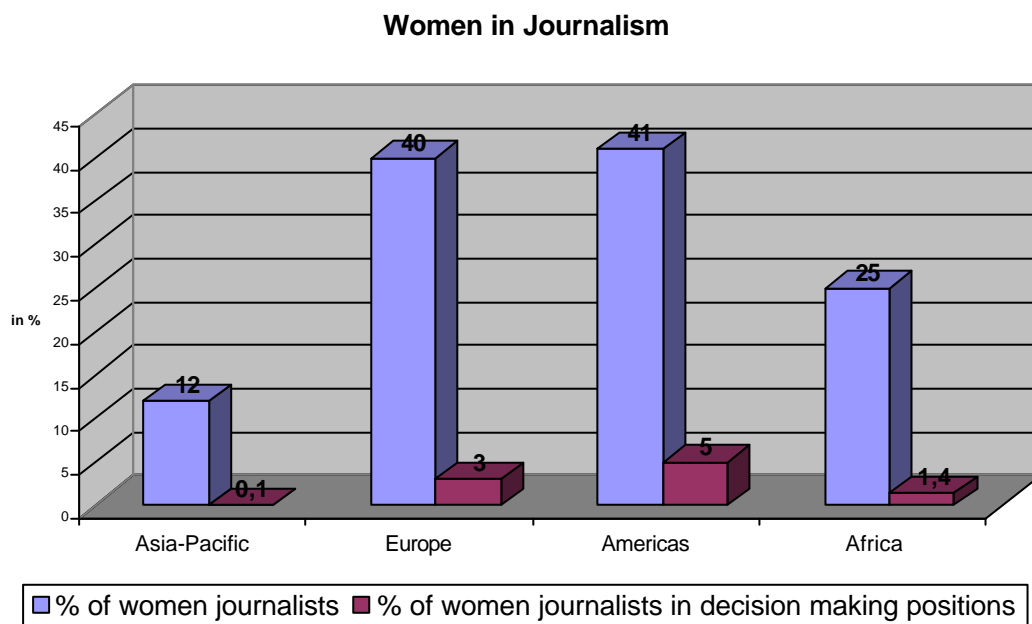
## 1) Women in Journalism: The Statistics

The number of women journalists is on the rise in most countries surveyed. But the percentage of women in journalism ranges from around 50% in countries, such as, Finland, Thailand or Mexico to as low as around 6% in Sri Lanka or Togo. The average percentage of women journalists is 38%. The IFJ survey ten years ago found an average of 27% women journalists.<sup>3</sup> All unions that replied to both surveys showed an increase in the number of women in the profession.

But the number of women in decision-making positions in the media is still shockingly low. Even though women represent more than a third of working journalists around the world, the percentage of women editors, heads of departments or media owners is only 0,6%.

Not all unions surveyed had data on this question but of those who replied the highest number of women in decision-making positions (10% to 20%) are to be found in Cyprus, Costa Rica, Mexico and Sweden.

The following chart shows the percentage of women in the profession and in decision-making positions in the four regions of the world.



## 2) Where Do They Work?

In most countries the highest number of women journalists work in newspapers reflecting a general situation that the number of journalists working for newspapers is still higher than for any other media. There are exceptions to this rule: For instance, in the United States more women work in magazines (37%) than in any other media, only 10% work in newspapers. In Morocco, almost 45% of the female journalists work in broadcasting, closely followed by the newspapers (38%).

<sup>3</sup> IFJ Survey Women in the News, prepared by Kate Holman, Brussels 1991

Also the number of women working as freelances is in balance with the changing numbers in employment. It is highest in Europe (around 20% in the countries surveyed) and lowest in Asia (2% in the countries surveyed). This is below the overall trend, which is growing.

Few unions had statistics on the number of women working in on-line media. These answers provided show that the percentage of women in new media ranges from 13% in Austria to below one per cent in most countries of Asia and Africa. Overall, only around 1% women work in on-line media but the trend in Europe shows that their numbers are growing.

### 3) Women in the Union

As the number of women in journalism grows so does their membership in journalists' unions. Generally, IFJ member unions have been successful in organising women and the number of women members mirrors or is slightly more than the number of women in journalism.

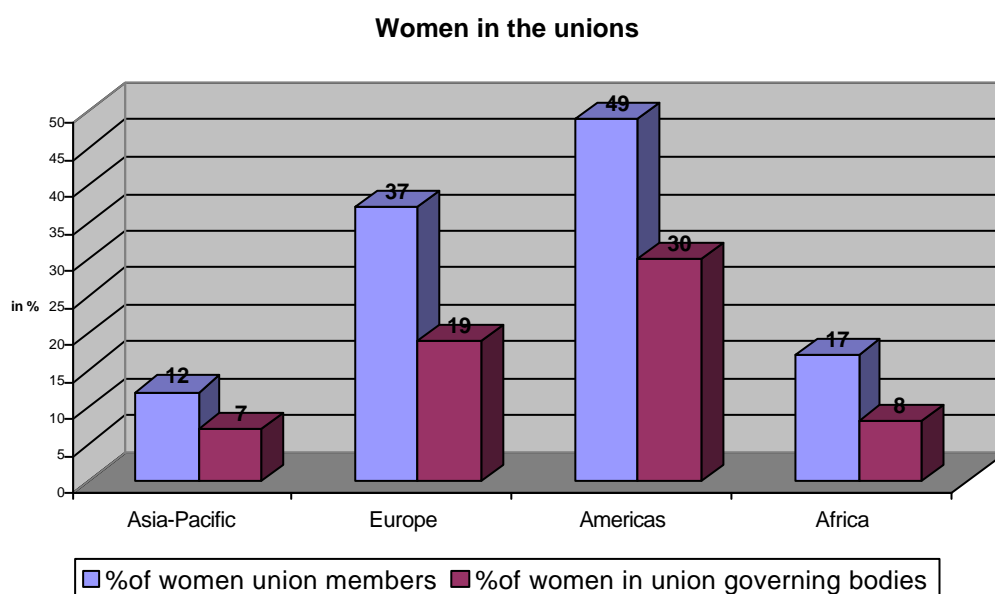
In several countries of the Americas (TNG-CWA in the US, Venezuela and Costa Rica) there are more female than male union members (around 55%). While in others the number of organised women journalists is lower than their representation in the profession as a whole. This is the case, for instance, in Cambodia, Thailand, Kenya or Niger.

Compared to the last IFJ survey the number of female union members has been growing. None of the unions that replied to both surveys organise less women today than they did ten years ago.

IFJ member unions also show a much higher degree of equality than the employers. The number of women in union decision-making bodies is higher in all regions than the number of women in decision-making in the media in general. Overall, women represent 17% of members in union governing bodies.

