CONSEILSUPÉRIEUR DE L'AUDIOVISUEL

Report on women's sport coverage on television

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The question of women's sport coverage in the media has been a subject for debate by the public authorities for several years now, on a level footing with the level of representation women have on sports governing bodies and in the sports economy and, more generally, with the conditions in which women participate in sport.

As part of its remit involving supporting and anticipating societal changes in the audiovisual landscape, in terms of diversity, women's rights or public health, the Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel (CSA) is committed to promoting women's sport on the television and radio. It keeps a particularly close eye on coverage devoted to women's sporting events and the extent to which women feature across all programmes to do with sport.

Part 1 of this report provides a rundown of the CSA's research and analyses on the subject.

Part 2 sets out the main aims of the "4 saisons du sport féminin" (4 seasons of women's sport) initiative ${ }^{1}$ launched in 2016 with the Ministry of Sport, Ministry of Women's Rights and the French National Sports and Olympic Committee (CNOSF). The CSA reports on the first season of this initiative, taking advantage of this opportunity to encourage television channels and radio stations to devote part of their programmes to covering women's sport over a weekend, and more generally highlights the positive effects of the initiative overall.

## Women's sport coverage on television

## The share of women's sports broadcasts is on the rise

The amount of television coverage devoted to women's sport is a central concern for the CSA.

In this regard, since 2012 the CSA has endeavoured to work out what percentage of overall hourly volume of television sports broadcasting is given over to women's sport. This was in the region of $7 \%$ in 2012 and $14 \%$ in $2014^{2}$. In 2016, the CSA estimated what percentage women's sport made up in the sports broadcasting volume by using a more robust methodology than the previous one, this time taking a full year of sports broadcasts into account. Bearing on all free-to-air channels having shown sports broadcasts (4 public channels and 8 private channels ${ }^{3}$ ) and a broad sample of the main pay-TV channels which are partly or wholly given over to sport ${ }^{4}$, the analysis showed that this proportion ranges between $\mathbf{1 6}$ and $\mathbf{2 0 \%}$ in 2016. Although there is still a lot of work to do, women's sport coverage on television has therefore progressed considerably over recent years.

In terms of hourly volume, women's tennis tournaments (1,039 hours), football matches (443 hours), skiing ( 360 hours) and biathlon ( 268 hours) events received the most coverage in 2016 on free-to-air television and on the sample of pay-TV channels selected. By comparison, the men's sporting events receiving the most coverage in terms of broadcasts are football ( 4,173 hours), motorsports ( 2,396 hours), tennis ( 2,149 hours) and rugby (1,663 hours).

[^0]

## The profile of women's sport on television is growing

Some women's sporting fixtures have attracted high audiences - a sign of the real and rising popularity of women's sport and confirmation of the interest television channels have in broadcasting it.

To illustrate, during the Rio 2016 Summer Olympics, an average of 5.6 million television viewers tuned in to watch the broadcast of the "Women's +78 kg" Judo final ${ }^{5}$. More recently, the semi-final of the Women's Rugby World Cup between England and France was watched by an average 3 million television viewers on France 2, an audience record for women's rugby ${ }^{6}$.

Over the 2011-2015 period, 4 out of the top 10 audiences on free-to-air TNT channels (excluding the so-called "traditional" channels which have generally tended to attract the highest audiences) were achieved for women's sporting competitions.

## Women's sport: 4 out of the top 10 audiences on free-to-air TNT channels (excluding traditional channels) between 2011 and 2015

| Rank | Date | Programme | Channel | Audience <br> (in millions of <br> viewers) |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | $26 / 06 / 2015$ | FIFA Women's World Cup: France -Germany | W9 | 4.1 |
| 2 | $30 / 01 / 2015$ | Men's Handball World Championship: France-Spain | TMC | 3.3 |
| 3 | $11 / 10 / 2015$ | Hunger Games | D8 | 3 |
| 4 | $21 / 06 / 2015$ | FIFA Women's World Cup: France-South Korea | W9 | 2.8 |
| 5 | $13 / 12 / 2015$ | Oblivion | TMC | 2.3 |
| 6 | $13 / 07 / 2011$ | FIFA Women's World Cup: France-United States | D8 | 2.3 |
| 7 | $08 / 02 / 2014$ | 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi: freestyle skiing | France 4 | 2.3 |
| 8 | $24 / 10 / 2013$ | Despicable Me | TMC | 2.3 |
| 9 | $17 / 06 / 2015$ | FIFA Women's World Cup: Mexico-France | W9 | 2.2 |
| 10 | $28 / 10 / 2013$ | Thor | France 4 | 2.2 |

Source: Mediamat - Médiamétrie. Processed by the CSA.

