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**STATUS OF FEMALE JOURNALISTS IN BOSNIA AND  
HERZEGOVINA**  
**Interdisciplinary study**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This study is built upon previous studies of BH Journalists Association, regarding the degree of media freedom in BiH society and status of female journalists in this context. According to the report of the Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina, an increased number of journalists has been recorded, but their status in society has not been improved<sup>1</sup>. On the other hand, there is information that indicate a trend of reducing staff, particularly on TV and radio broadcasting sectors, but it is mainly a reduction of the number of technical and administrative staff.<sup>2</sup> Studies indicate that there is an extremely large number of media outlets, however this fact does not imply pluralism of media content and the fulfillment of the democratic role of the media.<sup>3</sup> Political clientelism and the subsequent phenomena such as politicization of public services and their inefficient system of financing, advocacy journalism, exploitation of private media broadcasters aiming interference in political sphere and the like, particularly contribute to this<sup>4</sup>. The problem of the increasing number of the so-called online portals without the imprint is constant,<sup>5</sup> and with an expansion of online media outlets, journalism as a vocation faces both old and new challenges, which additionally affect and, relatively speaking, "fall onto" women who are persistent in doing their jobs or who chose journalism to be their profession. Considering the results of previous research, this study has also confirmed that aforementioned statement is particularly evident if we take into consideration tendency of the so-called feminisation of journalistic profession,<sup>6</sup> specifying that law does not have a clear definition of a male/female journalist.<sup>7</sup> Studies and analyses warn us of ethical standards in the media in Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>8</sup>. It is of a particular concern that there is an increasing number of women working in journalism, thus, this decline can be imputed to women themselves in a misogynistic way (the *backlascha* phenomenon), and for this reason these and similar analysis are of a great importance.

Although there are laws in this sphere (noting that the legislation needs to be improved), a tendency of their *ad hoc* (non)application is still present and it is under the influence of political pressure, economic factors (competition and commercialisation), negligence of institutions (primarily in the context of the prosecution and courts), guild solidarity which is present but not implemented in practice enough, related to insufficient awareness of personal rights but also to disintegration, along ethnic and administrative borders. Disorganization of

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<sup>1</sup> Institution of the Ombudsman for Human Rights of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Special Report on Position and Threats Against Journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Banja Luka, 2017, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Džihana, Amer (2018). *Women and the Media: Female Employees and Management Structures*, BH Journalists Association, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Turčilo, Lejla (2017). *Views/Theses on the Media and on Society: Articles, Essays, Research*, Sarajevo, self-published, p. 39.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 42–44.

<sup>5</sup> Adilagić, Rea (2018). *Indicators on the level of media freedom and journalists' safety (Bosnia and Herzegovina). Summary of the research results*, Sarajevo, BH Journalists Association, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Popov Momčinović, Zlatiborka (2018). *Attacks on female journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina*. BH Journalists Association, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Adilagić, Rea, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Turčilo, Lejla i Buljubašić, Belma (2018). *Alternative Facts and Post-truth in BiH: Who Really Creates the Media Agenda*, Sarajevo, p. 3.

trade unions and generally weak interest in trade unions in the media,<sup>9</sup> bad employment status of media employees, wrong conception of the role of journalists' associations and the lack of involvement in their work, are some of the factors that contribute to disadvantaged status of female journalists. Therefore, the objective of this study is to provide a deep insight into the ways in which the above mentioned phenomena impact the real status of female journalists, through the ways in which they are perceived and possibly overcome by female journalists themselves.

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<sup>9</sup> Adilagić, Rea, op. cit., p. 6.

## 2. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Unlike earlier studies that have been, relatively speaking, relied on objective indicators such as the number of attacks on female journalists and the degree of their exposure to certain forms of violation of rights and freedoms, the presence of women on the editorial and managerial positions, etc, this study primarily aims to examine the attitudes of female journalists on their own status, considering aforementioned statistics. In that manner, a deep insight, reflections and details on the actual status of female journalist have been obtained, and these results can not be obtained from purely statistical data analysis. It should be kept in mind that the statistical data are not completely accurate because the institutions do not collect data adequately and thoroughly, and the capacity of some institutions does not provide monitoring of all media outlets.<sup>10</sup> Thus, for example, Agency for Statistics data should include information both on male and female journalists, not only on the number of employees in the media; reports of public services should present a detailed gender structure of the employees and not just general information; and deficiencies in the data are particularly present in the print media and online media.<sup>11</sup> Considering that the *Law on Gender Equality*, institutions are obliged to keep and update the records by gender, which is usually not the case. Furthermore, there is (an insufficient number of) precise information about what is really happening in the newsrooms and whether female journalists work in proper *conditions*.<sup>12</sup> The most accurate information on the forms of endangering the rights and freedoms of female journalists can be obtained on the basis of the *Help Line* database, run by the BH Journalists Association, noting that they can not be comprehensive because they are conditioned by the willingness of female journalists to denounce cases when their rights are violated, especially when they take place out of the public eye.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to complete these shortcomings by examining attitudes of female journalists.

The subject of this study is the status of female journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is evident from the title of the study. It was created on the basis of a number of factors such as general situation in Bosnian society and the level of respect or violation of rights of women, the level of efficiency and activities of the relevant institutions that should promote and protect their rights, general situation in the media, or in the media outlet in which the female journalist is employed. If we make further analysis of each of these areas, a number of factors further increases. Therefore, when we talk about the general situation in Bosnian society, we can talk about the political situation which is complex because of the administrative and ethnic divisions and turbulent political scene on daily basis. These factors create bad climate in the public sphere in general and therefore have a great influence on the work of media employees. We would also like to mention poor economic situation which creates both unfavorable background for each activity and great pressure on the professions like journalism that are supposed to serve the public interest and to be one of the pillars of a

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<sup>10</sup> Adilagić, Rea, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>11</sup> Džihana, Amer, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>12</sup> Džihana, Amer, Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> A research of the Mediacentre confirms unreadiness of female journalists to denounce such cases: <http://www.media.ba/bs/magazin-novinarstvo/diskriminacija-novinarke-u-redakciji-i-na-terenu-neprijavljanje-iz-straha-od> (30. 1. 2019)

democratic and open society. A certain collusion between politics and economy and the lack of transparency of media ownership, the impact of politics on public services, especially on the local public media outlets financed from the budget, and commercial pressures in the race for survival in the media sphere, create a quite chaotic framework for the professional work of media employees. The aforementioned trend of feminisation of the media profession in such social context where human rights, particularly rights of marginalized groups including women, are viewed as a "luxury", creates more complex and unfavorable situation where negative factors reinforce each other and make the work of female journalists more difficult.

A large number of factors and their entwining are the research subject of this study because they often can not be distinguished from each other. Thus, for example, the status of female journalists is connected both with the situation in the media and with gender, but it is difficult to accurately measure them separately. As a matter of fact, "media outlets and their contents are not the cause, nor they cause effects that are directly visible in the behavior of the individual. They work ideologically - they promote and prefer certain connotations of the world, spread one meaning and not the other, and serve certain social interests better than others."<sup>14</sup>

For these reasons, this study has not begun by setting certain hypothesis but by setting several research questions to gain a deeper insight into the impact of these factors, ie. the way they are perceived by female journalist, and how they form their attitudes based on these impacts. The importance of these attitudes is that they are characterised by the commonality, centrality, social relevance, and that they differ from beliefs and opinions which are less permanent. These attitudes are also characterised by interests, personality traits, and the like. Considering the fact that attitudes have three aspects - cognitive (considering the mind), emotional (affective) and behavioral (conative) - we have formulated the research questions based on two key aspects that are important for the research problem, cognitive and behavioral. Accordingly, one group of research questions refers to the perception of female journalists on their status in society and similar cognitions, familiarity with relevant regulations, internal procedures and their assessments, activities of competent institutions and organisations. The other group of research questions refers to the manner in which female journalists fulfil their duties, including challenges they are faced with and their reactions to the violation of their rights, such as activism in associations and other forms of alliances, cooperation and solidarity. The so-called affective aspect has not been taken into consideration because of its complexity. However, several cases of this aspect have been recorded during conduction of the research by a few female journalists, especially those who faced violation of their rights.

A sample of the study was heterogeneous because the study itself is of an interdisciplinary aspect. The sample includes female journalists employed in different types of the media (electronic media, print media, online media), different ownership structures (public, private non-profit), those who work at different working positions in the media outlets, of different age and different working experience in the media.<sup>15</sup> The novelty of this study is that attitudes

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<sup>14</sup> <http://pescanik.net/javnost-i-ideoloski-efekti-medija> (26. 1. 2019).

<sup>15</sup> Filip Matić, a student of Political Science at the University in East Sarajevo, helped the data collection for this study and authors of the study are extremely grateful.

of male journalists were examined as well, and that was a special methodological challenge. In other words, due to a trend of feminisation of this profession, some male journalists find that they are not familiar enough with the status of female journalists and that they can not participate in the survey. On the other hand, this trend is reflected in the fact that many of the male journalists stopped working in this profession and started doing more profitable jobs such as public relations and similar. A few of the interviewed female journalists have pointed out to this fact.<sup>16</sup> It also implicitly indicates a disadvantaged situation of media outlets and female journalists employed there, considering the above mentioned trend of fluctuation within the profession.

Due to the complexity of the subject of this study, two methods of data collection have been used in the empirical part of the study:

1) quantitative method, which implies using technique of a questionnaire for the purpose of collecting statistical data and indicators of the status of female journalists' human rights and violation of these rights, in accordance with research questions; an online questionnaire has been created and the questions have been created on the basis of operationalization of research questions, and

2) qualitative method of an in-depth interview for the purpose of gaining a deeper insight into this phenomenon and the practice typical for it, as well as the manners in which they are interpreted by female journalists, for the purpose of gaining thorough and well explained information on quantity; a technique of semi-structured interviews has been used for the purpose of gaining information that are not obvious enough from the statistical data and have not been mentioned in public discourse; this aspect is of a special importance because of the various forms of violation of the rights of female journalists and the ways they interpret and experience them, happen out of the public eye.

Speaking of the structure of the study, it was designed, ie. divided in parts on the basis of the research questions, and the results of the above mentioned techniques are used equally for the systematic presentation of each.

Online questionnaire, created as *Google* document, has been sent to 100 email addresses of female employees and associates in the media outlets in Bosnia and Herzegovina, mostly journalists and editors employed in informative newsrooms. The questionnaire was completed by 51 of female respondents (51%), which is a good response rate,<sup>17</sup> especially considering the fact that the response to the online surveys is generally weaker than interviewing in person or other forms of data collection. In this study, online questionnaires have been used for two reasons. First, collecting information from respondents from different parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina has been provided in the short period of time and with limited financial and

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<sup>16</sup> As a prominent and interviewed female journalist noted: "In the period when journalism used to be relatively well paid profession in this region, all important positions in management were held by men... It is true that there were female journalists in the music newsrooms in public broadcast services, but today men do not even think about working as journalists. They left to work as PRs, whereas women stayed to work as journalists."

<sup>17</sup> Not all respondents answered all questions, which is a common thing with questionnaires. Therefore, the total number of responses may vary depending on the issue.

human resources. Second, this type of interviewing has ensured the anonymity of respondents, which should contribute to more honest answers to sensitive questions such as exposure to various forms of external and internal pressures and other questions included in this study. This response was achieved by guaranteed anonymity, personalizing the invitations to participate in the study, reminding to reply, and the availability of the questionnaires for a period of 20 days. The information has been collected over a period from 3. 1. 2019, when the first questionnaire was completed, to 23. 1. 2019, when the results were completed.

Table 1: Structure of the sample

Type of the media outlet they work for(%)	Type of the ownership in the media outlet (%)	Position in the media outlet (%)	Professional experience in the media (%)
Electronic media 55,1	Public 47,9	Reporter 46,9	From 5 to 15 years 36,7
Online media 28,6	Private local 27,1	Editor 30,6	From 15 to 25 years 32,7
Print media 16,3	Non-profit 16,7	Other 24,5	Up to 5 years 22,4
News agencies 6,1	Private foreign 12,5	Presenter 10,2	From 25 to 35 years 8,2
Other 12,2	Other 0	Manager 2	Longer than 35 years 0

A special online questionnaire for the female students of Journalism/Communicology (final year students of the 1st cycle of studies and students of the 2nd cycle of studies) was created as well. A link to Google's questionnaire was sent to 70 email addresses of students from public universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and 35 of them responded (50%).

The questionnaire has also been sent to email addresses of 70 male journalists, editors and managers in the media outlets in Bosnia and Herzegovina, however only 16 responded (22,8%). Due to the low response rate, which is not acceptable for generalizing conclusions, we are not going to show these results as representative indicators of attitudes of male colleagues on the status of female journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In-depth interviews were conducted with 28 female journalists, ie. editors and representatives of trade unions that gather employees of media outlets. These interviews were conducted in the period from 3. 12. 2018. to 15. 1. 2019, and each of them lasted from 50 to 90 minutes, depending on professional experience of a journalist, exposure to various forms of violation of rights and freedoms, familiarity with protection mechanisms, etc. The terms and locations of the interviews were depended on them so they could feel as comfortable as possible and be more prepared for the open conversation. Most interviews were conducted in cafés and restaurants, several of them in the offices of the editors, and some of them were conducted by phone because of the geographical distance. Despite the fact that almost none of the respondents asked for identity protection, it was estimated that it is more appropriate not to

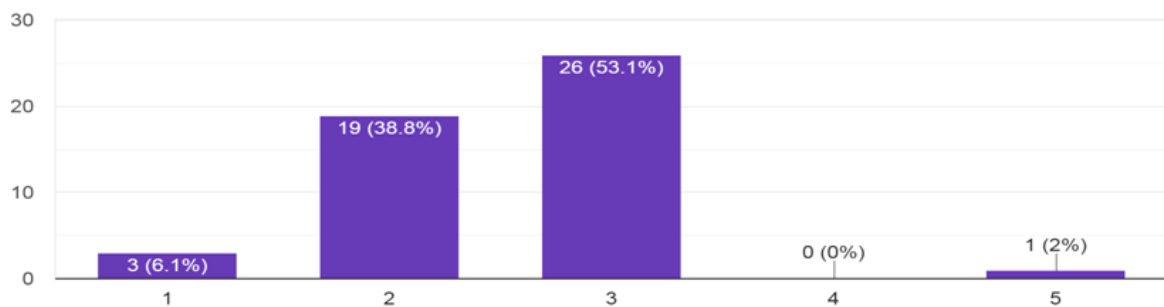


reveal their identity. The main reason for that is achieving greater openness and sincerity in the interviews. Additionally, in this way any inconvenience of the interlocutors is avoided, whether it was regarding those who have been exposed to long-term threats by powerful people who have not been prosecuted, or regarding different forms of violation of their rights in the media outlets. The identities of the interlocutors are known to the researchers and BH Journalists Association.