But there is no reason to be complacent. While women represent less than one fifth of the members in the union's governing bodies, one should not forget that they represent more than a third of the membership of all unions surveyed.

The following chart shows the number of female union members and women in the governing bodies:

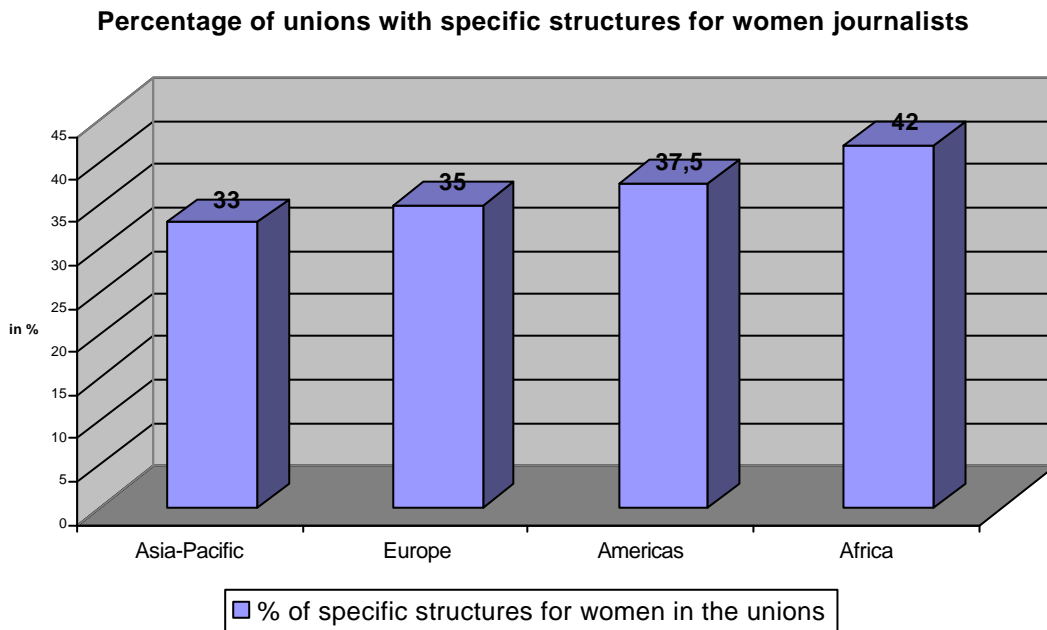


#### 4) Promoting Equal Representation: Women's Committees and Quota Systems

Journalists' unions around the world have been discussing policies and structures to improve the representation and participation of women in the union, but are things getting better? One way to increase the involvement of women is to create specific structures such as women's committees or equality councils to give women's concerns a voice in the union. Another approach is to introduce a quota system to ensure equal representation of women and men in the union's governing bodies

Of unions surveyed about 40% have a women's committee or equality council. The majority of unions do not have a special structure for women. Some unions have noted that this is not necessary because women represent almost half of the union's members (for instance, Bulgaria or Mexico), others say special allocation of seats for women or a quota system can result in limiting the number of women in the union's executive nevertheless, some unions where the number of women is less than men have not established a women's committee (for instance, Sri Lanka or Luxemburg).

The chart below shows the percentage of unions with women's committees or equality council in the four regions:



The unions that have a women's committee or equality council are:

<b>Asia-Pacific:</b>	Cambodia, Japan
<b>Europe:</b>	Finland, Germany (DJV), Denmark, Hungary (AJH), NUJ Great Britain and Ireland, Bosnia-Herzegovina (RS Association)
<b>Americas:</b>	United States (TNG-CWA), Canada (FNC), and Peru
<b>Africa:</b>	Kenya, Niger, and Morocco.

Not all of these unions reserve a seat for the women's committee in the union's governing body. The ones that do are:

<b>Asia Pacific:</b>	Cambodia, Japan
<b>Europe:</b>	Finland, Germany (DJV)
<b>Americas:</b>	Peru
<b>Africa:</b>	Kenya, Niger.

Only five of the unions surveyed have introduced a quota system to ensure equal representation of women in the union's governing body. They are:

**MEAA, Australia:** One third of the members of the Executive Committee must be women. The Australian Journalists' Association was the first union in the country to adopt this rule.

**DJV, Germany:** One third of the delegates to the union's Congress must be women to ensure that women are elected to the union's board.

**IG-Medien, Germany:** The number of women in the governing body must be in line with the percentage of female members, currently 30%.

**RS Association, Bosnia:** A quota system exists; no details are given about its provisions.

**SAINFO, Niger:** A quota system exists; no details are given about its provisions.

The union in Morocco states that the introduction of a quota system is currently being discussed in the union.

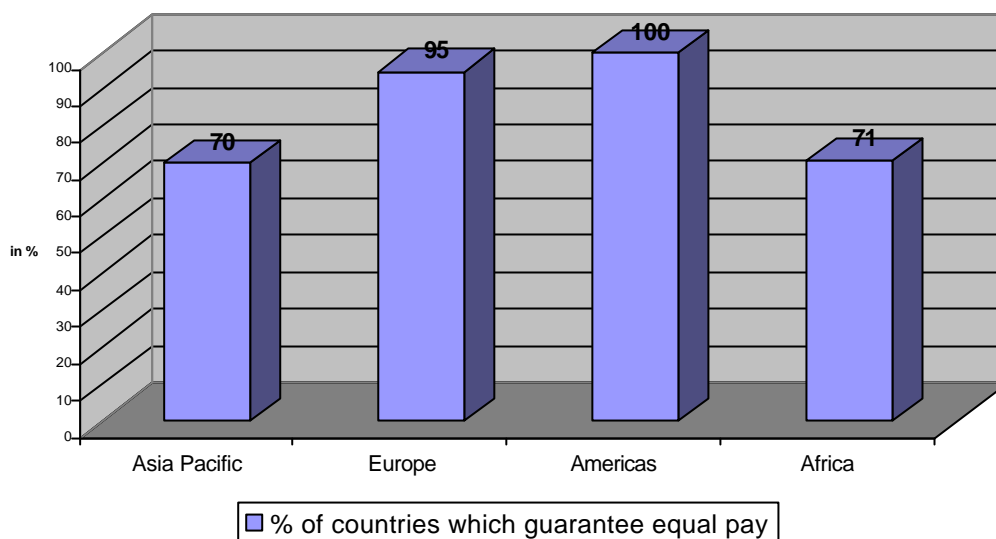
## 5) Equal Pay for Equal Work

In 1951 the International Labour Organisation (ILO) adopted the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), which is one of the fundamental ILO conventions and has been ratified by 147 of the 174 ILO member states. ILO conventions are international treaties and once a country ratifies a convention it is obliged to implement it in national law and practice.