## The gender imbalance in terms of the presence of women in sports programmes is still too stark

The number and prominence of women in sports programmes on the television should be addressed from a perspective that goes beyond merely the broadcasting of women's sporting events to include the extent to which women feature across all sports programmes. Through the Baromètre de la Diversité (Diversity Barometer) and publications of "women's rights" figures, the CSA has statistics to hand in this regard.

[^1]

In addition to its active incentive policy (partnership agreements, charters of commitments, incentives to broadcast televised messages, etc.), in 2009 the CSA set up a Diversity Barometer, a measurement tool enabling an objective assessment of the diversity of French society shown on the television.

For the barometer's 2016 edition, the indexing method was based on the observation of all the programmes broadcast from 9 to 15 May and from 5 to 11 September 2016 on 18 channels $^{7}$ and on the indexing of all the individuals who spoke out over the airwaves. For each programme, each individual was counted and qualified according to different criteria, including their gender (male/female) ${ }^{8}$.

The analysis of the 2016 Barometer's results, bearing on the gender criterion, indicates that the percentage of women speaking out in sports programmes - be they presenters, commentators, players interviewed on the side of the pitch or court, supporters or physicians questioned about a sports theme, etc. - is only 17 \% (vs. 83\% for men).

Regarding the publications of "women's rights" figures, national television services and radio services belonging to a national broadcasting network are now obliged to forward qualitative and quantitative indicators to the CSA on the representation of women and men on their channels, pursuant to Deliberation no. 2015-2 on respect for women's rights, adopted on 4 February $2015^{9}$.

The quantitative data bear on the proportion of women and men presenters, journalists/columnists, experts, other speakers and political guests on talk shows only.

Accordingly, based on the figures forwarded by the television channels ${ }^{10}$ to the CSA and bearing on the 2016 financial year, it emerges that the rate of female presenters on sports programmes sports broadcasts or shows - stands at $44 \%$ (vs. $56 \%$ for men), while the rate of female journalists and/or columnists and that of women among other speakers on talk shows falls to $13 \%$ (vs. $87 \%$ for men) and $1 \%$ (vs. 99\% for men) respectively.

[^2]

## Women's sport on television: an increasingly profitable programme

Broadcasts of women's sporting events are drawing ever higher numbers of television viewers, which in turn is enhancing their appeal for advertisers. Given that the value of television rights associated with them is still fairly reasonable (when you compare it with the rights associated with broadcasts of men's fixtures), these competitions can prove to be directly profitable for a publisher. The FIFA Women's World Cup, broadcast by D8 in 2011 and W9 in 2015, is a good example of a sport whose level of television coverage is still evolving today and the broadcasting of which was directly profitable for the channel.

To study the direct profitability of an event for a free-to-air television publisher, the CSA has used the profitability coefficient - i.e. the ratio between the amount of television rights paid ${ }^{11}$ and the advertising revenue received. This coefficient gives an idea of how profitable it is for free-to-air television to provide coverage of "major" sports broadcasts ${ }^{12}$.

For both the 2011 edition, broadcast on D8, and the 2015 edition, broadcast on W9, alike, the FIFA Women's World Cup presents a profitability coefficient of well over $1^{13}$ : advertising revenue associated with the event has far outstripped the amount it cost to acquire the television rights ${ }^{14}$ (see Figure below).

Average audience and direct profitability coefficient of FIFA Women's World Cup matches broadcast in the late afternoon and in the early and late evenings in 2011 on D8 and in 2015 on W9


Source: Kantar Media. Mediamat - Médiamétrie; reproduction prohibited, all rights reserved by Médiamétrie. Processed by the CSA. Audience consolidated.