### 3. THE STATUS OF FEMALE JOURNALISTS IN THE BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA SOCIETY

The results of quantitative and qualitative part of the research indicate that the status of female journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina is perceived negatively. According to the questionnaires, there was only one affirmative answer (Chart 1).<sup>18</sup>

Chart 1: Attitudes of employees and associates in media outlets on the status of female journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina



Based on the in-depth interviews, we have obtained additional nuances that additionally explain this disadvantage. In most cases this is associated with the general degradation of the journalistic profession: "... low salaries, a lot of work, disregard, lack of specific working hours, lack of weekends off, failure to meet legal obligations by the owner or the editor." These negative trends in journalism, combined with gender issues, further aggravate the status of female journalists. One of the interlocutors said:

Well, it is very difficult to be a journalist in this country, but I am quite sure that being a female journalist is at least twice as difficult.

According to one interlocutor who has been exposed to various pressures, threats and even physical assaults for many years, an image of a passive, weak woman prevails in society, and as almost all interlocutors emphasized, a woman is easier to be humiliated and insulted in the public space:

I believe that women are much more exposed to insults because nobody expects these women to fight, to react and oppose.

Due to the poor situation in journalism generally, some respondents have indicated that it is not easy to talk about the status of female journalists separately, although they pointed out to some specific problems, including personal challenges and challenges that women in general face in journalism. Most interlocutors pointed to the fact that the status of women in journalism is worse than the status of men, in the framework of existing propatriarchal values and the traditional division of labor in the private and public spheres, which further

<sup>18</sup> Points in the chart: 1 very poor; 2 poor; 3 neither good nor poor; 4 good; 5 very good.

complicates the work of women in journalism. According to one interlocutor with many years of working experience:

This position is all the more difficult because it is a job that requires 24 hours of your time, which means that if you do not have a partner who has a lot of understanding for what you're doing, you're not capable of doing both - to be a good mother, a good wife, good housewife and to be a journalist.

Some of the interviewees pointed out to the weaker position of women in society and in the sphere of work in general, and that the female journalists share the same "destiny" with women in other professions as well. They also pointed out to social phenomena and the matrix where work and professionalism are not respected. One of the interviewed journalists who has worked at the position of editor in chief for many years indicated:

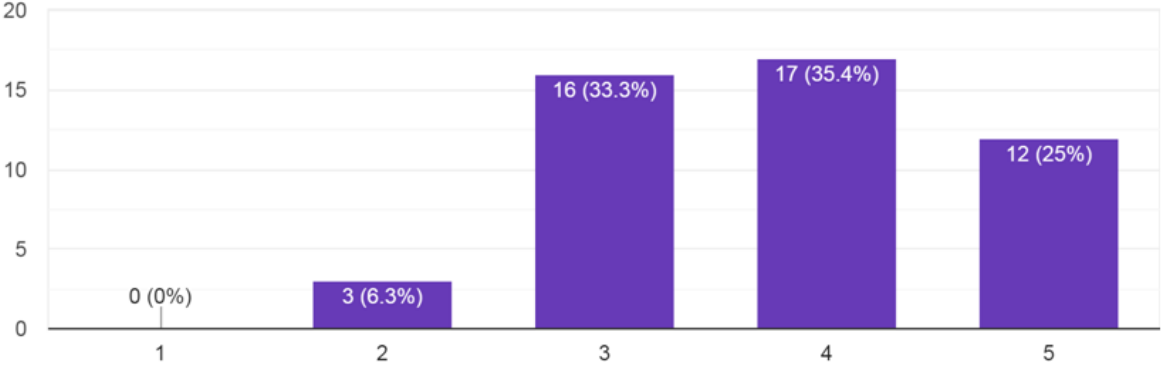
I know that, even among my colleagues, they often say: "You know, Jane Doe works a lot." I often have an impression that this is not a compliment, that's what i am trying to say. This certainly has to do with gender because, for God's sake, a man who works as the editor in chief is not expected to do a lot of work ... and when they really work hard, then it is like some kind of excuse because they are still at one of the senior positions in journalism. And to a man, each position is as given by God.

In cases where there is sensitivity to women in journalism, it is more a matter of good will, eg, good will of the editor rather than of cultural code, or obeying the law, which is also stated as a problem:

The issue of status should be resolved in a different way, and should not be a question of good will. I have a good boss who will give me an additional day off or he will not ask me to take sick leave because my child got the temperature on that day and he will be better tomorrow so I will not get 20% of salary cut.

This is partly confirmed by comparing survey results of questionnaires and interviews, where women generally rated their status, in the media outlets where they are employed, more positively than the status of female journalists in general (Chart 2).

Chart 2: Attitudes of female employees and associates on status of female journalists in the media outlets where they are employed



However, this particularity, conditionally speaking, should not be taken as an indisputable fact, especially if we consider the status of women journalists in small towns and media outlets where the situation is unmanaged . It should be noted that, although the survey was anonymous, female journalists specified the media outlets they worked for in the questionnaires. For that reason, the challenging question is whether in their responses, concerning the situation in the media outlets they work for, regarding the status of female journalists, this situation appears better than it is in order to protect their anonymity. It is necessary to be cautious considering the fact that not all respondents specified the media outlet they work for. During the conduction of in-depth interviews, female journalists were more likely to speak generally about the status of female journalists or to point out not personal but examples they have heard about or they have read about, despite the challenges they face, emphasizing work overload and unresolved employment status in some cases.

I've never had any problems, but I've read a text about the pressures women face in the newsrooms.

I know a woman who has worked part-time for 12 years...

I need more rest, I have to be a presenter, a journalist and everything. But when I hear about the examples in other media outlets, I'm satisfied.

There was also a lot of generalization or euphemistic answers:

I used to work in a media outlet where everyone was exposed to mobbing.

There were some problems but not serious ones, it happens in each company.

Just before getting our salaries, director becomes nervous, but we got used to that, we know when that period comes and we suffer, and then it just passes.

Female journalists from urban areas especially emphasized the fact that there is a lack of awareness about the status of female journalists in small and closed areas. Due to the great political influence in small towns, especially in the public media broadcasters, it is impossible to clearly distinguish the situation in the newsrooms because of the pressures employees are exposed to by local communities. For these reasons, the interlocutors' responses from these areas should be observed in that context as well:

It often happens when we're making a story about someone, that person calls, asking how, why, how to stop it, which political party we support, who do we work for. These things happen especially in small communities, where politicians behave as little gods, as if no one can do anything to them.

We had situations when reports had been sent to the leaders of the political parties to check them. When I asked the editor why that happened, she said: "Director said so."

Regarding public broadcasters in small towns, it is interesting that there is no sensibility to colleagues, especially to female colleagues:

I know when I confront my colleagues when they say: "She will never make a good report." But sorry, go to that place and do what you think you should, you think it's easy to live there ?!. Everyone who raised their voice was beaten, was marginalised, got everything that people in this country are capable of doing.

Female journalists who are satisfied with their working status because they work in the media outlets where they are paid regularly and where the rights of women are respected, have pointed out that such working conditions and atmosphere is more the exception than the rule. This can be illustrated by the following response:

I have the luxury of working in such media outlet where conditions are slightly better managed and the rights are mostly respected, especially the women rights. If an employee is a mother or if she is pregnant, people here really care about this. We also have higher wages, better social and economic status here, so for that matter, I can say that I don't have problems with these in this company. But I used to work for other media outlets, so I can say what the status is.

One of the factors that is associated with the status of female journalists is age. Specifically, when they start working, many female journalists face sexism at the workplace. However, due to lack of experience and lack of acknowledgement of their rights, they are not capable of opposing. It is evident from the interviews that women are usually familiar with their rights only when they are exposed to their radical violation.<sup>19</sup> For this reason, it is necessary to educate journalists about their rights and about preventing violation of their rights promptly.

It is also necessary to point out that three particular problems are emphasized within feminist studies on the media. One of them is the absence of women in the most serious informative contents, which was addressed by some of the interviewed media employees, especially in the context of preventing them to cover such topics:

In journalistic profession you can be retaliated in different ways. You might not be allowed to do things that you are capable of doing or to be given to do a completely silly, simple things in order to devalue your knowledge, they do not use your abilities and so on.

I've read a text somewhere that we are lacking female columnists. This is really true, all of the columnists are men. It is very rare that I see a woman. And I know so many talented female journalists, colleagues, writers and women from some other professions that could write excellent columns.<sup>20</sup>

This, of course, does not mean that women in journalism do not cover "serious topics", but they face particular challenges, eg.:

Women can be easily found at positions that cover serious topics such as social affairs, children's rights, issues that are much more difficult to cover and that receive less significance in the media than important political topics and sectors such as Prosecutor's Office, Council of Ministers, parliaments etc. These topics are often, and in greater number of media outlets, covered by men, they are of a greater significance, get much more attention in the media than the other issues that require more work, and are often covered by women.

The second problem is the manner of presenting women in the media, because numerous studies suggest the presence of stereotyping and sexualisation. Additionally, in the context of this study, violation of the rights of female journalists and their status is underreported, except for example at web-portals specialized in topics related to human rights, belonging to the so-called non-profit media. The mainstream media outlets report mostly *ad hoc*, current news,

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<sup>19</sup> This issue was particularly pointed out as a problem by several female journalists at the conference of the BH Journalists held on 20. 12. 2018, when the report, "Indicators on the level of media freedom and journalists' safety - Bosnia and Herzegovina", was presented.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.media.ba/bs/magazin-novinarstvo/gdje-su-kolumnistice> (30. 1. 2019).

and in the cases of radical violations of the rights of female journalists. In this regard, the question of so-called "newsvalue" arises, ie. the criteria by which an event is worthy to be the subject of media interest.<sup>21</sup>

The third problem is concerned with employment opportunities and career development, in other words, the fact that men control the means of the media production.<sup>22</sup> When women start working in journalism, they are often asked the question "who brought you here", which, at the very beginning, denies or at least minimizes the fact that they are educated for this profession. Furthermore, when they show greater level of commitment to work than it is expected, they meet a variety of comments, particularly from fellow journalists. When they go to the field, especially to small towns, some people refuse to talk to female journalists because they are women. The women who work in these areas also point out the limitations they encounter due to the conservativeness of these areas and the fact that in these areas people know each other well and avoid to speak about certain topics.<sup>23</sup> Going on maternity leave and similar is perceived as a period of stagnation in the career due to abuse of women's rights. For these reasons, and what has been implied in some interviews, women show less ambition to become editors for example, which is associated with the "pollution" in the public sphere, where powerful individuals and groups in society expect men editors to "do" a job easier. According to one interlocutor:

Women are not fighting for an advanced, better position at work, and when there is someone who care, they say: 'what does this idiot want, what is she fighting for', because it is not appreciated, it is not appreciated through salary nor through the process of career advancement.

This lack of ambition, which has been noticed with several interlocutors, can not be interpreted as acceptance of the passive position. This is about a view that there is no possibility of balancing professional and family responsibilities and that a position of an editor, especially in the media, is actually political position, hence women do not even want to make an effort. One of the interviewees indicated that one of the reasons why men develop their careers easier is because they spend more time with high-ranked individuals apart from work, and when women do so, it has a different connotation. For example, in a research of Mediacentre, one respondent stated: "I have been getting offers for intimate gatherings and my appearance has been commented."<sup>24</sup> A particular problem is the pressure of directors on editorial policy in both private and public media outlets, which further discourages or prevents women to make progress in their professional and status field.

Studies in the world, including countries with the so-called consolidated democracy, suggest that female journalists continually face various forms of discrimination, often hidden under the umbrella of the so-called benevolent sexism or "velvet glove" sexism.<sup>25</sup> Allusions to physical

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<sup>21</sup> Turčilo, Lejla i Buljubašić, Belma, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>22</sup> Thornham, Sue (2007). *Women, Feminism and the Media*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, p. 7.

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.media.ba/bs/magazin-novinarstvo/rad-novinarki-u-manjim-sredinama-profesionalnoscu-protiv-patrijarhalnih> (30. 1. 2019).

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.media.ba/bs/magazin-novinarstvo/diskriminacija-novinarki-u-redakciji-i-na-terenu-neprijavljanje-iz-straha-od> (30. 1. 2019).

<sup>25</sup> It is a combination of a so-called protective paternalism and negative attitudes and emotions towards women, often accepted by women because it supposedly "supports" women's values in a positive manner. Nirman

appearance, marital and family status are more than just present concerning female journalists, and the media and non-media actors use strategy of interference in the private life of journalists for the purpose of their degradation. In case when someone opposes the behaviour of their fellow colleagues in the newsroom, they just laugh it off as a joke (aforementioned phenomenon of so-called benevolent sexism):

... because you have a child, because you do not have a child, what were you waiting for until now to have a baby, when are you going to have a baby, why did you take this story, you'd better have a child. That's what I have experienced, and then when I raise my voice a little, then: " what, I' m kidding, c'mon, why are you buying into this". I think one can not make jokes in this way, you don't know someone's private problems, so maybe someone is not able to have children, that's insulting; and then to say for the colleague like "she got divorced, who would ever want her, she'd better do something", stupid comments like these. But these are chauvinistic, male comments.

Different studies show that in these and similar circumstances women use the following tactics: taking over masculine style of behavior; accepting alternative style of connecting with colleagues that are excluded from the dominant pattern based on eg. race, sexual orientation; withdrawal, ie. a commitment to work as freelancers, which exposes them to additional, particularly financial pressures.<sup>26</sup> In this region, such alternatives are further narrowed due to ethnically divided public sphere and public sphere divided on the basis of political parties, where other orientations and affiliations are irrelevant. In such circumstances, women chose to ignore, especially in small communities and small media outlets. For example, in regards to sexual harassment cases, women say that they do not denounce them, because it is a waste of time, and if they react, they suggest that other colleagues do not do that. Interlocutors, however, sometimes emphasize that it is not a question of gender, but the way you present yourself from the beginning. This is actually how the responsibility shifts to women themselves as individuals, while ignoring their position as a specific group. However, as pointed out in feminist studies on the media, the problem is actually that subjective and social experience is gendered, and the space where you articulate your thoughts is not your own.<sup>27</sup>

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Moranjak-Bamburać (2007). "Unbearable Lightness of Stereotypes." In: Moranjak-Bamburać, Nirman, Jusic, Tarik and Isanović, Adla (ed.), *Stereotyping: Representation of Women in Print Media in South East Europe*. Sarajevo: Mediacycenter, p. 32-33.

<sup>26</sup> Byerly, Carolyn i Ross, Karen (2006). *Women and Media. A Critical Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, p. 78–79.

<sup>27</sup> Thornham, Sue (2007). *Women, Feminism and Media*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, p. 55.