The Convention sets out that men and women workers must receive equal remuneration for work of equal value without discrimination based on sex. It obliges member states to establish this right through national law or collective agreements. The convention allows for different rates between workers if these are not based on gender discrimination (geographical, economic differences etc.)

The majority of the countries surveyed have adopted national laws that guarantee the right to equal pay. Unions from India, Austria, Morocco and Togo replied that no national law on equal pay exists in their country. As all of these countries have ratified the ILO Convention, they would be obliged to introduce such a law.

**Percentage of countries which guarantee equal pay by law**



Provisions of equal pay laws vary from country to country and not all unions supplied information on what the law says.

The MEAA in Australia explains that the law adopted in 1972 established the right to equal pay at national level for all professions.

In Japan the Labour Standards Act states that the same wage must be paid for the same work and prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender.

In Benin the right to equal pay is enshrined in the constitution of 1990 but no specific provisions on how to implement this right exist. The law in Burkina Faso provides for the same principles as the ILO Convention.

In Senegal equal pay is guaranteed in the labour code but the union notes that inequalities exist in the laws governing taxes. As a result working women often pay higher taxes than men.

In Europe, virtually all countries have a law on equal pay. Most of these laws were adopted in the 1970s and include provisions similar to those of the ILO conventions. But several countries have changed the law on equal pay in recent years.

In Sweden a new law was adopted in 2000 which not only provides for a ban on discrimination, equal pay and affirmative action but also gives unions access to figures on wages of all employees in any given company so that the union can check whether the right to equal pay is upheld. If discrimination based on gender is discovered the employer must correct the situation within three years. The union says the new law is better than the previous legislation because it gives the union a tool to fight discrimination.

Also in Denmark a new law was adopted in 2000 but contrary to the Swedish situation the new law takes away rights from the unions. The previous law gave the union access to the figures on wages, under the new law employers are no longer obliged to give the union access to these figures and they do not even have to show them to a female colleague who makes a complaint about lack of equal pay.

In Croatia the Labour Law adopted in 1996 states that an employee must not enjoy less favourable working conditions due to his or her gender. It also states that the employer is obliged to pay equal wages to men and women for work of equal value.

Finland adopted an Equality Act in 1987 (improved in 1995), which prevents direct and indirect discrimination based on gender and requires that men and women shall have equal opportunities to education and occupational advancement.

The Labour Code in Hungary of 1992 prohibits discrimination based on gender and requires employers to apply the principle of equal pay.

The Equality Act adopted in Switzerland in 1996 improved the conditions for workers to take legal action against discrimination and established mediators to promote equal pay.

In the United Kingdom the Equal Pay Act was adopted in 1975 but the union states that policies of equal pay for work of equal value are still being phased in.

In the United States the Equal Pay Act and the Civil Rights Act are the federal laws prohibiting discrimination. A new Fair Pay Act aimed at improving the tools for implementing the right to equal pay is stuck in Congress. The TNG-CWA states that while the laws are good, their value has been undermined because the agencies set up to enforce them are understaffed and underfunded.

In Costa Rica the law on equal pay was adopted in 1949. The union states that all journalists, regardless of gender, receive a basic salary, which increases at set levels every year of employment.

In Peru, while the constitution prohibits discrimination on the grounds of gender, the right to equal pay is not fully enshrined by law because legislation adopted in 1993 states that equal pay for equal work must be guaranteed "for workers employed in identical conditions". This leaves a loophole for employers.

In Paraguay legislation on equal pay has improved in recent years and includes provisions on equal taxation.

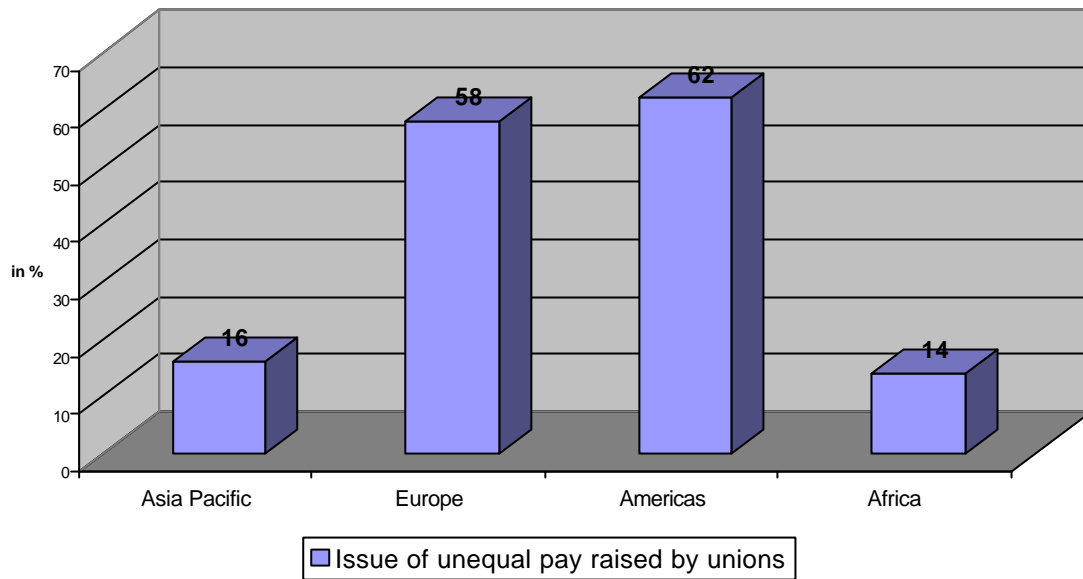
The law in Canada provides for equal pay but the FNC in Quebec reports that employers often circumvent the law by giving different titles to men and women doing the same work thus allowing for different rates of remuneration.

## **6) Equal Pay: An Issue for the Union**

There is often a difference between law and practice. Many unions state that the existing laws are not sufficiently enforced, that de facto discrimination continues because employers create unjustified distinctions between work done by men and women and that the laws do not give unions enough tools to combat discrimination. On the other hand, some unions report that the issue of equal pay is not a problem in their country. These include unions from India, Cyprus and Bulgaria.

Close to 40% of the unions surveyed believe that unequal pay is an issue for the union:

### Lack of equal pay is an issue for the union



The majority of the unions surveyed have a specific policy or strategy to achieve equal pay. These policies address many issues ranging from improving conditions for parental leave to raising awareness on equal opportunities among union members.