[^3]

The acquisitions of the rights to broadcast UEFA Women's Euro 2017 matches by the public group France Télévisions, and then matches of the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup, set to be organised in France, by the group TF1, are evidence of the growing appeal the women's version of this sport holds for broadcasters. In the event the channel TF1, the market leader ( $20.4 \%$ of the audience share in $2016^{15}$ ), were to broadcast matches of this event, the audience performances for women's football fixtures already achieved on D8, W9 and the France Télévisions channels could well increase as a result ${ }^{16}$.

For the sake of comparison, of the different men's sporting events with high television coverage, broadcast over free-to-air channels since 2007, only the broadcasts of the Men's Rugby World Cup on TF1 in 2015 seem to have been profitable (see Figure below).

## Direct profitability coefficients ${ }^{17}$ of various "major" men's sporting events broadcast over free-to-air channels



Source: Kantar Media, CSA.

[^4]

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## A positive correlation between sport coverage on television and participation in sport

In France, 14.5 million women play sport or another physical activity on a regular basis, which is around half of all sports players ${ }^{18}$.

Sport coverage on the television is playing a part in more people taking it up. The high coverage of the Olympics thus had a positive effect on the uptake of certain sports that are not usually given much airtime - especially where French athletes performed well (badminton, swimming and boxing).

Women's participation in football also provides a good example of the mutual ripple effect that can exist between a sport's level of television coverage and its increasing uptake in the community. Since the 2011 World Cup, media coverage of international women's football fixtures has steadily gained traction - not least on the back of the French team's commendable performances, which have subsequently pulled in higher audiences. Alongside these television and sports performances, the number of female members of football clubs has soared since the 2010-2011 season (+90\%).

Growth in the number of female members of football clubs


Source: licence statistics published by the FFF. Processed by the CSA.

[^5]

## The 4 seasons of women's sport initiative

Working with the Ministry of Sport, the Ministry of State for Gender Equality and the CNOSF, particularly by mutually sharing their respective areas of expertise, the CSA launched the " 4 saisons du sport féminin" (4 seasons of women's sport) initiative in 2016. This initiative is aimed at giving fresh impetus to increasing female representation in sport, firmly establishing women's sport as normal practice and encouraging diversity in the sports broadcast over the air - since media coverage appears to be the linchpin in developing sport among women.

To enable the issues associated with women's sport to be addressed all year round, the initiative is rolled out over 4 stages, overseen by each partner respectively. Each season has a corresponding theme: media coverage of women's sport (overseen by the CSA), consideration given to women's sport (overseen by the Ministry of Sport), women's participation in sport (overseen by the CNOSF) and the women's sport festival (overseen by the Ministry for Gender Equality).

The high number of television channels and radio stations involved in the initiative has helped, over the past two editions, to raise the general public's awareness of women's participation in sport in our country.

## The 2016 edition

## Season 1, the stage bearing on media coverage of women's sport, led by the CSA

The first stage, run by the CSA, has helped to enhance women's participation in sport through a major media coverage campaign: 23 television channels and some fifty radio stations rallied to the cause.

Over the weekend of 6-7 February 2016, publishers made an effort to broach women's sport through different types of programme, at peak television viewing times. The contents were incorporated into programmes which, for the most part, were already fairly popular and were either intended for the general public or sports enthusiasts. Some television channels played an even more direct part by airing women's sports broadcasts.

Radio stations also lent a hand in this media coverage of women's sport campaign by airing special reports, debates, programmes and talk shows as well as sports broadcasts.

The scheduling of video clips dedicated to the campaign and produced by several audiovisual groups also helped to raise the profile of the campaign.



The 4 seasons of women's sport initiative was talked about in the national and local, general and specialist written press, as well as on a number of websites and over the social networks (Facebook and Twitter).

## The other three seasons

Overseen by the Ministry for Urban Affairs, Youth and Sport, the second season involved working out what the keys are to increasing female representation in sport, at a conference held at the National Assembly on 25 May 2016, with over 200 professionals in attendance.