#### 4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR PROTECTION OF FEMALE JOURNALISTS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Various studies suggest that legislation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is good, however, there are great problems regarding their implementation. Considering gender equality, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a textbook case of separation of legal (*de jure*) and real (*de facto*), noting that in the first segment idealization is not justified, nor leveling is in the second.<sup>28</sup>

In the *de jure* context, in the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Article 2, which deals specifically with the protection of human rights and freedoms, discrimination in the enjoyment of these rights on any grounds including gender, is expressly prohibited. Gender Equality Law (GEL), which was adopted in 2003 and amended in 2009 is of a particular importance. According to the Article 2 of this law: "Full gender equality is guaranteed in all spheres of society, including but not limiting to the field of education, economy, employment and labor, social and health care, sport, culture, public life and the media, regardless of marital and family status".<sup>29</sup> The law defines the obligations of all institutions, public and private companies and other entities that collected, recorded and processed statistical data should be presented by gender. Article 21 specifies the role of the media in a manner that it defines that everyone has the right of access to the media regardless of gender, it prohibits the public airing and presentation of any person in an offensive, degrading and humiliating manner with regards to gender, and the media outlets are required to promote gender equality through their contents. Previous parts of the study pointed to some aspects of the violation of these laws that occur with the help of the media.

Other legal frameworks concerning the media, where the need for improvement is noted, should be emphasized as well<sup>30</sup>: the introduction of changes in the Law on Freedom of Access to Information in order to enable quick access to information, legislation on the transparency of media ownership. In relation to this, forming the media registry of the media with information on the type and ownership structure for each of the media outlets, especially if we have in mind anarchy in the online media.<sup>31</sup> Internet is increasingly becoming a place for various forms of manipulation (ie. fakenews), pressures, verbal assaults and harassment, including those based on gender. An already mentioned report of the Ombudsman says, among other things, that the female journalists are more often exposed to online online assaults in order to prevent the publication of certain information or story, with the purpose of sexual or other forms of gender based harassment, or even *cyber bullying*.<sup>32</sup> The threats that female journalists get on Facebook, and even death threats, even when reported to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and further redirected for consideration to the Prosecutor's Office, often become closed cases. More then often, they are dismissed as acts of crime because there

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<sup>28</sup> Ždralović, Amila, Popov-Momčinović, Zlatiborka i Hrnjić Kuduzović, Zarfa (2018). *Women in BiH Institutions Puppets of Gender*. Sarajevo: CURE Foundation, p. 9.

<sup>29</sup> Gender Equality Law in Bosnia and Herzegovina – consolidated text, *Official Gazette of BiH*, No. 32/10.

<sup>30</sup> Adilagić, Rea, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>31</sup> Turčilo, Lejla, op. cit., p. 58–59.

<sup>32</sup> The Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2017). Special report on status of journalists and cases of threats to journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Banja Luka, p. 59.



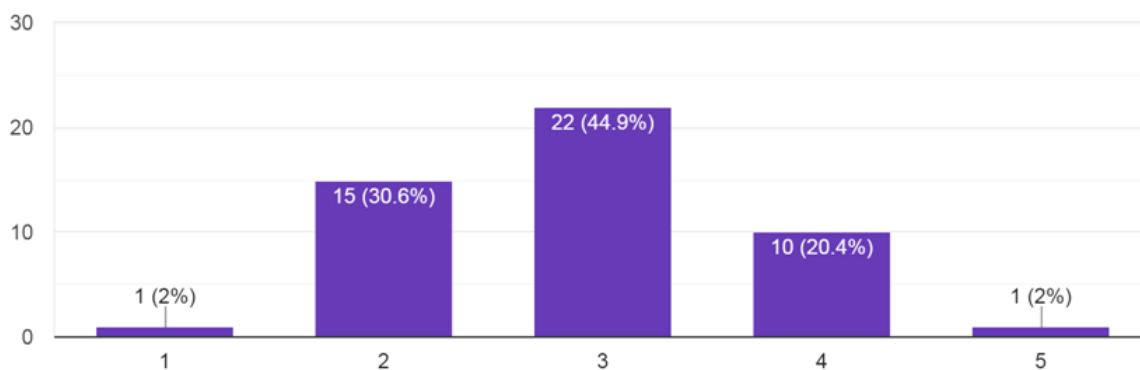
are no laws regarding that.<sup>33</sup> Although these cases can be subsumed under the term defamation, gender-based violence or threats, which are treated in our criminal laws,<sup>34</sup> it is obvious that this area needs to be regulated in a more normative manner.

These requirements have been confirmed in this research as well, due to the fact that the interviewed journalists pointed to the problems they encounter when, eg., the access of information is concerned and other forms of disruption of their work by different actors, both the non-media actors and those who work with them in the same media outlet. Also, the initiative of BH Journalists Association and other actors, in particular the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) that the attack on journalists should be treated as an attack on the person performing official duty, was considered as extremely important. The problem of ownership structure is reflected in a fact that female journalists are often under pressure of certain editorial policy, in other words if they are editors or if the editorial policy is relatively satisfactory by the managerial structure. This is a general problem that creates unfavorable framework for the work in the media. According to one interviewed journalist:

The problem is that the owners of the media in BiH are mostly people who run additional business apart from the media, and this media outlet is used to protect their private business. If we talk about the public media outlets, they are owned by a handful of the most powerful men in the political party who hold power at the level of the government that owns the media outlet. And that's the end of story.

Regarding general legal framework in the segment of protection of the rights and freedoms of female journalists, quite ambivalent responses were obtained in this survey (Chart 3)

Chart 3: Attitudes of female journalists and associates employed in the media on laws of rights and freedoms of female journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina



The need for better implementation and improvement of existing laws and adoption of new laws has been recognized as well. Distribution of the answers to the abovementioned issues indicates that female journalists recognize the implementation of existing laws as important,

<sup>33</sup> Popov Momčinović, Zlatiborka, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>34</sup> One World Platform, Association for Progressive Communications, *Stop violence. Women's rights and safety on the Internet*, 2015, p. 25.

their improvement was recognized as less important, and respondents were the least affirmative regarding adoption of new laws (Table 2).

Table 2: Attitudes of female journalists on the legal framework in the area of their rights and freedoms

	Would not contribute	Would poorly contribute	Would partly contribute	Would contribute	Would strongly contribute
Implementation of existing laws	0%	2%	6,3%	33,3%	56,3%
Improvement of laws	2%	2%	16,3%	28,6%	51%
Adopting new laws	4,1%	6,1%	16,3%	32,7%	40,8%

During interviews conduction, journalists mostly referred to the Labor Law regarding the protection of their rights, which indicates that there is a lack of awareness considering legislation that directly concerns gender equality, which was confirmed in the questionnaires: 22.4% of respondents stated that they do not know whether there are laws in BiH that contribute to protection of the rights and freedoms of journalists and 24.5% stated that such laws do not exist. According to one of the interviewed journalists:

There is no legislation, with the exception of Labor Law, there are no rights that are separated from it.

During the interviews, respondents mostly pointed to violation of the so-called labor rights, although the Gender Equality Law, Article 13 precisely defines and prohibits gender based discrimination at work. In-depth interviews analysis shows that a violation of provisions of this Act occurs really often, especially concerning failure to ensure promotion at work in equal terms, failure to provide equal conditions for training and development, different treatment because of a childbirth or pregnancy or using rights to maternity leave, the organization of work, division of tasks, and determining the working conditions in a manner that less favorable positions are allocated on the basis of gender or marital status, and the like.

We can claim with a high degree of certainty that, due to a frequent violation of labor rights and economic insecurity in general, which is present not only in journalism but also in other spheres, the interviewed journalists emphasized this segment mostly. In such circumstances, respecting labor rights is the exception rather than the rule. According to one editor:

We are very proud of some extremely bizarre things that normal people consider bizarre. I often point out that we are the media outlet that gives employees complete employment contracts, payrolls and respects all these obligations, vacations, contributions, taxes, health fund, pension fund are paid...

Female journalists, as has been pointed out in regards with their status, emphasized examples of sexual harassment, although an attitude that the cultural matrices are present in society regarding relations between genders was more present. They did not refer to a specific law that regulates this segment. With a certain amount of caution, it can be affirmed that the

female journalists are partly conscious that patriarchal patterns, deeply rooted in society, could hardly be suppressed by normative acts:

The legislative framework should be improved in every possible way, but I'm afraid that some of the things that occur in our society do not have anything to do with the laws but with mentality, with the understanding of rights, with respecting women.

This lack of awareness is related to the fact that certain strategies in Bosnia and Herzegovina are made and different mechanisms are defined, however they do not lead to real social changes. For instance, although Bosnia and Herzegovina has signed and ratified the Istanbul Convention, on the basis of which the strategy for its implementation has been made and which includes the media due to the fact that it has been based on the principles of interdisciplinary and coordinated approach to the prevention and combating violence against women,<sup>35</sup> there is no reliable information on its implementation nor is the public sufficiently informed and involved in it. The same problem is, at different levels, present in terms of Gender Action Plans which also, as a rule, includes the media as a transversal area, or an area that extends throughout other areas and becomes their integral part.<sup>36</sup> In such a vicious circle, where the legislation is partially satisfactory, but implemented selectively, and the real conditions in which journalists live and work carrying out an increasing number of journalistic tasks in the increasingly uncertain economic conditions, their attitudes can not be fully coherent. One of the interviewed journalists pointed out that this is a kind of paradox:

The media is expected to educate the public about their rights, but often journalists themselves are not familiar with their rights enough or human rights in general...

One of the issues is concerned with the internal regulations in the media outlets, regarding the fact that in some sectors (eg., the judiciary, education) the need to regulate this issue by establishing internal procedures and improving awareness regarding sexual and gender-based harassment has been recognized.<sup>37</sup> In regards to the media, 30.6% of respondents stated that there are internal regulations that provide protection of female journalist, 42.9% of respondents stated that there are no such regulations, while 28.6% stated that they did not know. However, during the in-depth interviews, female journalists actually referred to the sets of rules concerning the rights of all employees and to journalistic codes (eg., The Code of the Press and Online Media) and not the internal procedures relating to their status as women in the media.

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<sup>35</sup> Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees (2016). *Framework Strategy for the Implementation of the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period of 2015–2018*, p. 7.

<sup>36</sup> Džihana, Amer, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>37</sup> Eg., High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2015). *Guidelines on Prevention of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Judicial Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, available at: [https://www.pravosudje.ba/vstv/faces/docservlet?p\\_id\\_doc=31014](https://www.pravosudje.ba/vstv/faces/docservlet?p_id_doc=31014) (17. 12. 2018).

## 5. THE ROLE OF INSTITUTIONS IN THE PROTECTION OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS OF FEMALE JOURNALIST

### 5.1. Police

Female employees and associates in the media believe that the police are not doing enough to protect the rights and freedoms of female journalists. The average grade with which the respondents rated the work of the police at a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good)<sup>38</sup> is 2.3. Most respondents (61.2%) rated the work of the police in this segment as poor or very poor, while only 12.2% rated it as good or very good. It is indicative that out of 12 women who have addressed someone for violation of their rights and freedoms, only one of them stated police as an institution which she requested help from. Interviews with female journalists show that neither those who have experienced physical assaults or threats were satisfied with the response of the police.

When I received threatening letters I took them to the police, but the police did not solve the case. They sent they informed the Prosecutor's Office that the letters were from the unidentified person. I remember, when I came to the police station, they said: "We are going to solve this. Why are we going to do so? Because the person can be identified even if they disposed of their cell phone. We can find him through the phone card." They found everything, however, they did nothing about that.

Journalist: What happened was that they were threatening to blow up the TV studio... But I knew that nothing will happen.

Interviewer: How could you be sure?

Journalist: Well, these things often happen, people make threats.

Interviewer: Have you reported that to anyone?

Journalist: No. To whom? When the ex-soldiers attacked me at the demonstrations, police were nearby. Nobody reacted, I had to defend myself ...

This response is illustrative because it indicates that the threats to female journalists are perceived as an integral part of journalistic work. The distrust in the efficiency of the police is one of the main reasons why many forms of violation of the rights and freedoms of female journalists are not denounced.

...they don't have any specific solutions (police – A/N), but they stand behind journalists.

From this example from Banjaluca, the attack on the BN journalist, I could say that they are doing their best they can but they are not so effective. If you report it to the police, they will do the best they can.

Some cases are particularly discouraging - instances when police officers do not react against verbal insults but also contribute to abuse.

Among the people who attacked me in the shopping centre was the employee of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.. When they (in the police station and the Prosecutor's Office - A/N) could say: " You did not see, it did not happen", then I realized how far they can go, because they know in advance that they are amnestied, nothing bad is going to happen to them ... And what I've survived, and how terrible was to

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<sup>38</sup> Grades on the scale: 1 very poor; 2 poor; 3 neither poor nor good; 4 good; 5 very good.

my children ... For two years, neither the police nor the Prosecutor's Office have reacted even to the death threats I've received ... I told them: "See the video". One of them (police officer-A/N) said: "No, there's no need." And the other one, there's always someone in there, said: "No point, nothing can be seen or heard in the video. You're speaking, and they came immediately, the first thing we do, when it comes to us, is to delete the video immediately". Two years later, the police officer who called me "bitch" said that the security camera hadn't been in function that day. The first thing I saw when I looked up was the camera. When I was at the police station, they threatened me, jumping one by one like this, "let me see, who came here to complain about me"... When I went upstairs to one of the police officers who was supposed to see me, I heard the police officer...(name and surname - A/N) saying: "Where is she, motherfuck..., give me her picture, where does she work, give me something." I came back and said my name and "What can I do for you?" He told me: "Get your ass up, I'm not talking to you." I told him: "This is being recorded," and he said: "Keep recording, you bitch". And then I went upstairs but he didn't want to take my complaint, nor the complaint about his colleague who called me "bitch".

Regardless of how rare such cases were, and the intention of this study is not to present them as representative examples of the behavior of police officers towards female journalists, they should not be passed over in silence nor tolerated because in democratic societies such anomalies are unacceptable even in the slightest degree. Insults and threats to female journalists by employees in the institutions that are supposed to protect them is a radical form of abuse of the position in public office.

## **5.2. Prosecution and courts**

According to the view of the employees and associates in the media, prosecution at various levels do their job poorly, concerning protection of the rights and freedoms of female journalists. The average grade of doing their job is 1.9. More than 3/4 of respondents rated the work of this institution as poor or extremely poor, and only 2.1% of respondents rated it as good. The average grade of the courts at various levels is also poor (2). The fact that the very small number of female journalists who have experienced any form of compromising their rights decided to turn to the Prosecutor's Office or the court is symptomatic. Specifically, out of 31.3% of respondents who stated that they were exposed to certain forms of violation of their rights, only 13.3% turned for help to the Prosecutor's Office or the court. The main reason for this is lack of trust in the Bosnian judicial system, as well as long-lasting court proceedings.