The MEAA in Australia takes action to improve family workplace practices through campaigning for paid maternity leave and on-site child care as well as seeking regular and transparent procedures for assessing promotions in media companies.

Shinbun Roren in Japan organises several conference to raise awareness on the issue, Minpo Roren believes that equal pay has been achieved so that the union does not focus on the issue and Nipporo reports that they are involved in equal pay campaigns organised by the Japanese trade union centre Rengo.

Some unions admit that they have come late to the issue. Few unions in Africa have a strategy or union policy although the union in Benin says they are currently discussing strategies to combat discrimination and SAINFO in Niger reports that equal pay has been an issue in union training programmes and raising awareness campaigns.

Several unions from Europe say continuing inequality at work is mainly a result of unfair procedures for promotion and the lack of women in decision-making positions in the media. IG-Medien in Germany says the works council system should provide for fair promotions as it gives the works council the right to reject appointments proposed by the employer. But the problem is that a specific law (Tendenzschutz), guaranteeing the publisher's right to determine the editorial policy or tendency, means that works councils in media companies do not have the same rights of consultation and co-determination as people in other industries.

The union in Luxemburg supports equal pay campaigns organised by the union centres in the country. The union in Croatia focuses its work on the labour law and uses the legal provisions to achieve equal pay for

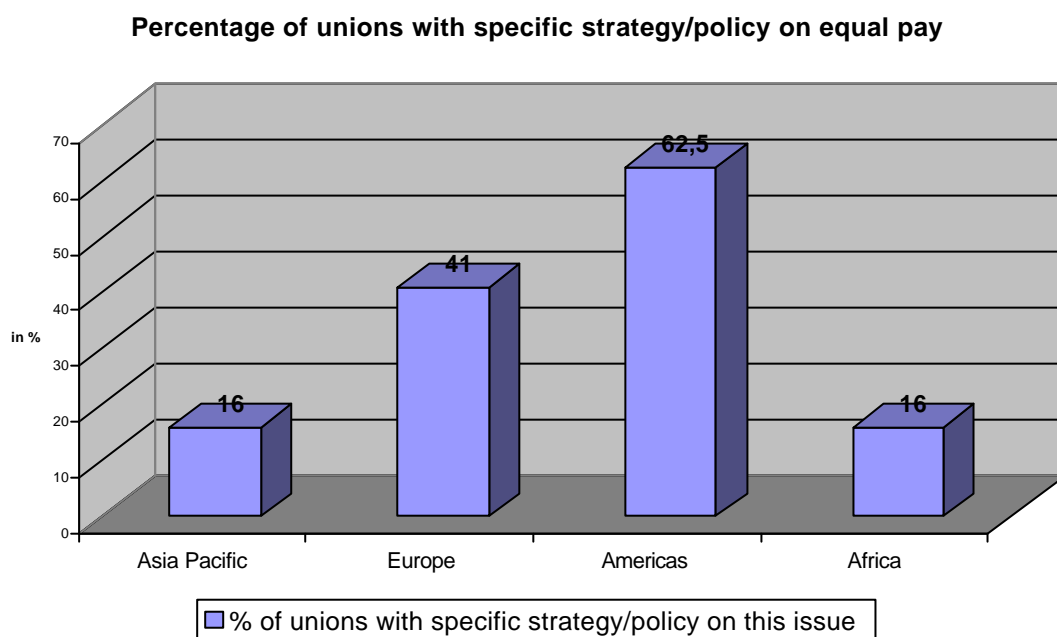
women. The union in Finland has an Equality Action Plan and carries out annual surveys of its member's wages.

The TNG-CWA in the United States has prepared a collective bargaining model contract including a range of provisions on equality and has joined the National Committee on Pay Equity campaigns in the US.

The union in Peru reports that it makes equal pay and equal opportunities an each in all its activities and publications.

Several unions from Latin America state that the IFJ organised trade union development programme, PISA, has helped them to define objectives for equality.

The following chart shows the percentage of unions that have a policy on equal pay:

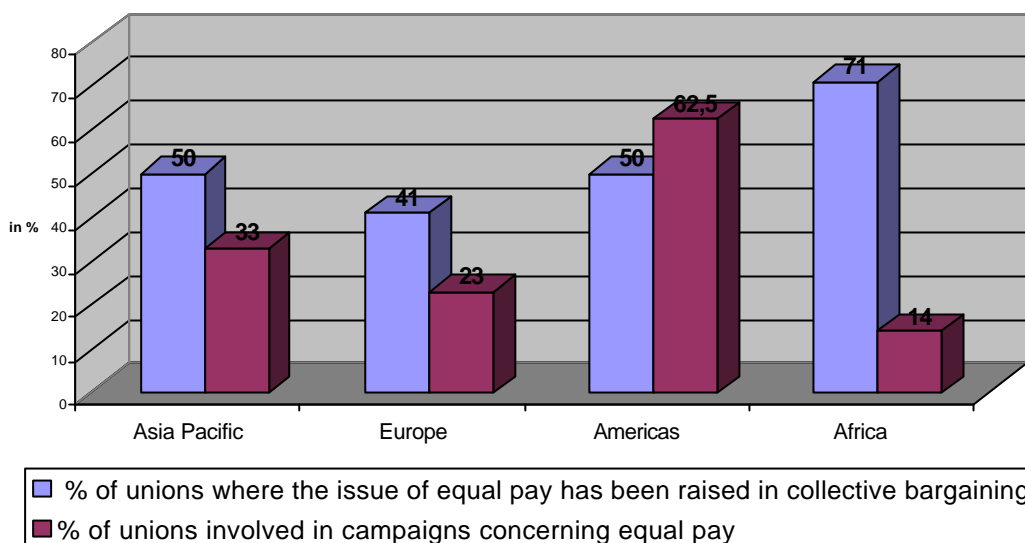


Collective bargaining is the main tool for the unions to achieve conditions of equal pay and equal opportunities. Overall, more than half of the unions surveyed have taken up the issue of equal pay in collective bargaining. Several unions state that they do not negotiate on equal pay because it is provided for in law.

A third of the unions surveyed have been engaged in campaigns to promote equal pay at national level. Many have been involved in the general campaigns organised by the national union centres, while others state that collective bargaining is a better tool for achieving equal pay.

The following chart shows the percentage of unions that have negotiated on equal pay in collective bargaining and/or have been involved in equal pay campaigns:

### Equal pay in collective bargaining and equal pay campaigns



### 7) A Global IFJ Campaign on Equal Pay?

The IFJ women working party asked unions whether they believed that a global IFJ campaign on equal pay would benefit women journalists. Some 85% of the unions who replied support such a campaign.