The third season, organised by the CNOSF to coincide with the European week Sentez-vous sport (Feel sport) in September 2016, put on an array of events and opportunities to encourage women to take up a sport. More than 1,500 people flocked to the launch day, on 10 September 2016, hosted at the Sentez-vous sport Village of Charléty Stadium in Paris. Some forty sites across different French regions rolled out a range of certified activities in local clubs during the week Feel sport.

The fourth season, overseen by the Ministry for Families, Childhood and Women's Rights, took place on 14 December 2016 at the Maison du Sport in Paris. This sequence helped to showcase and celebrate women's sport with the awarding of the "Trophées du sport féminin" (Women's sport trophies). Made up of the partners of the 4 seasons of women's sport and the association Femix'Sports, the jury decided to reward 7 prizewinners from among 120 applicants. One of the awards included a "Sexisme, pas notre genre" (Sexism, it's not in our nature) trophy, which fitted squarely in with the action plan against sexism launched by the Ministry in September 2016.

## The 2017 edition

After the overwhelming success of the 2016 edition, the 4 partner institutions wanted to run the 4 seasons of women's sport initiative again in 2017, sticking with the same 4 themes according to the same timescale: the seasons were staggered throughout the year, each one led by one of the four institutions. An overarching theme has been defined to link all four of the seasons for the 2017 edition together: Local areas. The aim is to enhance women's participation in sport at regional level - within the local community.

The first season ran between 11 and 12 February 2017, along the lines of the first edition. Over thirty television channels - free-to-air and pay TV, national and local alike, given the community focus of the 2017 edition - along with some fifty radio stations broadcast women's sporting events, special reports, debates, programmes and talk shows all on the subject of women's sport.

The second season took place in the context of the setup of the Standing Conference on Women's Sport on 5 September 2017 in Valence, chaired by the Minister of Sport Laura Flessel and Minister of State for Gender Equality Marlène Schiappa. The Standing Committee on Women's Sport ${ }^{19}$ sets out to improve knowledge of women's representation in sport and increase support for stakeholders in terms of the organisation, enhanced professional status and media coverage of women's sport. It has been founded to unite and mobilise the stakeholders who are called to contribute to these issues; chief among these stakeholders is the CSA, since media coverage is instrumental to developing women's sport in France.

[^6]

The third season, overseen by the CNOSF, took place on 23 September during the week Feel sport.

The fourth season, led by the Ministry of State for Gender Equality, is scheduled for the end of the year.


## Appendix: women's participation in sport in France

According to a study by the Union Sport et Cycle, out of the 30 million French people over 18 years of age who play sport or another physical activity at regular intervals (at least once a week), almost half ( 14.5 million) are women.


Source: "Pratiques sportives et infrastructures de proximité" (Community facilities and sport) study by the Union Sport et Cycle (2,000 French people surveyed by the research agency BVA)

Overall, the most popular activities are practised by men and women in equal proportions (walking, cycling, swimming), but some pursuits, such as fitness, running and yoga, appeal much more to women ${ }^{20}$.

Between 2007 and 2015, the number of female members of sports clubs jumped by $20 \%$, so by more than a million, versus an increase of just $10 \%$ for male members, so by $900,000^{21}$. In 2015 , out of 16 million members ${ }^{22}$ of Olympic single-sport, non-Olympic and multisport federations, $37.5 \%$ were women ${ }^{23}$.

[^7]
[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ http://www.csa.fr/Television/Autres-thematiques/Sport-et-audiovisuel/Les-4-saisons-du-sport-feminin
    ${ }^{2}$ These figures had been estimated on the basis of an analysis bearing on a sample of a few weeks rather than a full year.
    ${ }^{3}$ TF1, France 2, France 3, M6, C8, W9, TMC, France 4, CStar, France Ô, L'Equipe, Numéro 23.
    ${ }^{4}$ Canal+, Canal+ Sport, Golf +, belN SPORTS 1, beIN SPORTS 2, beIN SPORTS 3, Eurosport, Equidia.