The case on the newsroom intrusion in Sarajevo dragged on for ten years at the court in Sarajevo. (name of the media – A/N). Ten years after the attacks, the judge sent us a letter at ten to nine in the morning, happy because it had reached the legal deadline for this process to be continued. I mean, ten years! They weren't strong enough to sentence... (name and surname – A/N) a person who got into the newsroom with guns, harassing people, and then like, probably in agreement with some of them, left plastic guns, so they made jokes out of it. But even if they had used plastic guns, it lasted almost three hours, what gives him the right to do that with his bullies? So, that was a concrete and undisputable act of violence and they were dragging the process for ten years. Until it reached the limitation period. The situation here is that the government simply doesn't want to punish criminals whatever they do. The police, prosecution and courts are inefficient when it comes to solving cases of attacks on journalists and are often influenced by various political or economic power centers.

Female journalists who have denounced threats and attacks to the police and to the Prosecutor's Office are frustrated with overly slow court proceedings or the adverse outcomes of the trials.<sup>39</sup> Some female journalists, apart from several years of waiting for the processing of their cases, suffered the insults of the employees in this institution due to queries about the process. In addition, as the interlocutors explained, Prosecutor's Office and courts do not have enough sensibility for female journalists who face a variety of pressures in their work, including defamation lawsuits.

### **5.3. Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Even 3/4 of respondents considered that the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina does not contribute to the protection of journalists' rights. Specifically, 75.5% of respondents rated the work of this Ministry in this segment as poor or extremely poor. The average rate was 1.9 (poor). Female journalists believe that this institution is not interested in their rights, that it does not want to be included in the improvement of their status, nor it announces the cases of attacks.

Imagine how significant would be the public appearance of the Minister of Human Rights and Refugees, Samiha Borovac if she said that her duty, as a woman, is to stand up for women and that it is unacceptable to attack female journalists... Victims' associations are in some manner already covered, migrants etc. But, one should be sensible and recognize that some people have absolutely no protection. You are completely unprotected when you decide to do this job.

### **5.4. Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina that operates within the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Gender Centres of the Entities are, as it says on the official website of the institution, initiators of activities and key actors in the implementation and monitoring of the process of achieving gender equality in BiH. "These three institutional mechanisms for gender equality are crucial for the initiation and implementation of activities in the field of gender equality. They have a prominent place regarding the activities, projects and measures that have been undertaken and are strengthening and maintaining institutional mechanisms for gender equality, as well as initiating the establishment of such mechanisms at the local level"<sup>40</sup> However, the journalists' view is that in practice, the results of these operations are not noticeable. In the segment of protecting the rights of female journalists, the respondents rated the work of this agency as "neither poor nor good" (2.9). It is evident from the interviews that female journalists believe that the Agency does not implement specific activities to improve the position of women in

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<sup>39</sup> In 2018, Help Line founded by BH Journalists Association, has been reported a total of 56 cases of violations of media freedom and journalists' rights. Of these, in 18 cases (32.1%) full names of the journalist as individuals or members of a team of journalists who denounced the case have been specified. In another six cases (10.7%), complaints are related to the newsroom or team of journalists as a whole, therefore it is possible that women are also included in these cases. In addition, in two cases related to the team or the media outlet, the gender is not specified. Very few journalists decide to initiate legal proceedings for violation of their rights and freedoms.

<sup>40</sup> <https://arsbih.gov.ba/oblasti/institucionalni-mehanizmi-za-ravnopravnost-spolova/> (28. 1. 2019).

general, including journalists. There are no developed mechanisms that prevent attacks and protect rights and freedoms. Only 12.2% of respondents rated the work of the Agency as good, while 59.2% rated the work as poor or extremely poor. While some female journalists are not familiar with the jurisdiction and the role of the Agency, nor with the mechanisms that have been established in order to achieve gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina, most female journalists believe that the role of the Agency and gender centers is declarative, and that neither women whose rights are jeopardised, nor female journalists, have institutional support. In accordance with the Law on Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Resolution 1751 (2010) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe "Combating sexist stereotypes in the media", 2017, the Agency for Gender Equality has issued a Recommendation regarding gender stereotypes and sexist attitudes and speech in the media in Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>41</sup>

### **5.5. Gender Centres of the Entities**

Due to the fact that the gender centers are key institutions at the entity level that are supposed to advocate, promote and protect gender equality, it is expected that they react to each case of compromising the rights and freedoms of female journalists, as well as to be an ally in improving the status of women journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, these institutions do not enjoy the trust of many female journalists. The average grade of their work was 2.9, which means "neither poor nor good". Although this grade is slightly better compared to the grade for the police, prosecution and courts, it is far from desirable. Only 10.2% of the respondents believe that the Gender Centres of the Entities do their job well regarding protection of rights and freedoms of female journalists. In contrast, even 57.2% of respondents consider their work as poor or extremely poor. This kind of perception of gender centers among female journalists is not surprising due to their failure to react to cases of assaults against female journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as illustrated by the following answers:

In the entire existence of the Agency for Gender Equality and Gender Centers in the Entities, I've never heard of any case where they held a press conference and presented some statistical data or research on what they have done to protect women's rights in general. So, these things should really be done from the beginning.

I give grade 1 to the work of Gender Centres. They never announce the issue of attacks on female journalists.

Gender centers have absolutely no role. A failed investment.

### **5.6. The Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Although the results of the quantitative part of the study show that female journalists are not satisfied with the involvement of the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the field of protection of journalists' rights, the results of the qualitative part of the study show that the female journalists would rather address to this institution before any other. The respondents rated the work of this institution on preventing violation of rights and

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<sup>41</sup> The recommendation is available at <https://arsbih.gov.ba/preporuka-medijima/> (2. 2. 2019).

freedoms of female journalists as 2.4, which is slightly higher grade in relation to the grade for Prosecutors' Office, police and the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, but is less than satisfactory. In interviews, female journalists often repeatedly mentioned the Human Rights Ombudsman as an institution which would be addressed in cases of violation of their labor rights. They believe that the Ombudsman would react before any other institution in this country.

Journalist has to know how to protect herself. If someone threatens me, I would immediately react. Depending on the case, I would report it to the editor, Ombudsman, or to the Prosecutor's Office if there are grounds for that...

I know what I can do if something really radical happen to me - I can go to Journalists Association, Ombudsman, I mean, I know that part.

Speaking of Ombudsman, if someone complains to them, they would probably do something.

Some interlocutors with many years of journalistic experience indicated a need to re-establish the duty (Deputy) of the Ombudsman for the media. As a matter of fact, there was a Deputy Ombudsman for the Media in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the period of 1999-2010 in the context of the institution of Ombudsman and he had two functions. One of them was the protection of media freedoms, including the protection of the public from the media abuse, and the other was implementation of the Law on Freedom of Access to Information in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and legal assistance to journalists and citizens to exercise the right to access information controlled by public authorities.<sup>42</sup> The abolition of The Institution of Ombudsman of the Federation of BiH was abolished in 2010, and the position of the Ombudsman for the media was abolished as well.

The big mistake in the system resulted after abolishment of the Ombudsmen and its consequences are clearly visible now... We've mentioned the Human Rights Ombudsman and I have to point out a strong, significant role played by the individual man or individual woman. Jasminka Džumhur - it's a completely different world, the way this woman took the flag, raised her head bravely and managed to preserve the dignity of the Institution, pointed out to certain things, etc.

It would be good to have the Ombudsman for the media because effect of the media is very specific in its nature and has some other requirements of to the public compared to other profession. First of all, because of the Law on Free Access to Information, because of the openness of institutions and generally because of the rights. We are in a position to, eg., plainly speaking the police do not understand the rights of journalists when it comes to some public meetings, secretaries in the state institutions behave toward the journalists, and I will use harsh words here, as bulldogs who protect these people in politics from attacks of journalists. And in fact, journalists are just doing their job. And that's why all the people employed in public institutions should be trained or at least sensitized to the needs of journalists, because... the whole structure between journalists and public representatives and the minister on two different ends actually do not understand this relationship and that all of them build some sort of personal importance by trying to protect their "boss" from some journalist who is only provoking and asking questions. And it's no longer a question of the Law but a question of understanding social relations.

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<sup>42</sup> More information at <https://analiziraj.ba/2017/01/10/zasto-je-u-bih-potreban-ombudsmen-za-medije/> (27. 1. 2019).



The primary task of the Ombudsman for the media is to promote journalism based on high journalistic standards, a regular checking of journalistic practice, the protection of journalists' freedom, responding to complaints of the citizens relating to the work of the media, as well as making recommendations in specific cases of complaints.<sup>43</sup>

### **5.7. International organisations**

Even international organizations do not enjoy great reputation among journalists. In fact, respondents rated their work in the field of protection of the rights and freedoms of journalist as an average grade of 2.7, which is closest to the grade of 3, which means "neither good nor bad".

Although the number of respondents that considered their work as poor or very poor (47.9%) is almost twice as high than those considered as good or very good (25%), a number of respondents that rated their work is of a significant importance, at least compared to a number of respondents that have positive rate on the work of public institutions in BiH, particularly Prosecutors' office. There were several respondents in the interviews who mentioned the OSCE as an organization whom they had addressed or would address in the cases of violation of their rights and freedoms. Most respondents believe that the international organizations in BiH are more sensible in cases of violations of journalists' rights and freedoms than local institutions:

...If you can't do anything in our institutions, then you should go to the international institutions, and I believe that they would do something.

I'm giving 4 to their work. My general attitude is that these associations, non-governmental sector and international organizations, protect our rights more than institutions whose duty is actually to do so. I give them 3, it's a medium, they do some work but not enough

The unmistakable conclusion that arises from a quantitative and qualitative study is low level of confidence in the institutions, which is very worrying. Institutions should play a key role in the system of protecting the rights and freedoms of journalists. Regardless of the enthusiasm, courage and perseverance of individuals, both men and women, who actively advocate for better status of female journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as for the democratization of the Bosnian society, long-term results can not be achieved without broader public support and institutional solutions of high quality. Declarative support is not enough. Necessary things are highly effective mechanisms and active engagement of institutions to respond more quickly and more adequately in accordance with the existing normative acts. This is the only way for creating a favorable environment for the work of male and female journalists, and sending a clear message that any kind of violence against them is unacceptable. The incidents when representatives of the institutions insult and threaten female journalists are particularly unacceptable. Unfortunately, these instances are not so rare to be called exceptions. Such behavior of representatives of public institutions or establishment are

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<sup>43</sup> <https://analiziraj.ba/2017/01/10/zasto-je-u-bih-potreban-ombudsmen-za-medije/> (27. 1. 2019).

incompatible with European values advocated by representatives of the legislative, executive and judicial authorities in this country.

Table 3: Journalists' rates of the work of local institutions and international organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina

	1 Very poor (%)	2 Poor (%)	3 Neither poor nor good (%)	4 Good %	5 Very good %	Average grade
Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina	18.4	40.8	28.6	12.2	0	2.9
Gender Centres in the Entities	22.4	34.7	32.7	10.2	0	2.9
International organisations	10.4	37.5	27.1	22.9	2.1	2.7
Human Rights Ombudsman	16.3	34.7	42.9	6.1	0	2.4
Police	20.4	40.8	26.5	10.2	2	2.3
Courts	30.6	40.8	26.5	2	0	2.0
Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH	34.7	40.8	22.4	2	0	1.9
Prosecutions	29.2	47.9	20.8	2.1	0	1.9

## **6. PERCEPTION OF MEDIA EMPLOYEES AND ASSOCIATES ON THE STATUS OF FEMALE JOURNALISTS AND SOLIDARITY IN THE PROFESSION**

### **6.1. Perception of a woman in journalism**

The average grade that the respondents gave for the status of female journalists in the media in BiH is 2.5. More than half of respondents (53,1%) rated status of female journalists as „neither good nor poor ”, 44.9% rated it as poor or very poor, and only 2% rated it as very good. The majority of respondents believe that the number of women in journalism is increasing. However, in regards to the key positions in the media, women believe that these positions are still held by men. Therefore, they often feel discriminated just because they are women. For instance, they have been denied the opportunity to talk to important interlocutors, and the biggest challenge of this job for them is unknown working hours, and they sometimes find it difficult to balance their private life and business. Some of them claimed that the editors or directors generally understand and support them, however such attitude is the result of good will of their superiors rather than a status of female journalists which is regulated by internal regulations. The denial of rights to maternity leave and discrimination against mothers are only few of the problems faced by our interlocutors. The following are some comments on the challenges they face:

A number of women in journalism is growing, this trend is continuing somehow. It is related primarily to the war and the war events in Bosnia. I haven't examined any scientific research on why men chose other professions while women chose journalism.

It is usually easier for men to get a job because they do not give birth, while, on the other hand, women have their own opinions and are less liable to pressure.

The problem in our society is that a woman, especially a journalist, is judged based on her looks-whether she is ugly or beautiful, the length of her skirt and so on. Man has never been scrutinized in that manner. Society is always more opinionated about women than about men. For example, many times I've had situations when I go on the field and some interlocutors don't want to talk to me at all because I'm a woman. Then I need to talk to a driver or to a photographer so that only then they come upon the interlocutor and talk with him. There were instances when the editor chose a male colleague over me or my female colleague when the interview was to be conducted with some arrogant politician.

(...) the fact that there are more women than men in journalism, says a lot about the situation in journalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina. When journalism was more profitable profession in this region, all the duties and positions were held by men.

The situation in the media for women is terribly bad because the salaries are low, there is a lot of work, disregard, lack of specific working hours, lack of weekends off, failure to meet legal obligations by the owner or editor ... It is worse in a sense that when you come to apply for a job, they ask you whether you are planning to have children, you do not have the right to maternity leave provided by law ...

Analysis of the responses of the interviewed media employees and associates shows that a certain number of female journalists believe that men in general have better leadership skills than women. In other words, the so-called "masculine" characteristics such as competitiveness, focus on the tasks and achieving business goals, are more useful for the

successful organization, as opposed to the so-called "feminine" characteristics such as cooperation and preservation of harmonious interpersonal relationships, which is one of the key criteria that Geert Hofstede (1980) used for comparing different cultures. On the other hand, the success of women in performing tasks is sometimes associated with their physical appearance. Some journalists stated that it was harder to work with women than with men because they believe that, as interlocutor N17 said, "women are malevolent to other women", and N15 considered that "men are better editors and leaders. Women are hesitant, inclined to analyze too much, modify their decisions, have doubts. I prefer working with men to working with women, and I think men are more competent to editorial positions than women." N19 claims "that in journalism, it is much easier for women to acquire information than it is for men. It is even much easier if a woman looks pretty, if she looks nice inside and out ... ". Among the respondents, there are those who suggested that the difficulty of work for female journalist depends on her attitude toward work, to the interlocutor(s), to editors, director(s). None of the employees in the media who answered the questionnaire considered the status of female journalists as good or very good.

The average grade that the respondents rated the awareness of journalists about their rights is 2.8. The largest number of respondents (44.9%) believe that familiarity with that is "neither good nor poor". Considerably more of them evaluated this familiarity as poor or very poor (34.7%) than good or very good (20.4%).