All unions in the Americas, except Mexico, say an IFJ campaign would be useful. The Mexican union believes that the issue is better tackled in direct negotiations with employers. The FNC in Canada points out that such a campaign should focus on equal access to decision-making positions and the TNG-CWA in the United States says it can be useful in raising awareness and supporting collective bargaining.

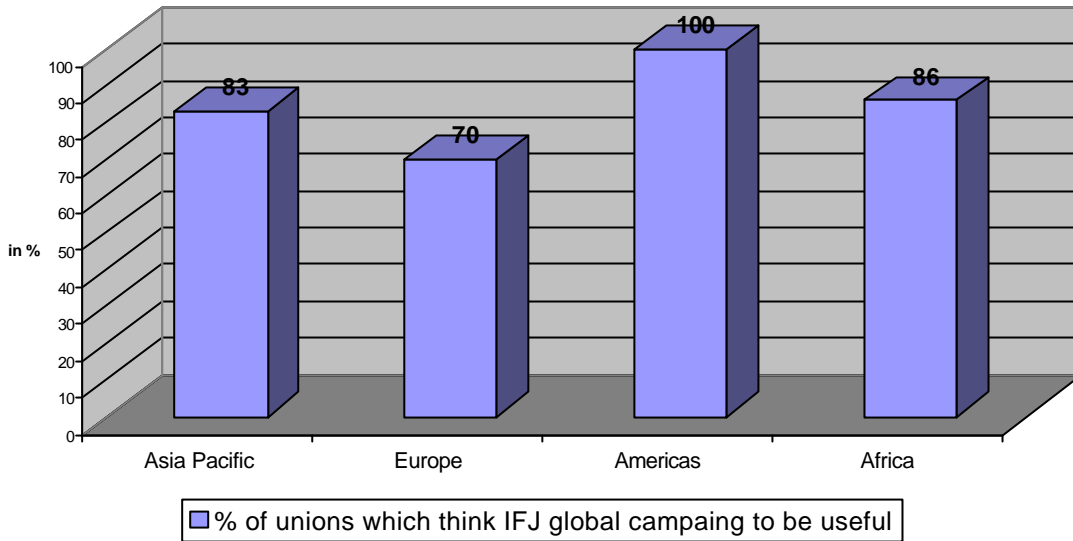
In Asia only the union in Thailand does not feel that an IFJ campaign would be of use. They say equal pay is already guaranteed by law so a campaign is not necessary.

In Europe, unions from Sweden, Germany (IG-Medien), Norway, Switzerland and Bulgaria say an IFJ campaign would not necessarily be useful. The reasons given include that the issue is best tackled at national level, that it must be dealt with in collective bargaining or that a global campaign may undermine existing beneficial provisions in their own country (Switzerland).

All unions in Africa, except Burkina Faso, support an IFJ campaign. The union in Burkina Faso does not explain why an IFJ campaign would not be beneficial.

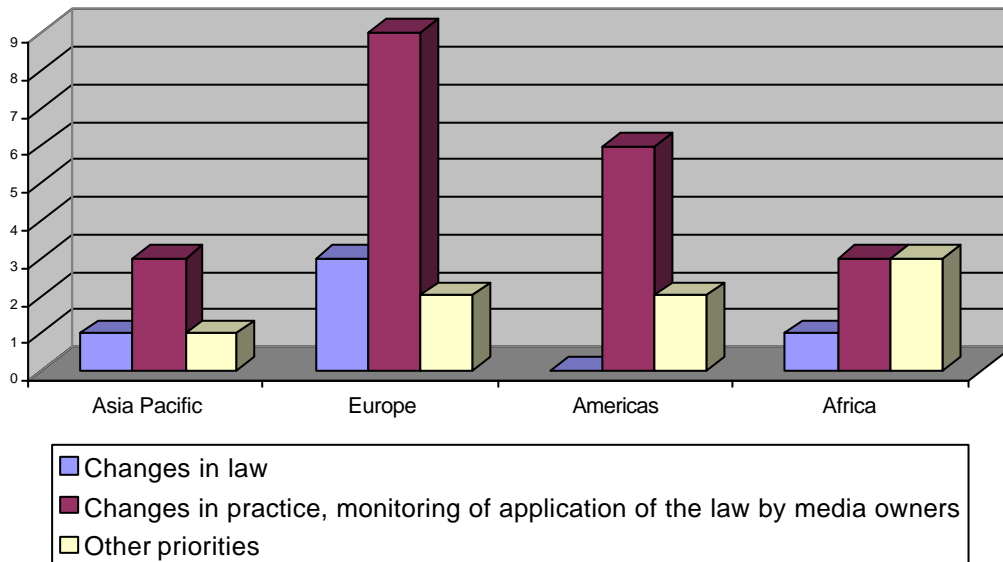
The following chart shows the percentage of unions that support an IFJ campaign on equal pay:

**Percentage of unions considering a global IFJ campaign on equal pay to be of benefit for women journalists**



Unions that support an IFJ campaign on equal pay list a number of priorities that such a campaign should address. The following chart shows the priorities identified by the unions in the four regions according to number of times mentioned:

**Priorities for global IFJ campaign on equal pay**



Overall, the majority of unions believe an IFJ campaign should focus on bringing about changes in practice and should assist unions in monitoring the application of equal pay legislation by media owners.

A range of unions give other priorities for the campaign. The Croatian union says the campaign should focus on protecting existing good legislation against attempts by employers to change it. The NUJ Great Britain and Ireland insists that an IFJ campaign should focus on changing the male culture in the media

industry. SAINFO in Niger says the IFJ campaign should aim to introduce a quota system to ensure equal representation of women in decision-making positions; this initiative should be supported by specific training programmes. The union in Panama says the IFJ campaign should highlight the differences in pay for women journalists in different media. They say that, especially in television, the rates of pay are unfair.

## 8) Portrayal of Women in the Media

The UN Beijing declaration adopted more than five years ago called on media owners and media professionals to develop and adopt codes or guidelines to promote a fair and accurate portrayal of women in the media. An IFJ report prepared for the UNESCO conference on Women in the Media: Access to Expression and Decision-Making, Toronto 1995 found that:

*".... after more than a decade of research indicating that women are dissatisfied with their media portrayal the industry has done little to change its practices. Women are grossly under-represented and where they do feature, they are still portrayed in a narrow range of stereotyped roles."*<sup>4</sup>

Not much has changed in the last five years. Women's lives are still the untold story in today's media. Journalists and media organisations may, with varying degrees of success, disavow responsibility for the non- and misrepresentation of women. This issue is but one aspect of the general debate about quality of content in media. There is little doubt that media professionals, whether they own the newspapers and broadcast media or whether they are employed to gather, edit and disseminate information have an urgent need to articulate principles of better performance and make themselves ethically accountable in a transparent and public manner. That should go for challenging media stereotypes of women as much as it applies to intolerance or hate speech.