[^1]:    ${ }^{5}$ Médiamétrie, Médiamat national daily audiences.
    6 L'Equipe, Audiences: 3 millions devant Angleterre-France sur France 2, 23 August 2017 https://www.lequipe.fr/Medias/Actualites/Audiences-3-millions-devant-angleterre-france-sur-france-2/827771

[^2]:    ${ }^{7}$ TF1, the five channels of the France Télévisions group, Canal+, M6, C8, W9, TMC, NT1, NRJ12, BFMTV, Cnews, Cstar, Gulli, Numéro 23.
    ${ }^{8}$ The frequency, scope, indexing method and results of the 2016 Diversity Barometer are available on the CSA website: http://www.csa.fr/Etudes-et-publications/Les-observatoires/L-observatoire-de-la-diversite.
    ${ }^{9}$ Link to the aforementioned deliberation: http://www.csa.fr/Espace-juridique/Deliberations-et-recommandations-du-CSA/Recommandations-et-deliberations-du-CSA-relatives-a-d-autres-sujets/Deliberation-n-2015-2-du-4-fevrier-2015-relative-au-respect-des-droits-des-femmes-par-les-societes-mentionnees-a-l-article-20-1-A-de-la-loi-n-86-1067-du-30-septembre-1986.
    ${ }^{10}$ The television channels concerned by this deliberation are as follows: the five channels of the France Télévisions group, France 24, TF1, TMC, HD1, NT1, LCI, M6, 6Ter, W9, Paris Première, Canal+, Cnews, C8, Cstar, NRJ 12, Chérie 25, Gulli, RMC Découverte, BFM TV, L’Equipe and Numéro 23. It should nevertheless be pointed out that only France 2, France 3, France 4, France Ô, C8, Canal+, L'Equipe, M6, Numéro 23, TF1 and W9 have reported sports programmes.

[^3]:    ${ }^{11}$ By subtracting from these costs any revenue associated with the sub-licensing of rights.
    ${ }^{12}$ This "profitability coefficient" is a simple, albeit imperfect source of measurement since, with respect to revenue, it does not factor in the advertising revenue received by the channel on its digital media; and, with respect to costs, it does not take production costs in particular into account - which can be significant.
    ${ }^{13}$ The profitability coefficient for the 2015 edition has most likely been over-estimated as the available advertising data concern not only W9 slots but also 6ter slots, which are jointly marketed by the M6 group's advertising company. That said, in light of the coefficient value (more than 2 ), this bias probably does not call the analysis's findings into question.
    ${ }^{14}$ The advertising revenue taken on board is that which relates to slots aired at half-time ( $100 \%$ taken into account) and 15 minutes before and after the programme ( $50 \%$ taken into account). For W9, the joint slots with 6ter are included in the calculation.

[^4]:    15 Médiamétrie, Médiamat Annuel 2016, Press release dated 2 January 2017, file:///C:/Users/habert d/Downloads/2017\%2001\%2002 Mediamat Annuel 2016\%20(1).pdf
    ${ }^{16}$ The group TF1 has not yet clarified on which channels it is intending to air the matches for this World Cup (especially TF1 or TMC).
    ${ }^{17}$ The direct profitability coefficient corresponds to the ratio between the amount of TV rights paid by the television publisher (and after deduction of any revenue associated with the sub-licensing of rights) and the advertising revenue it receives.

[^5]:    ${ }^{18}$ Additional data on women's sport participation are available in the appendix

[^6]:    ${ }^{19}$ Established by decree on 10 May 2017.

[^7]:    ${ }^{20}$ Union Sport et Cycle, Le sport et les Français, https://www.unionsportcycle.com/sports-loisirs/le-sport-et-les-francais .
    21 Centre de Droit et d’Economie du Sport, Panorama du sport féminin et Enjeux stratégiques, 2017. http://www.cdes.fr/sites/default/files/files/Expertise/r\%C3\%A9f\%20\%C3\%A9co/2017/Etude\%20CDES FDJ Sport\%20f\%C 3\%A9minin.pdf
    ${ }^{23}$ Ministry of Sport, Répartition des licences masculines et féminines par fédération française agréée (hors ATP) en 2015, http://www.sports.gouv.fr/organisation/publication-chiffres-cles/Statistiques/Donnees-detaillees/article/article-Donnees-detaillees-2015.