Journalists believe that the laws of the media are generally good, however inadequate mechanisms for their implementation is the problem.

I believe that laws should be implemented more efficiently in a way that people responsible for attacks on journalists are properly punished. I believe that the protection of rights and freedoms of journalists can be improved through, for example, the application of ethical professional standards, strengthening solidarity, dialogues within the professional community. I think that BiH has good legislation in the region, but the problem is that regulations are often not implemented.

(...)I know about the Labor Law, I know about the Ombudsman, and it is always implemented there, there is Defamation Law, where it is stated that insults are not allowed, and there are many laws which can be used for protection. I think there are different ways ... I think that laws are good, but the sanctions are poor or there are no sanctions at all...

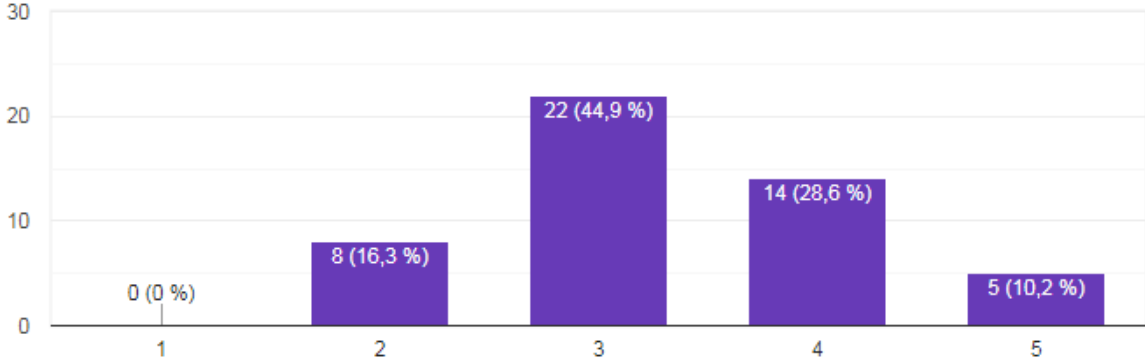
We have European legislation and the Arab application of the law ... The biggest problem is that certain officials, who should be the ones to demonstrate the practice of the law, do not do so. So, when I say this, I'm talking about the courts, the complete judiciary, the Prosecutor's Office and so on.

Although the majority of respondents believe that socioeconomic status of female journalists, as well as familiarity with journalists' rights are not at an appropriate level, most of them (53.1%), are not members of any journalistic association though.

## **6.2. The perception of journalists about the presence of various forms of violations of journalists' rights**

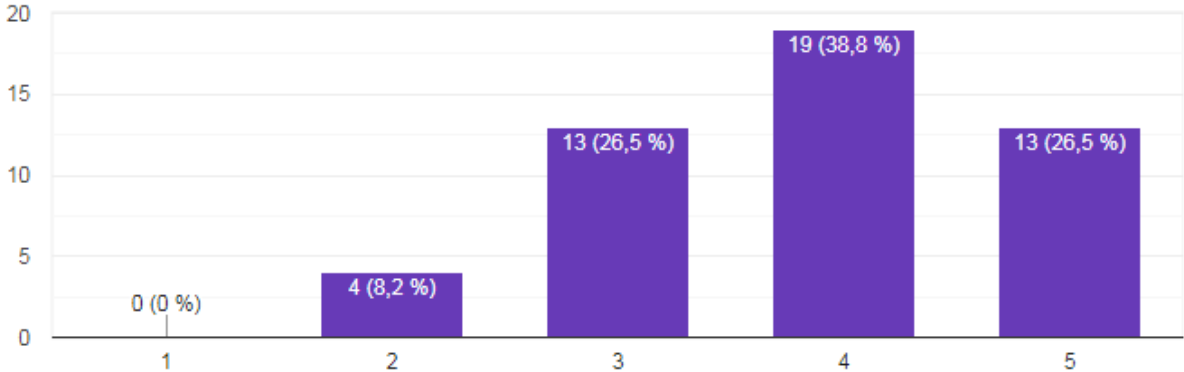
In regards to the mobbing over the female journalists, even 83.7% of respondents considered that it is partly or fully present in the media context of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Chart 4 : Rates of the respondents about the presence of mobbing over the female journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>44</sup>



A great number (38.8%) of female journalist believe that female journalists are exposed to political pressures, and 26.5% of them believe that political pressure on journalists in BiH is quite present. None of the respondents believe that female journalists in BiH are spared of mobbing and political pressures.

Chart 5: Rates of the respondents on the presence of political pressure on female journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina



These results are in accordance with the answers of journalists in in-depth interviews.

I've had some situations, some verbal threats, political pressure, during these six years, there have certainly been some situations. Politicians present themselves as little gods, as nobody can do anything to them, especially in small towns.

There is a pressure in terms of topics and interlocutors which we deal with. For example, despite the fact that these days air pollution is a hot topic in public and in other media outlets, we do not report on it at all, although we are the local media outlet.

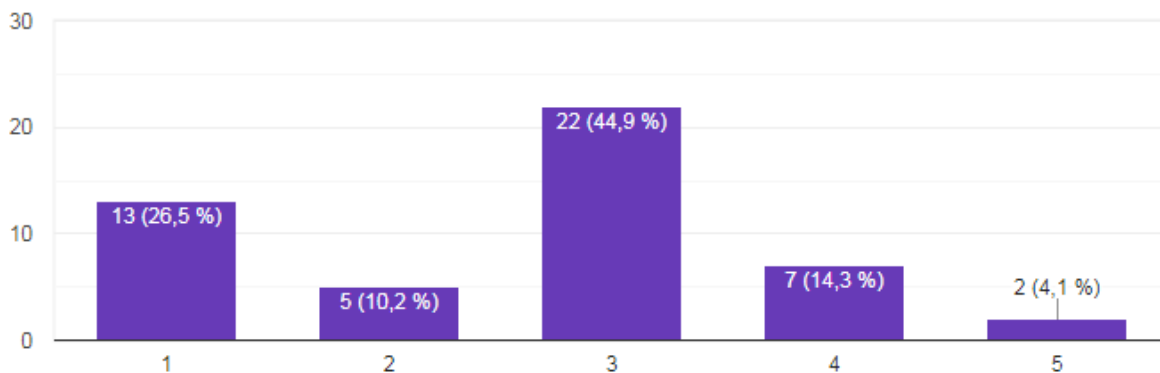
<sup>44</sup> Grades on the scale: 1 not present; 2 rarely present; 3 partially present; 4 present; 5 quite present.

I feel like a "prostitute". I've got to turn a blind eye because the founder wants it to be like that.

People who mostly assault journalists are politicians. They often deny journalists the right to work, insult journalists on the basis of certain physical characteristics. Also, institutions' responses are very slow, inefficient and there are often no convictions for the attackers. And in this way, we create an atmosphere where these attacks are approved or welcomed

The average grade the respondents rated the level of self-censorship in work is 2.6. The percentage of respondents who believe that self-censorship is partly present in their work amounted to 44.9%, and is much higher than the percentage of those who consider that there is no self-censorship in their work (26.5%).

Chart 6: Assessment of the level of self-censorship in work



In regards to the defamation and verbal threats, only one of the respondents believes that journalists are not exposed to verbal attacks, and none of them think that journalists are not exposed to certain forms of defamation. Journalists interviewed in in-depth interviews generally agreed about the fact that they have experienced verbal threats or have been victims of defamation. However, most of them do not see a big problem in that, accepting it as part of their job. Concerning the male respondents, their assessment on the presence of political pressure, defamation and verbal threats as a way of violating rights of female journalists, is similar to rates of their female colleagues.

Chart 7: Attitudes of female journalists about the presence of defamation on female journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina

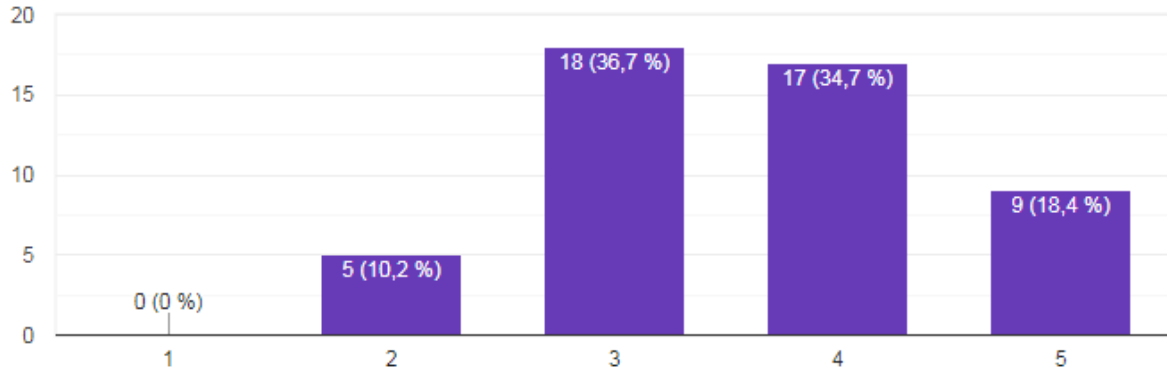
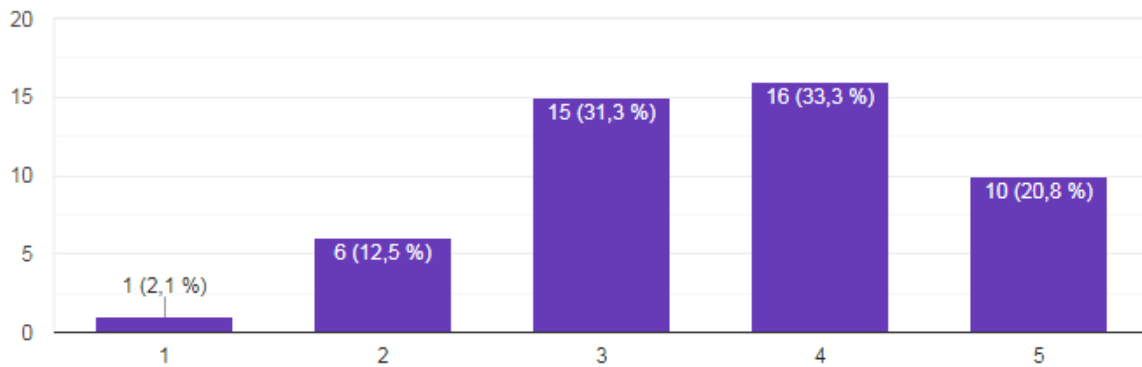


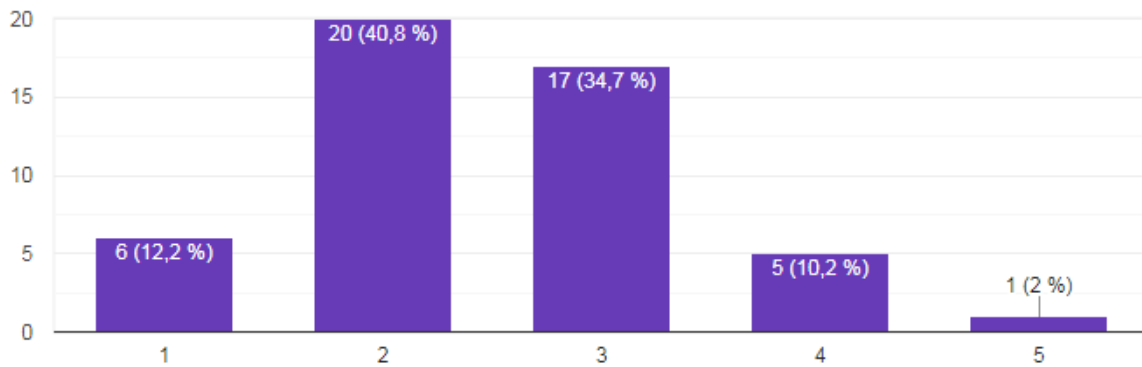
Chart 8: Attitudes of female journalist about the presence of verbal threats against female journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina



In regard to the physical attacks on female journalists or death threats, the situation is slightly different. The average rate with which the respondents evaluated the presence of death threats against female journalists is 2.4. Charts 9 and 10 clearly show that only one respondent in each thinks that journalists are often the victims of physical attacks or death threats. Their male colleagues share similar opinion.

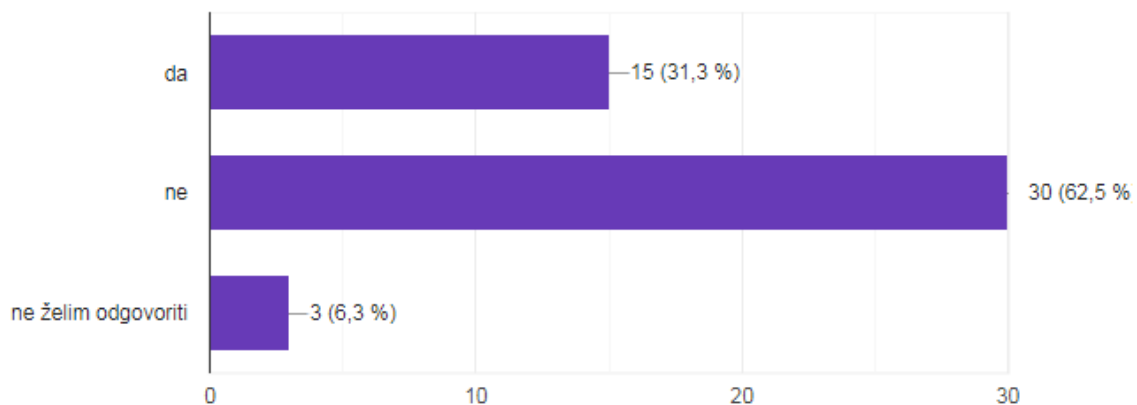
Chart 9: Views of female respondents on the presence of death threats against female journalists in the media in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Chart 10 : Views of female respondents on the presence of physical attacks on female journalists



62.5% of the respondents said they had not been exposed to any form of violation of journalists' rights, and 31.3% stated that their rights had been violated. The respondents who had been victims of violations of journalists' rights claimed that they had experienced death threats, threats (with no precise explanations of form), mobbing, verbal attacks, hate speech, defamation or their statements had been denied.

Chart 11: Exposure to various types of violating rights and freedoms of female journalists among respondents



In the in-depth interviews, journalists explained several situations when they felt that their rights or safety were violated.

We have recently had a situation when some guys who were arrested for narcotics entered the newsroom and attacked us because they believed that it had been defamation, and then looked for the journalist to get even with her.

One of the "respectable" interlocutors put his hand on my leg. I reacted. Unfortunately, my female colleagues felt that I was making a big deal out of it.

They see me in a different way when I'm recording in the municipal council, and I often do that, they tell me that the councilors commented on my bottom. Similar things happen ...