One problem we all face is to try to discuss the issue of media responsibility without rhetoric, stridency and recourse to bitter argument which has poisoned much of the debate thus far. When the role of media is debated it is often led by politicians who sometimes forge public concerns into weapons, which are potentially damaging to the notion of press freedom. Governments around the world have tried to justify restrictive media laws with ethical considerations, arguing that the press will only be responsible if the government forces it to be.

The IFJ survey aimed to get the union's point of view on this issue and asked whether IFJ unions felt that the portrayal of women in the media was an issue for them and what actions could be undertaken to promote an accurate and fair media portrayal of women.

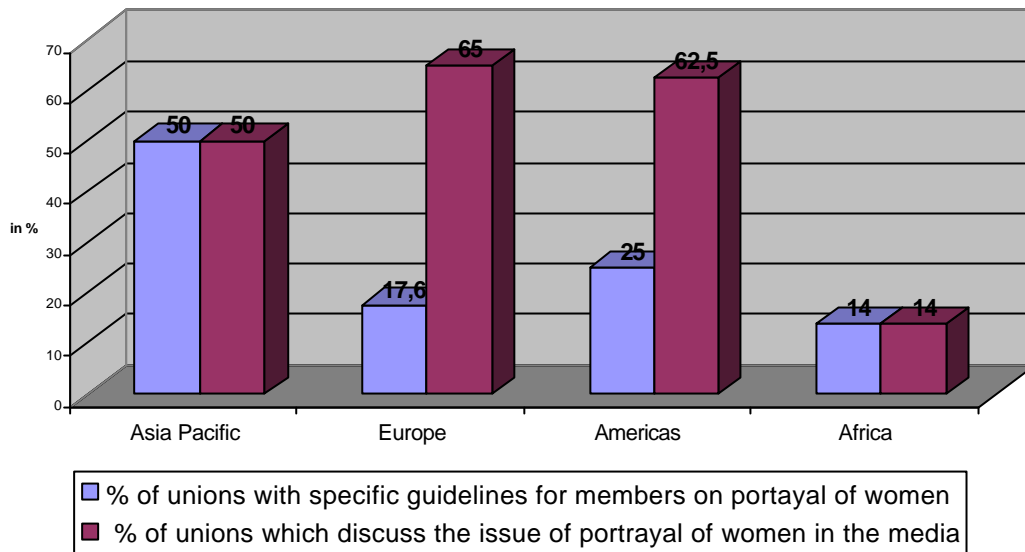
Close to half of the unions surveyed said portrayal was an issue and one being discussed within the union. Those who do not discuss the issue give different reasons for the lack of debate in the union. The AINE in India states that since a free press exists in the country the issue of portrayal is not a pressing one. Several unions say portrayal of women is not a problem in their country (Kenya, Iceland). Other say that other concerns are more important such as basic violations of labour and human rights or that other groups exist that take up the issue (Benin, Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina (RS association)Croatia, Bulgaria, Paraguay). The Mexican union reports that the culture of "machismo" makes it difficult to discuss the issue in general union fora. The Japanese unions say that given the low number of women members the issue has not yet made it on the unions' agenda of priorities.

The chart below shows the percentage of unions in the regions that are discussing the issue of portrayal and/or have adopted specific gender reporting guidelines:

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<sup>4</sup> Value and limits of a self-regulatory approach to gender equality in the media, IFJ discussion paper prepared by Bettina Peters for the UNESCO Conference on Women in the Media: Access to Expression and Decision-Making, Toronto 1995.

### Portrayal of women - discussions in the unions



A total of 27% of the unions surveyed have adopted reporting guidelines on gender. These try to make members more aware of gender issues and to change journalists' attitudes to women when selecting and presenting news.

Apart from reporting guidelines, most IFJ member unions have adopted codes of conduct or practice defining ethics in journalism. Virtually all these codes include a clause calling on the professionals not to write or publish material that discriminates against persons on the basis of race, sex, religion or national origin.

All 146 member unions of the IFJ have undersigned the IFJ Principles on the Conduct of Journalists, which states in paragraph 7:

*" The journalist shall be aware of the danger of discrimination being furthered by the media, and shall do the utmost to avoid facilitating such discrimination based on, among other things, race, sex, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, and national or social origins."*<sup>5</sup>

It should be noted that the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) has never adopted an international code of practice for publishers.

A third of the unions surveyed say stereotypes or the presentation of women according to prejudices, which do not correspond to reality are the main reason for an inaccurate portrayal of women in the media. Some 25% of the unions say the lack of female sources, experts or spokespersons in media coverage accounts for a distorted image of women in the media. Another 20% of the unions believe that the media do not sufficiently cover issues of concern to women or report reliably on their perspectives on development in society.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> IFJ, Declaration of Principles on the Conduct of Journalists.

<sup>6</sup> Please note that several unions stated that all of these issues (stereotypes, lack of experts etc) contribute to an unfair portrayal of women in the media.

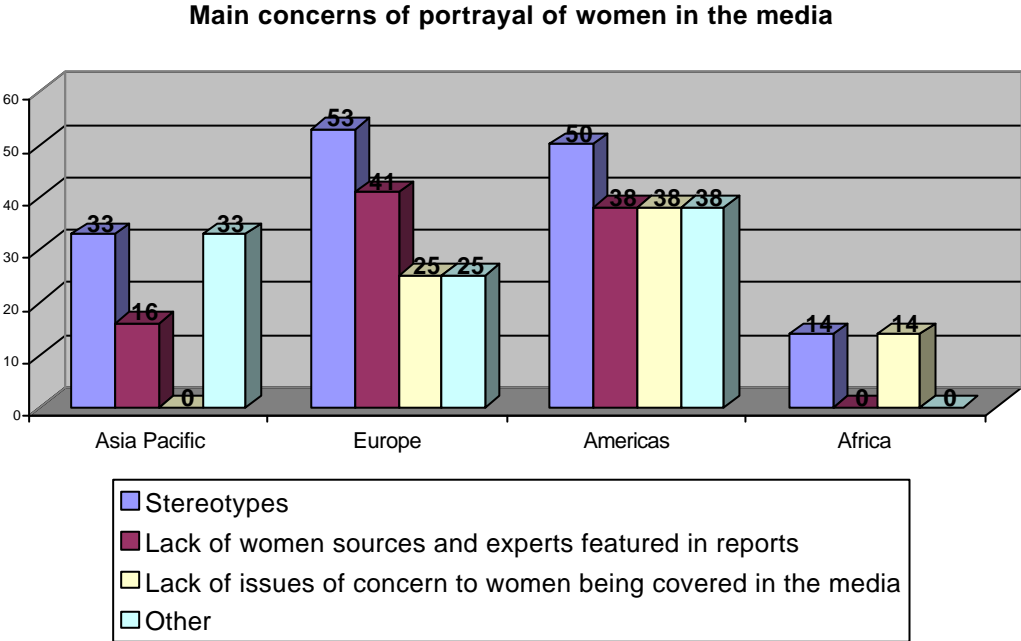
The MEAA in Australia says a trivial image of women is purported by the media. Women in public life are often portrayed as less serious or less well informed than their male counterparts. The union in Cambodia says that violence against women is not sufficiently reported by media.

The DJV in Germany believes the social and economic situation of women should be more of a focus in media coverage. The NUJ Great Britain and Ireland says media often trivialise women's issues and do not consider them worthy of serious coverage.

The TNG-CWA in the United States points out that the issue of dependent care affects women in different ways than men and that generally women often have the full responsibility for caring for children, grand children and elders without any support. The media coverage of this problem is wanting.

In Peru the union says sexist language in media is a major problem. The FNC in Canada reports that women are still relegated to covering certain issues.

The following chart shows the percentage of unions who identified the concerns listed in the questionnaire:



### 9) Conclusions

Today, women can be found in all newsrooms. They work in print, broadcasting and on-line media; they cover every issue from education to war and their numbers in journalism continue to rise. As more and more women gain economic independence, they are a group to reckon with for advertisers and media owners. And even where individual women are not in a position to "cast their vote at the newsstand" women media associations demand better coverage on behalf of women. Media owners disregard women's concerns at their peril.

But the IFJ survey shows that there is no room for complacency. Nor is it right to think that the struggle for equality in journalism has been won. Many issues remain unresolved and as long as women are still impeded by discrimination over the top jobs, or have less access to training, or continue to be forced into

impossible choices between career and family, journalists' unions must keep women's rights at the top of their agenda.

The following conclusions highlight the main findings of the IFJ survey and included proposals for future action by the Federation:

## 1. Women in Journalism

The number of women in decision-making positions in media is still shockingly low. Even where women represent around 40% of working journalists, they only make up 3% - 5% of editors, heads of departments or directors. The list of obstacles faced by women who want to get ahead in journalism is long and it is the same whether drawn up by women journalists in Asia Pacific, the Americas, Africa or Europe:<sup>7</sup>

- \* *stereotypes*, cultural attitudes expecting women to be sub-ordinate and subservient, negative attitudes towards women journalists;
- \* *employment conditions*, lack of equal pay, lack of access to further training, lack of fair promotion procedures, lack of access to decision-making positions (glass ceiling), sexual harassment, age limits, job segregation;
- \* *social and personal obstacles*, conflicting family and career demands, lack of support facilities (day care centres), lack of self-esteem.

Unions have to address these problems and they have to negotiate and lobby for conditions that will allow women to reach decision-making positions. Transparent and open procedures for promotion, adequate child care facilities and getting media owners to set targets to increase the number of women in decision-making positions are some of the actions unions can undertake.

### **Proposal for Action:**

The IFJ Women Working Party should prepare an overview of best practice examples used by unions and/or media employers to increase the number of women in decision-making positions. Such a survey should include information on best practice examples on equality provisions achieved in collective bargaining.

## 2. Women in the Union

As the number of women in journalism grows so does their membership in journalists' unions. Generally, IFJ member unions have been successful in organising women and the number of women members mirrors or is slightly more than the number of women in journalism. None of the unions that replied to both surveys organise less women today than they did ten years ago.

IFJ member unions also show a much higher degree of equality than the employers. The number of women in union decision-making bodies is higher in all regions than the number of women in decision-making in the media in general. Overall, women represent 17% of members in union governing bodies.

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<sup>7</sup>)UNESCO Regional Preparatory workshops for the International Symposium Women and the Media: Access to Expression and Decision-Making, Apia, Western Samoa, August 1994, Santiago, Cuba, August 1994, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, September 1994, Quito, Ecuador, September 1994, Harare, Zimbabwe, September 1994, Veliko Tirново, Bulgaria, October 1994, Tunis, Tunisia, October 1994.

But there is no reason for complacency.. While women represent less than one fifth of the members in the unions' governing bodies, they represent more than a third of the membership of all unions surveyed.

Between 30% - 40% of the unions have a women's committee but only seven of the unions surveyed reserve a seat for the women's committee on the union's governing body. Five unions have a quota system either determining the number of female delegates to Congress or setting a quota for the number of women on the executive body.

There is no overall agreement among unions whether special structures for women, allocation of seats or quota systems are the way to improve representation and participation of women in the union.

**Proposal for Action:**

The IFJ Women Working Party should prepare a review of women's committees and quota systems explaining if and how these structures have contributed to improving participation of women in the union.

### 3. Equal Pay for Equal Work: An Issue for the Union and the IFJ

While most countries provide for equal pay in national legislation, many unions say that in practice women earn less than their male colleagues. Most unions believe that lack of equal pay is an issue for the union and have addressed it in their work, although their numbers are smaller in Asia and Africa, where other concerns, such as press freedom or basic human rights issues take priority.

85% of the unions surveyed support an IFJ campaign on equal pay. But the answers show that such a campaign should be organised at regional level addressing the different conditions for journalists and trade unions.

The majority of unions say the campaign should focus on bringing about changes in practice not in law and should assist unions in monitoring the application of equal pay legislation by media owners. Several unions point to the general equal pay campaigns organised by union centres.

**Proposal for Action:**

The IFJ Women Working Party should initiate a campaign on equal pay. The campaign should be organised at regional level and should focus on achieving equal pay for women in practice. The IFJ should co-ordinate the campaign with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (representing the trade union centres). Campaign targets should include regular salary reviews with employers, consultation rights for unions on payment grades and promoting best practice in collective agreements.

### 4. Portrayal of Women in the Media

Close to half of the unions surveyed said portrayal was an issue and one being discussed within the union. Those who do not discuss the issue give different reasons: Portrayal is not a problem, other concerns, such as violations of trade union rights are more important or the low number of female members account for lack of debate within the union.

Less than a third of the unions have adopted reporting guidelines on gender but most union codes of conduct include a clause calling on journalists not to publish material that discriminates against persons on the grounds of race, gender, religion or national origin.