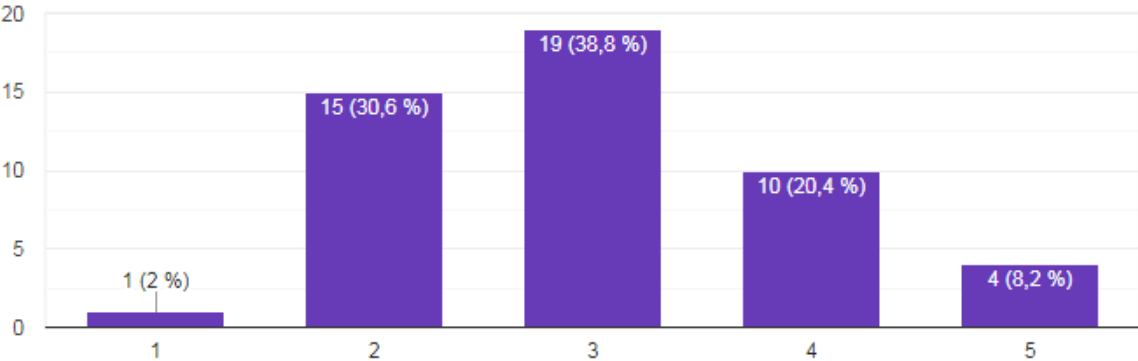
Mobbing, insults, defamation, death threats, there have been many comments on physical appearance.



Some interlocutors explained that the situation of journalists in their work depends on the manner in which they present yourself in a given situation and to interlocutors, both men and women. For instance, N4 says that the position of female journalist "depends on her character a lot. If she reacts immediately and shows that she does not like it, they withdraw." A N19 describes one of her female colleagues in the following way: "We have a woman who works in marketing. She faces certain indecent proposals and insolent behavior that comes from clients. But if you see her, it would be clear why." These attitudes indicate the relativization of inappropriate behavior towards journalists. In other words, even among female colleagues, there is an opinion that disrespect and insults directed towards female journalists are consequences of their inappropriate clothing style, a way of communication and similar.

Only few journalists who were exposed to various forms of violation of rights and freedoms turned to help to editors (male or female), associations and organizations dealing with the protection of the rights of female journalists (BH Journalists Association, Commissioner of the OSCE, the Office of the Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina), police, courts and trade union organizations. A similar situation is among the journalists we spoke to personally. They usually do not denounce threats to anybody, they sometimes consult with editors (male or female) or colleagues at work. The reasons for failure to denounce such cases are: disappointment in the judicial system, the length of court proceedings, the futility of the process, perceiving threats online as "usual form of communication." The average grade the journalists rated willingness to denounce threats is 3.

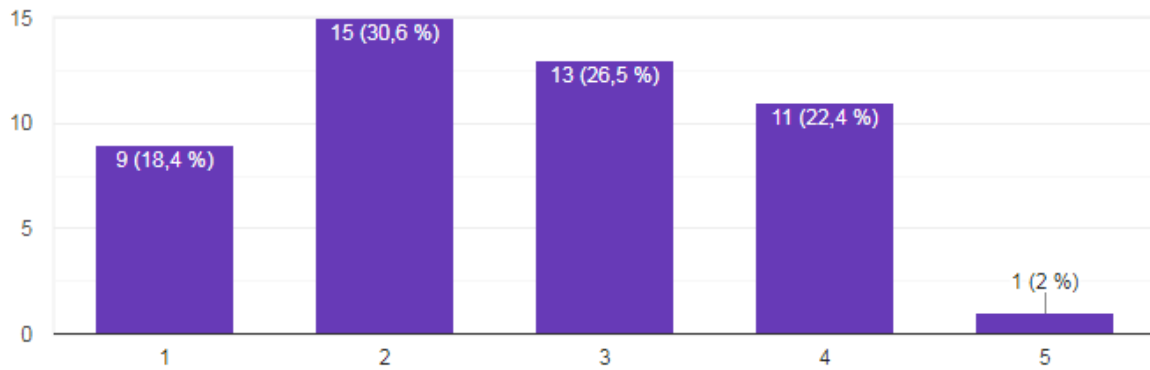
Chart 12: The rate of female journalists' willingness to denounce threats



**6.3. Perception of solidarity in journalism within the profession**

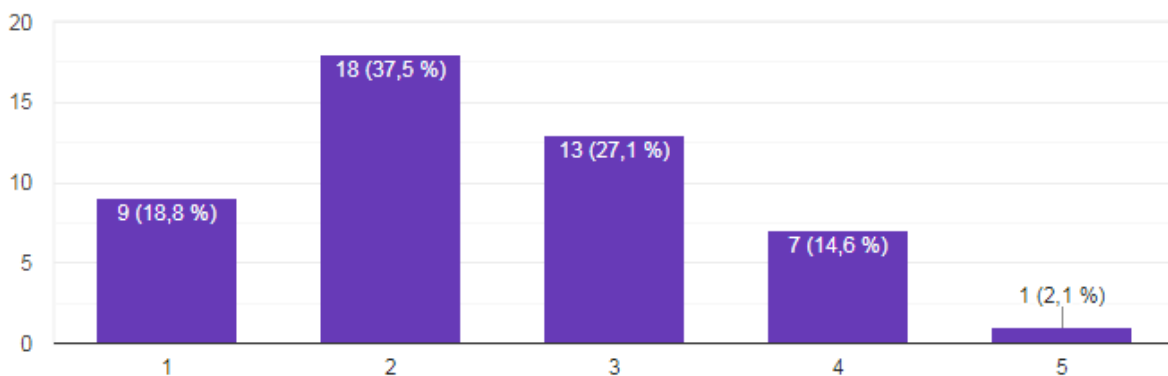
More than half of the respondents (50.9%) have an attitude that the journalists from other media outlets contribute to violation of the rights of female journalists to a certain extent.

Chart 13: Perception of respondents on how journalists from other media outlets contribute to violation of the rights and freedoms of female journalists<sup>45</sup>



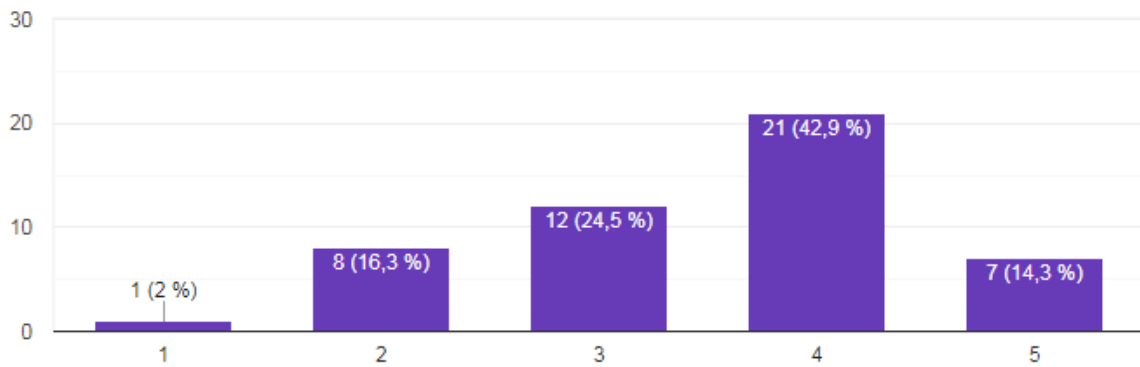
The average rate that female journalists assessed the work of journalists' associations to protect the rights and freedoms of journalists is 3.5. Journalist gave significantly lower average grade - 2.4 for the work of trade unions to protect their rights. Interviews reveal that the main reason for this is the belief that trade unions are politically influenced, and that trade union representatives are more concerned about the interests of management than employees in the media.

Chart 14: Rating the contribution of journalistic associations to protect the rights and freedoms of female journalists



<sup>45</sup> Grades on the scale: 1 do not contribute; 2 contribute a little; 3 partially contribute; 4 contribute; 5 contribute a lot.

Chart 15: Rating the contribution of trade unions to protect the rights and freedoms of female journalists



Journalists rated cooperation within their own media outlets as 3.7, and which is significantly higher compared to average grade of 2.7 for the cooperation in the context of the journalistic community (2.7).

Chart 16: Rating cooperation within the media outlet on protection of the rights and freedoms of female journalists

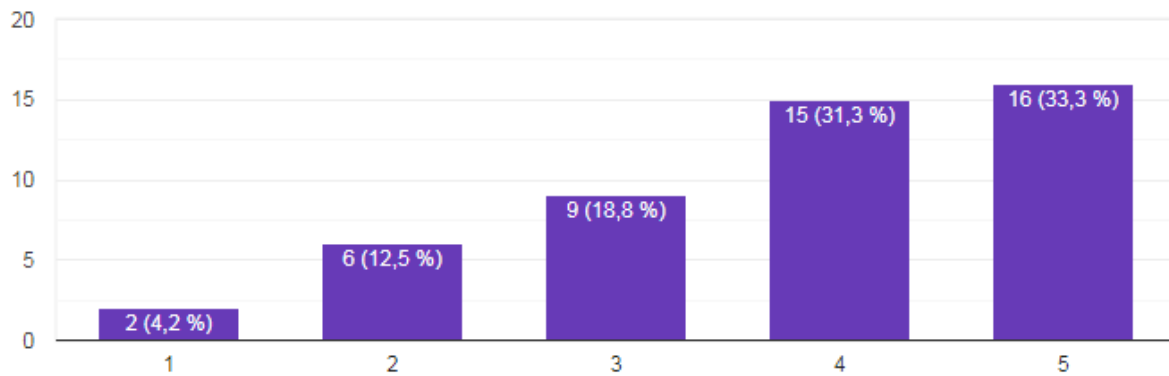
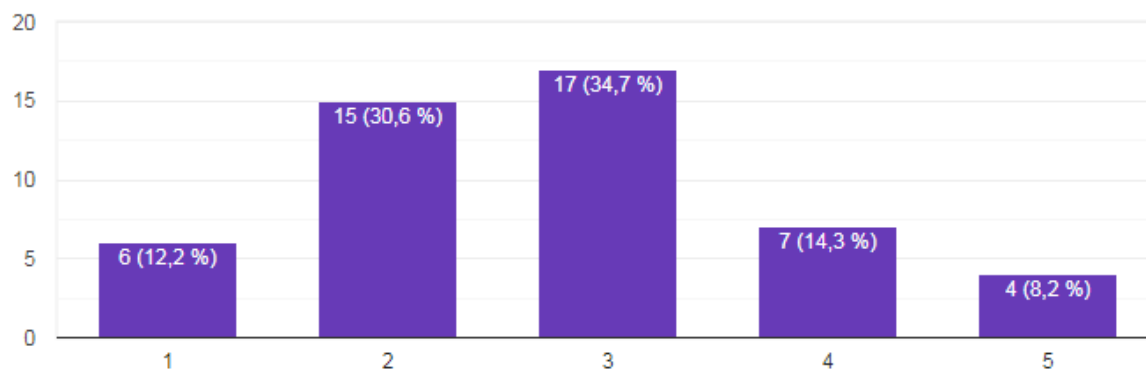


Chart 17: Rating cooperation within journalistic community on protection of the rights and freedoms of female journalists



#### 6.4. Job satisfaction and career opportunities

Regarding both in-depth interviews and questionnaires, women journalists stated that they do various jobs in the newsrooms. Despite the fact that some of them are not satisfied with their jobs, only few of them would like to be editors, unless they are already on these positions.

I wouldn't like to be an editor. I couldn't tell people what to do and how to do something. I find it boring, I prefer working, recording, story editing...

I wouldn't like to be an editor of the informative programme. We call it deciduous position. I wouldn't be the editor of the daily news as well, because you are between the two fires, you have to balance between different political options. I am the only editor who asked to be returned to the position of a journalist from the position of an editor. It is very stressful due to political pressures.

Employees in the media, who were contacted via e-mails, sometimes (49.8%) or often (24.5%) attended training courses on the rights of female journalists and mechanisms of protection of female journalists. Reports from professional associations, international and other organizations on the status of freedom of journalists, their rights and employment status are sometimes or often followed up by most respondents. Journalists whom we interviewed in-depth interviews generally do not have time to work on their career advancement.

It is assumed that the journalists will learn how to use new programmes themselves. A journalist who has learned to use a new programme is supposed to teach other colleagues. We don't go to seminars for that. We teach each other ...

We can make progress through projects, initiate something, suggest something, but we lack time. One can't be that ambitious when overloaded with daily work.

I didn't have that in the private media outlet (opportunity for career progress – A/N). I have it now, but I don't have time for that.

## 7. THE STATUS OF FEMALE JOURNALISTS IN THE NEWSROOMS

### 7.1. Previous studies in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region

In addition to political and economic pressures, stereotypes and prejudices that the public and families have about journalism, especially when women are concerned, female journalists face problems in the newsrooms as well, including internal pressures. There are two reasons for devoting this chapter to the status of female journalists in the newsrooms. The first reason is that the interaction within newsrooms and attitude towards female journalists in the media outlets are unexamined. "We know that there is a discrimination against women in the media in general, differences in wages for men and women, and that established working structures, norms and practices favor men over women, but we do not have studies that determine the extent to which such practices exist in Bosnian media outlets "(Dzihana, 2018: 21). As it has been discovered in the in-depth interviews with female journalists, the second reason is that the attitude of the newsrooms towards female journalists is often a crucial factor. The manner of the female journalist responds to various forms of threats to her rights is dependent on this attitude: whether they will denounce them and to whom, in what manner will they behave toward the person or organization that violates her professional dignity, what forms of protection mechanisms will be used, etc.

Mediacentre Sarajevo has published several articles on the status of female journalists in the newsrooms in Bosnia and Herzegovina, on relationship of female journalists with editors and colleagues, and the problems they face in the media outlet where they are employed. One of the articles focused on the status of female journalists during the period of pregnancy and maternity leave, the manner in which their status is regulated in this period and labor rights they exercise. The results of the study showed that the most common violation of maternity rights has been made to the journalists who were on contract of employment. For the others, who had been engaged on temporary contracts, these contracts had been discontinued immediately before going on maternity leave, which had left them without employer's compensation and health care insurance.<sup>46</sup> All relevant interlocutors who were contacted from the Mediacentre on this issue agreed that the key factor for solving this problem is public announcement of discriminated journalists and denouncing cases in which their legal rights were denied. However, for fear of losing their jobs, or because female journalists often hope that the employer will hire them back after maternity leave, most of them keep silent. That was a reason why journalists who spoke to the Mediacenter did not want their names to be mentioned.

Another study was conducted by the same organization in 2018. The study of 50 female journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina showed that "every fifth female journalist in Bosnia and Herzegovina has experienced gender based discrimination in the newsrooms"<sup>47</sup>. According to the official data, there are not many cases of gender based discrimination of

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<sup>46</sup> <http://www.media.ba/bs/magazin-novinarstvo/novinarke-izmedu-porodiljnog-odsustva-i-otkaza-saradnje-o-svojem-problemima-sute> (9. 1. 2019).