The main reasons for an inaccurate and unfair portrayal of women in the media are stereotypical coverage of women, lack of use of female sources, experts or spokespersons, lack of coverage of issues of concern to women and giving a trivial image to women and their interests.

Some unions point out that portrayal is taken up by other organisations, such as women media associations or media monitoring groups and the IFJ could draw on the expertise of these organisations.

**Proposal for Action:**

The IFJ Women Working Party should co-operate with other groups working on portrayal of women in the media. An IFJ initiative could focus on collecting unions' experience with reporting guidelines and promoting the use of such guidelines in journalism training.

Finally, the IFJ Equality and Quality Conference – the first of its kind to be held in the 75-year history of the Federation -- offers a unique opportunity to expand the existing network of IFJ women and to ensure that female members from all regions can participate in future work. An e-mail network of IFJ women exists but it must be expanded and it should be co-ordinated at regional level by the IFJ offices and regional federations.

The Seoul Congress will adopt a working programme for the IFJ Women Working Party for the next three years. More women than ever before will attend the IFJ Congress and will have a chance to make their voices heard.

After two heated debates at recent Congresses over issues related to the representation of women, the challenge before the IFJ is to build on the consensus and positive work of the past three years and to define realistic objectives and priorities for action within our unions that can make a lasting difference to the lives and working conditions of women journalists.

Bettina Peters  
Director, IFJ Project Division  
Brussels, June 2001



***Equality and Quality: Women in the Media***  
IFJ Global Conference, Seoul, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001



**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR IFJ MEMBERS**



***Introduction***

On the eve of its World Congress the IFJ plans to organise a global conference of women journalists to debate the status of women in the media and to propose to the IFJ World Congress a comprehensive working programme in support of gender equality. The conference will review successes and setbacks in guaranteeing gender equality in journalism since the adoption of the programme of action at the UN Women World Conference in Beijing five years ago. A major aim of the conference is to strengthen the IFJ Women network and to build effective networks between equality officers and women representatives of IFJ unions in the regions. The conclusions of the conference will be presented to the approximately 250 Congress delegates from over 90 countries.

In preparation for the conference, the IFJ with the support of UNESCO will prepare a report on the status of women journalists. This questionnaire will form the basis for this report.

*Part I: Women in the Profession: The Statistics*

- 1) How many women work as journalists in your country? (If you do not have exact numbers, please make an estimate).
  - Total number of women journalists: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Percentage of women of total number of journalists: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Number of women in newspapers: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Number of women in magazines/ agencies: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Number of women in broadcasting: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Number of women in on-line media: \_\_\_\_\_

- Number of women freelances: \_\_\_\_\_

2) How many women work in decision-making positions?

- Number of editor-in-chiefs: \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of head of departments in broadcasting: \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of women media owners, directors: \_\_\_\_\_

3) Has the number of women in decision-making positions increased in the last ten years? If yes, by what ratio?

## Part II: Women in the Journalists' Organisations

4) How many members in your union/association are women?

- Number of women members: \_\_\_\_\_
- Percentage of women of total number of members: \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of women in union governing body (executive committee etc.): \_\_\_\_\_
- Percentage of women of total number of members of governing body: \_\_\_\_\_

5) Does your union have a specific structure for women (equality council, women's committee etc.)?

YES :

NO :

6) Does this committee/council have a reserved seat on your union's governing body?

YES :

NO :

7) Does your union have a quota system for allocation of seats on governing bodies?

YES :

NO :

### ***Part III: Equal Pay for Equal Work***

In 1951 the International Labour Organisation (ILO) adopted the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), which is one of the fundamental ILO conventions and has been ratified by 147 of the 174 ILO member states. ILO conventions are international treaties and once a country ratifies a convention it is obliged to implement it in national law and practice.

The Convention sets out that men and women workers must receive equal remuneration for work of equal value without discrimination based on sex. It obliges member states to establish this right through national law or collective agreements. The convention allows for different rates between workers if these are not based on gender discrimination (geographical, economic differences etc.)

Countries that have NOT ratified this convention include Kenya, Kuwait, Liberia, Pakistan, Tanzania and the United States of America.

8) Does a law guaranteeing equal pay for equal work exist in your country?

YES :

NO :

9) What are the main provisions of this law?

10) When was the law adopted? Has it replaced a previous law on equal pay? If yes, do you think the new law is better?

Law adopted in:

Replaced law of:

Better :

Worse :

Please explain why.

11) Many studies have found that even if the principle of equal pay is enshrined in law, in practice women tend to earn less than men for doing the same job. Has this issue been raised in your union?

YES :

NO :

12) If yes, does your union have a policy/strategy on the issue?

YES :

NO :

Please outline the main points of the strategy and/or attach the policy document adopted by your union?

13) Has your union raised the issue of equal pay in collective bargaining?

YES :

NO :

14) Has your union been involved in any campaigns for equal pay?

YES :

NO :

Please outline the main points of the campaign and/or attach copies of the campaign leaflets and materials.

15) Do you think that a global IFJ campaign on equal pay would be of benefit for women journalists in your country?

YES :

NO :

16) If yes, what do you think, should be the aim of the campaign? (Tick one box)

a)  changes in the law :

b)  changes in practice, monitoring of application of the law by media owners :

c) Other, please explain:

17) If no, please explain why you don't think a global campaign would be useful and, if appropriate, propose other initiatives.

#### ***Part IV: Portrayal of women in the media***

The Beijing Declaration (attached) called on media owners and media professionals to develop and adopt codes or guidelines to promote a fair and accurate portrayal of women in the media.

18) Does your union have specific guidelines for members on portrayal of women?

YES :

NO :

If yes, please attach a copy.

19) Is portrayal of women in media (stereotyping) an issue that is being discussed in your union?

YES :

NO :

20) If no, please explain why do you think it is not an issue?

21) If yes, what are the main concerns being raised (tick one or more)?

Stereotypes :

Lack of women sources and experts featured in reports :

Lack of issues of concern to women being covered in media :

Other:

## Equality and Quality : Women in the media

### *Responses received to the IFJ questionnaire*

#### Responses by regions:

**Asia-Pacific:** Japan, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Australia, India, Thailand  
6

**Africa:** Benin, Togo, Senegal, Niger, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Morocco,  
Kenya  
7

**Europe:** Austria, Luxembourg, Croatia, Finland, Hungary; Switzerland,  
UK, Serbia, Italy, Iceland, Denmark,  
Norway, Cyprus, Bulgaria  
Spain, Germany (2x), Sweden  
17

**Americas:** Venezuela, Canada, Costa Rica, Peru, USA, Mexico, Panama,  
Paraguay  
8

Total

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39