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.media.ba/bs/magazin-novinarstvo/diskriminacija-novinarke-u-redakciji-i-na-terenu-neprijavljanje-iz-straha-od> (9. 1. 2019).

female journalists in the newsrooms. However, when anonymity is guaranteed, journalists' statements show that there is much more discrimination compared to the number of denounced cases. Therefore, the same study showed "that women journalists are still exposed to assaults, insults and discrimination, both from colleagues within the editorial staff and the interlocutors, and from the public as well. The study clearly shows that their appearance is being commented, as well as marital status, sexuality is emphasized, they are seen as "pretty faces" without rights and ability to think".<sup>48</sup>

In the publication "Invisible Violence: Stories from the Newsroom"<sup>49</sup>, 50 journalists from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Macedonia were interviewed. The authors have tried to give a clearer picture of the status of female journalists in the newsrooms in the aforementioned countries. The respondents demanded anonymity in this research as well. "Even 70 percent of the interviewed journalists in the region said they would change job or editorial office they work in, and the main reasons are low salaries in the first place (42 percent), and censorship within the editorial staff in the second (15 percent). When asked if they were free to speak about the pressures they face by the editorial staff in public, most responses, 32 percent, was no"<sup>50</sup>. The study showed that female journalists in all five countries face problems of censorship and self-censorship, and they had situations when their stories were excluded from the program if they were critical of the ruling political parties and individuals, and they were also often prevented from investigating topics of public interest. As expected, this kind of attitude towards their work in the newsrooms causes dissatisfaction with work, and they do not have any kind of help from the media trade unions, which are, as the authors concluded, mainly led by the strategy of unconflicting state authorities. On the other hand, female journalists from private media outlets do not have the practice of trade unions at all. A common problem in the editorial offices of non-profit media, according to the survey, is the intertwining roles of managers and editors. Many respondents of non-profit media complained that the management of NGOs often has an unreasonable influence on the work of the editorial board, and that "in case of problems with the management and editorial staff, journalists from non-profit media have nobody to ask for protection"<sup>51</sup>.

We have not found research from Croatia dealing specifically with the status of journalists in newsrooms, although there are studies on representation of women in the newsrooms and television programs as authors, but also as sources of information. One of these is the research *Women and Men in Television News: The Unequal Voices*<sup>52</sup>. The results of analysing 3148 news from a total of 180 primetime news on following television broadcasters: HTV, Nova TV and RTL, have shown that during the five years of analyzing (2009-2013), women journalists were the authors in 42.6% of analyzed news. However, "men are more visible as the authors of the news - they appear in the author's role in front of the camera in 60% of analyzed informative programs, and women are visible only in one-fifth" (Car et al. 2017:

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.niit.rs/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Nevidljivo-nasilje-B5-stampa-1.pdf> (10. 1. 2019).

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.cdtmn.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Nevidljivo-nasilje-B5-stampa-1.pdf> (9. 1. 2019).

<sup>51</sup> Ibid

<sup>52</sup> Car et al. (2017). *Women and Men in Television News: The Unequal Voices*, *Media research* 23 (1), p. 73–100.

74). Furthermore, "women are extremely underrepresented as holders of the news content – they appear on that position only in 8.3% of cases, and men appear on that position four times more - 33.4% "(ibid, 75). Although women prepare more of the content than their fellow journalists (women 42.6%, men 23.9%), and are mainly the authors of the news that appear at prime time, they "appear on the screen only in 19.8% of the news program, whereas male journalists are "in front of the camera" in almost a quarter of the analyzed news program"(Car et al. 2017: 83). Compared to women, men were also more present in live programmes (in 54.29% of cases). These results suggest a disproportionate division between the number of accomplished tasks and opportunities for their presentation in the program between men and women.

In a study of professional and gender identity of female journalists in Vojvodina,<sup>53</sup> the author talked to 16 women journalists of different age who have received various awards for their work in journalism. The conclusion is that "women in the media start the profession as *the second*" and that "regardless of the number of women in the media, professional and social power still belongs to men because they still hold the management in the media" (Milinkov, 2015: 230). The author further states that women journalists, even "when publicly identify themselves as equal to men, still do not see themselves as an entity, but put themselves in subordinated position relating to the profession, whose frames and rules had been set when there were only men in journalism" (Ibid , 233). In addition, interviewed journalists believe that freedom of journalism as a profession is more important than the fight for freedom and equality of women themselves, and they also believe that gender equality must be fought within the framework of the profession, however they do not consider inequality in relation to men as a problem.

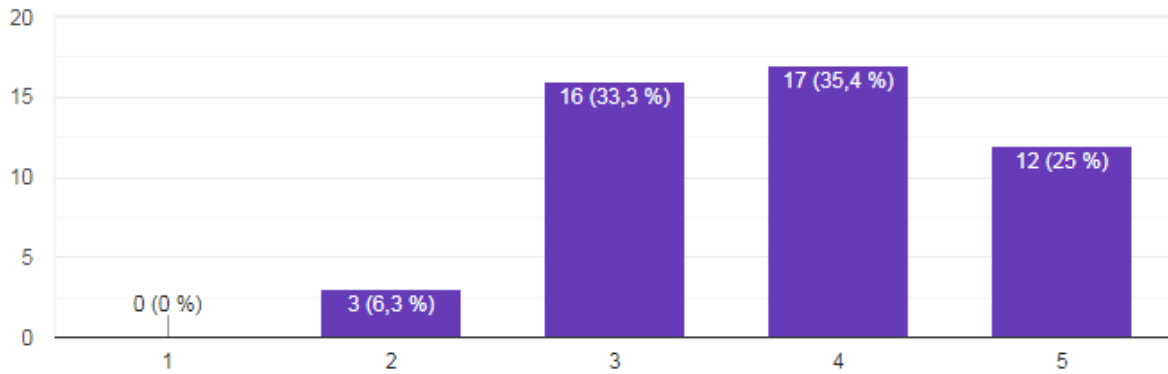
## **7.2. Perception of female journalists about their personal status in the media outlet they work for**

The average grade that the journalists in our study rated their position in the media outlet they work for is 3.7.

Chart 18: Rating of female journalists on their status in the media outlet they work for

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<sup>53</sup> Milinkov, Smiljana (2015). "Social changes and education - professional and gender identity of female journalists in Vojvodina". *Almanac of the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad*. XL-2. Novi Sad: Faculty of Philosophy, 121–137.

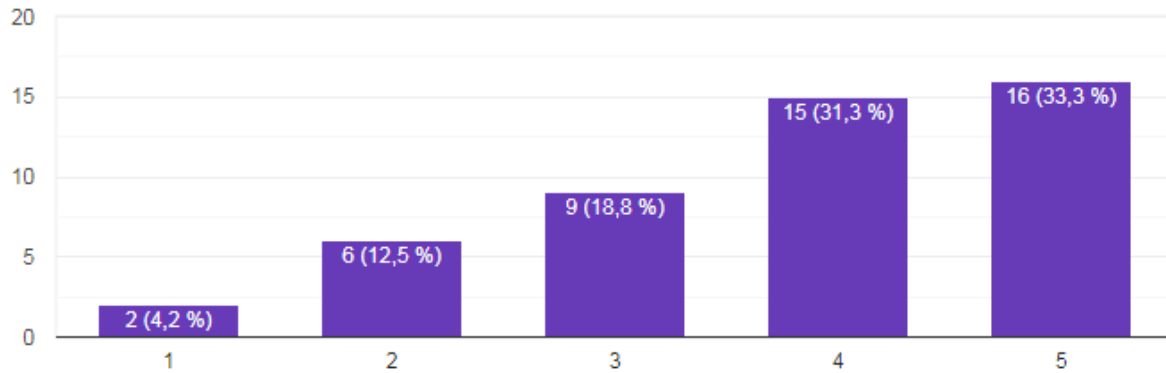


Despite the fact that they consider their status in the media outlets they work for as generally good, only 30.6% of female journalists said that there are internal regulations related to the protection of the rights of female journalists in the media outlets they work for, whereas 42.9% declared that such regulations do not exist, and the remaining 28.6% did not know. A similar situation was also observed with the interviewed women journalists. Familiarity with the legal framework among journalists is poor - the interviewees said. There are no internal regulations that specifically regulate the status and rights of female journalists in the media outlets they are employed. There are respondents who do not know whether there are specific laws at the state level or regulations in media outlets that would protect their rights. Women journalists who stated that there are internal legislative acts that protect their rights in the media outlets they work for, rated their application as an average grade of 4.7. This grade is pretty high and suggests that these respondents feel quite protected in the newsrooms.

Cooperation within the media outlet they work for was rated with an average grade of 3.7 by respondents, and this is relatively high rating. We dare to conclude that the respondents in our sample were satisfied with this aspect of work, which is very important. Firstly, journalistic work often involves teamwork, and this is the reason why good interpersonal relationships within the newsroom and satisfactory relationship with their colleagues are extremely important for productivity and satisfaction of female journalists. Secondly, due to the fact that **in** the interviews interlocutors identified editors and colleagues as key persons on which dealing with various forms of violation of their rights and freedoms depends, it is extremely important that relations within editorial staff is good. However, the percentage of 16.7% of respondents who consider cooperation within the media outlets they work for as poor or very poor, is not insignificant.

Chart 19: Rating of female journalist on cooperation in the media outlet they work for





Statements about solidarity in the profession, as well as collaboration with colleagues in media outlets by interviewed interlocutors are different:

Excellent cooperation with colleagues and protection of journalists. The media outlet I work for always protects journalists...

If there is an option, I would give zero for cooperation, solidarity and collegiality, there is no desire to help, understand nor put into somebody else's position. This is indeed a vain profession, very competitive when it comes to relations among journalists ...

I think that there is solidarity, as far as the journalistic profession is concerned, and that the largest solidarity is here, because we all somehow know what somebody else is going through. (...) I think my colleagues show solidarity the majority of cases and it works well.

I do not see any support. For example, I am a person who often defends colleagues and if somebody defends me, it is usually our association. My colleagues do not even try, they usually play dumb.

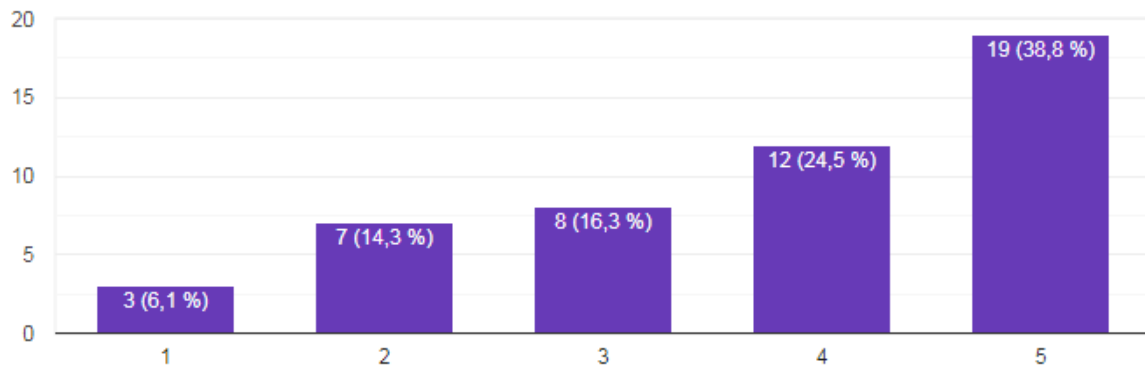
I would rate this one with high grade, most journalists show a lot of solidarity, and we help each other a lot ...

The majority of respondents (62.5%) believe that greater collegiality within the profession would contribute to the improvement of the rights of female journalists, and 44.9% believe that greater support of fellow colleagues would contribute to a better status of women in the media.

### **7.3. Attitudes of female journalists on the role of the newsrooms in the protection of their rights**

Support and protection of editors in everyday work and specific situations have been rated with an average grade 3.7. Chart 20 shows that 63.3% of respondents rated cooperation with the editor as good or very good.

Chart 20: Rating support and protection of editors in daily work, as well as in disputable situations



On the other hand, experience of the journalists who did in-depth interviews are varied:

The only important thing to the women editors is not to be resented by any of them (referring to the local government -A/N) and to preserve their positions.

I was surprised when the former editor once supported me. (...) Such behavior is more the exception than the rule. Editors and journalists mostly ignore the threats and insults towards women journalists.

Basically I have the support, depending on what is an issue. It is often ignored when I have some problems.

We protect each other. We do not trust institutions..

Women editors protect women journalists. When the editor is a women, she is more sensitive towards women's issues and needs. There is more understanding.

Some journalists have described the situations when, refusing to be politically biased, they were replaced from their positions of editors.

We ignore many initiatives and statements of councilors because they are the opposition. I said that I wouldn't do it that way and that I would represent the views of different parties. That's why I was dismissed from the position of editor.

N13, however, said that the editor did not want to protect her when she was threatened with defamation suit.

There was one case when a man was threatening to sue us for defamation because we had not released a denial. I forwarded this denial to the editor, he told me that it had been released, but actually it hadn't, and then, when a problem occurred, he didn't take responsibility, but he tried to put responsibility on me.

Some journalists explained that, the reports are strictly checked by editors in the newsrooms, therefore they have not had problems with defamation suits.

We have experienced here that the reports were sent to the leaders of the parties so that they can check them.

According to most female journalists, they do not deal with controversial political issues, nor investigative journalism, because a) *they do not have time because "everyone does everything"* and b) *because these topics are not acceptable in the mostly politically oriented*

*media outlets for which they work for.* Some of them suggest that the editors usually assign "difficult" topics to men.

Men are assigned "dangerous" topics. But women journalists prefer easier topics because, why would they expose themselves to threats and potential dangers when the public doesn't appreciate that kind of sacrifice.

There are journalists who equate investigative with sensational journalism, and on the question of whether dealing with investigative topics, they responded in this way:

It depends on the topics you are dealing with. It wouldn't be easy to investigate, for eg., prostitution. But we're not sensational journalism. Sensationalism triggers these consequences. We don't do investigative journalism either, maybe bare minimum.

One of the recommendations of the OSCE in the fight against abuse of female journalists via the Internet with a tendency to increase, is that the media outlets create company atmosphere of gender equality and intolerance on the threats and harassment of employees.<sup>54</sup> In regards to the cyber abuse, a large number of journalists we talked to, said that they had been exposed to virtual attacks. However, they did not denounce these attacks and insults because they considered them harmless or they attempted to solve the problem on their own because they do not trust institutions. In some cases, colleagues from the newsroom even mutually commented on derogatory comments addressed to their female colleagues via social networks or which were posted in the comments on the websites.

Someone had written messages to me and my colleague on the chat. We did not know who. He wrote that he wanted to see us on screen, praised our appearance, eg., he wrote about me, "her gorgeous black hair" and the like.

Sometimes there are sarcastic remarks about the report, appearance ... Comments are not deleted.

Sometimes there are really vulgar comments about the appearance of women journalists. There are more allusions to appearance than to the content. We do not deal with such comments, the administrator does. It seems like he enjoys these comments. And even comes to us asking: "Have you seen that comment? "

Once I wrote an article about the criminal arrest at the border crossing. His brother wrote to me in a threatening tone on Facebook. I blocked him and that was it.

Some journalists tried to solve the problems of cyber violence by themselves - they tried to reach people who had put comments on social networks. One of the journalists told us a story about how she came to the workplace where person who had offended her worked, told the whole situation to his superior, and then the man who had insulted her apologized.

Despite the fact that female journalists mainly consider their status in the media outlets they work for satisfactory, in-depth interviews showed that they are still facing a number of problems, but they are not aware of the fact that some of the problems represent violation of

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<sup>54</sup> New Challenges to Freedom of Expression: Countering Online Abuse of Female Journalists <https://www.osce.org/fom/193556?download=true> (3. 12. 2018).

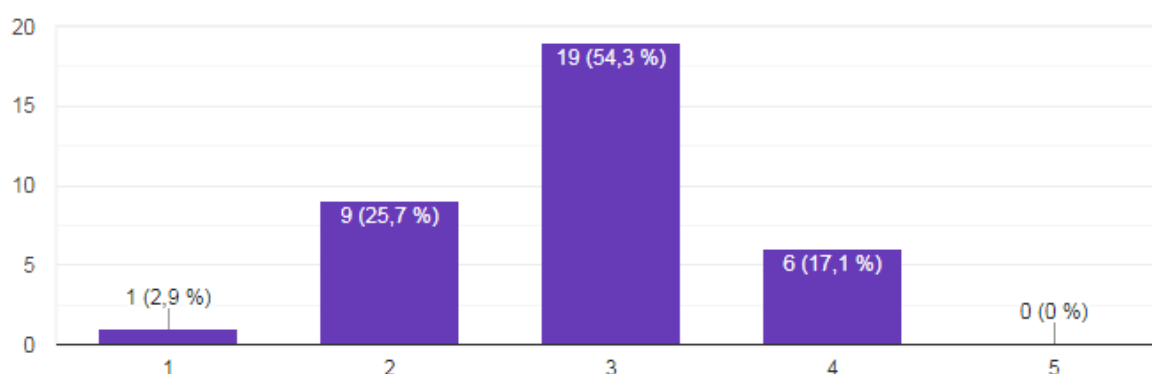
their rights and freedoms. The big problem for them is unregulated maternity leave, a large amount of work, unknown working hours and not enough time for professional advancement.

## 8. PERCEPTION OF FEMALE STUDENTS OF JOURNALISM/COMMUNICATION STUDIES ON THE STATUS OF FEMALE JOURNALISTS IN BIH

Students of journalism are the future and human resource for effective implementation of gender policies in Bosnia and Herzegovina relating to the media. Gender awareness, education of future journalists about their rights, their encouragement and motivation for greater representation on editorial positions and membership in the administrative and business structures are some of the strategic objectives of this study. Therefore, attitudes of future journalists about the current position of female journalists in BiH were examined in this study. The sub-sample included final year students of the 1st cycle and the students of the 2nd cycle of studies, because it is expected that they should have acquired certain knowledge in this field by this stage of education. Out of the total number of 70 female students of the final year of the 1st cycle of studies, and students of the 2nd cycle of studies who study Journalism and Communication Science at public universities in BiH and on whose e-mail addresses questionnaires were sent, 35 (50%) of them responded. Out of these, 61.8% was in the fifth year of study, 32.4% was in the fourth year and 5.9% was in the third year.<sup>55</sup> 22,9% of them volunteer in some of the media outlets.

The students rated the situation of female journalists in BiH with average grade of 3.4. When this is compared with rating of 2.5, which was how the female journalists rated their status, we can notice that students perceive the situation of women in journalism as better than media employees and associates do.

Chart 21: Journalism female students' rates on the status of female journalists in BiH media outlets<sup>56</sup>

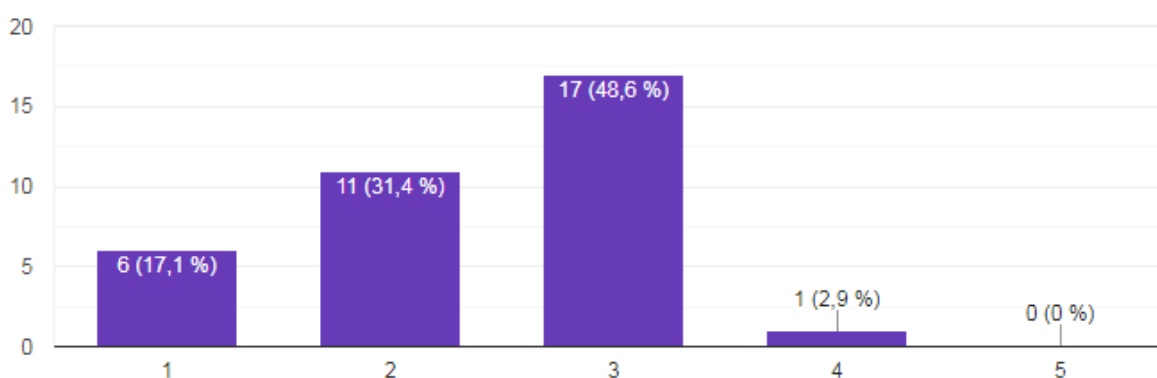


<sup>55</sup> At some universities in BiH where the studies of Journalism or Communications is organized by the so called 3 + 2 model (eg., In Sarajevo and the University of Mostar), final year of the 1st cycle of studies is the third, and in others, where the studies are organized by 4 + 1 model (eg., in East Sarajevo and Tuzla ) a final year is the fourth. Depending on that, students of the 2nd study cycle might be the fourth or fifth year. The sample was sent to 70 e-mail addresses of students of third, fourth or fifth year of Journalism /Communication studies at one of the public universities in BiH. 35 (50%) of them replied.

<sup>56</sup> Grades on the scale: 1 very poor; 2 poor; 3 neither good nor poor; 4 good; 5 very good.

In regards to the legal framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 42.9% of students considered that there are laws that contribute to the protection of the rights and freedoms of female journalists, and 28.6% thought that such laws do not exist or they do not know if there are any. The average grade of students' rating of the existing legal framework in the field of rights and freedoms of journalists is 2.4, and that is closest to the poor. Due to the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina has a legislative framework of a quite high-quality in the field of gender equality and in the area of media policy, we dare to conclude that the perception of students about laws concerning the rights and freedoms of journalists is worse than the objective situation.

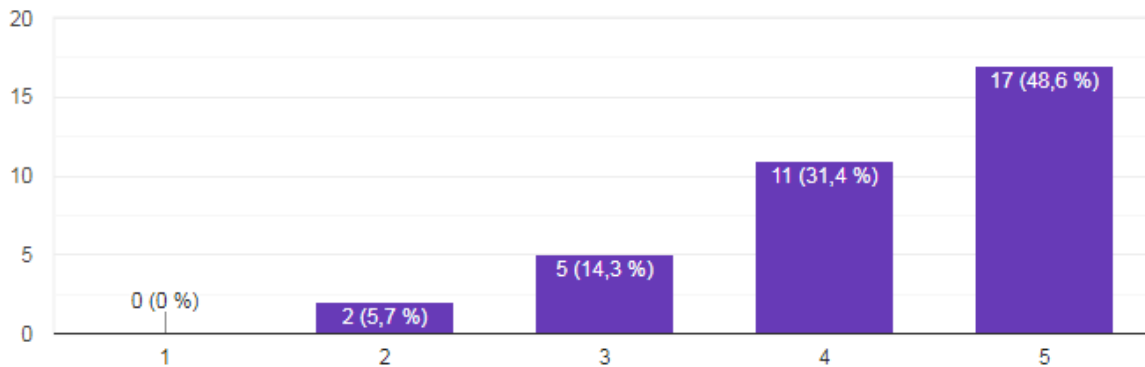
Chart 22: Rating the legal framework in the field of rights and freedoms of female journalists



The students reckon that journalists are exposed to political pressure (4.1 on a scale of 5), verbal threats and defamation (3.9) as well as to mobbing (3.6). It is noticeable that the female students of Journalism are more aware of the physical assaults and death threats in BiH society than the interviewed female journalists. While the female journalists graded the frequency of physical assaults on the employees and associates of media outlets with grade 2.5, the students rated it with grade 3. Female journalists have rated the frequency of death threats to employees and associates of media outlets with grade 2.5, while the students rated it with 2.7.

The students have the listed institutions in which the journalists can seek the protection of their rights as follows: BH Journalists Association, Ombudsmen for Human Rights, Public Prosecutor's Office of BiH, Press Council, courts, police, their male colleagues, Communications Regulatory Agency, lawyers, and even their husbands. The average rating given on whether the female journalists would denounce the violation of their rights is 2.8, however the most prominent answer is that the journalists are "partially" ready to denounce such violations. Moreover, when the case is about themselves, 48.6% of female students is rather willing, and 31.4% is willing to denounce the violation of their journalistic rights.

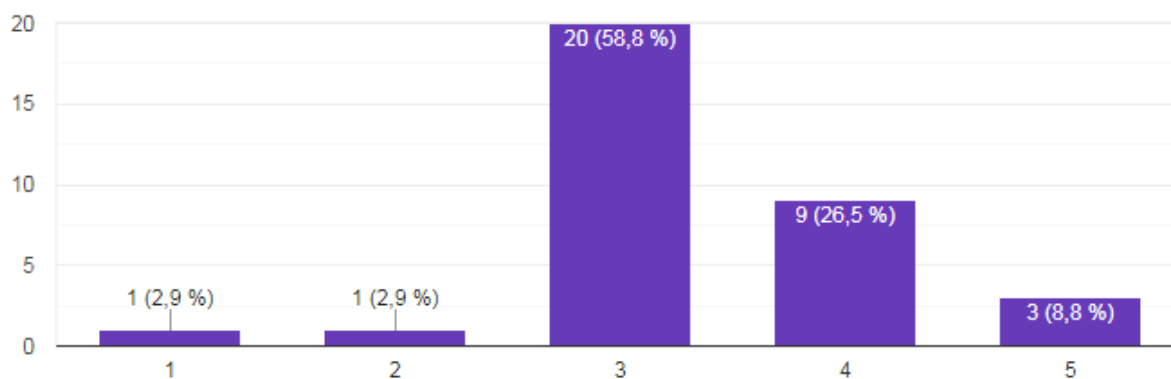
Chart 23: The willingness of female students to denounce violation of their journalistic rights



The respondents rated that politicians, representatives of institutions and powerful individuals contribute or greatly contribute to violation of female journalists' rights. Most students (57.1%) think that journalists from other media outlets partially contribute to the violation of the rights of female journalists. This thinking is similar to the thinking of their colleagues in practice.

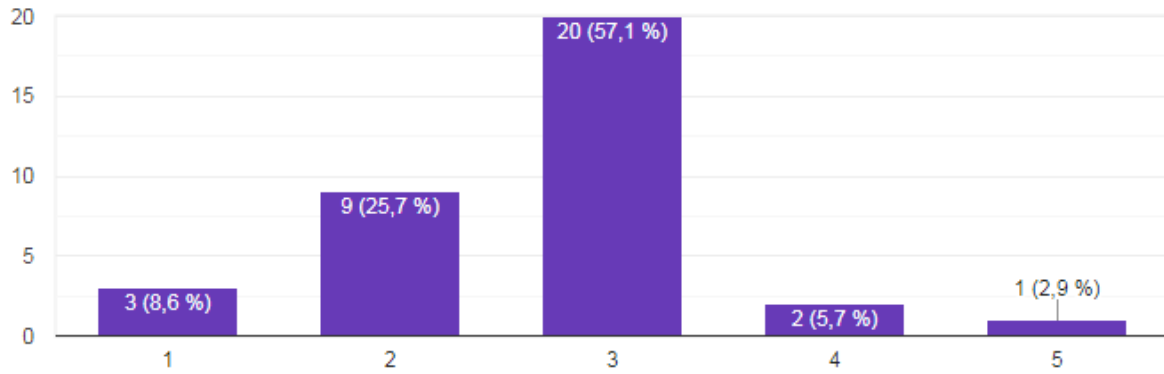
The students rated the work of the listed bodies on protection of the rights and freedoms of journalists as poor or very poor as follows: police, Prosecutor's Office and courts. The students rated work of gender centers, Agency for Gender Equality of BiH and the Institution of Ombudsman as "neither good nor poor". They rated the work of journalistic associations on protection of the rights and freedoms of journalists with an average grade 3.2.

Chart 24: Attitudes about the work of journalistic associations on protection of the and rights and freedoms of female journalists



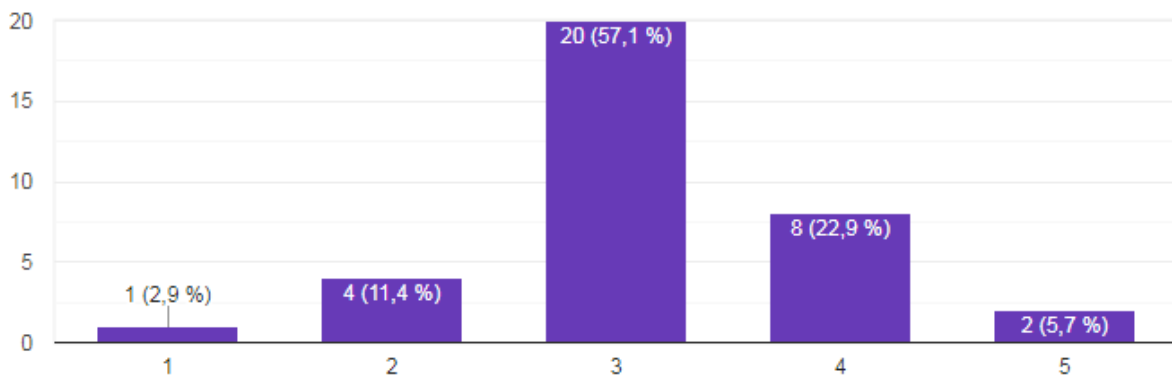
An average grade for the work of trade unions on improving the protection of the rights of female journalists is slightly lower, 2.7.

Chart 25: Attitudes about the work of trade unions on protection of the rights and freedoms of female journalists



Regarding the status of female journalists in the media newsrooms, the students rated cooperation within the journalistic community in order to protect the rights of journalists with an average grade 3.3. They rated editorial support to female journalists in their daily work and disputable situations with an average grade 3.2. Chart 26 shows that the students generally (57.1%) believe that the editors "partially" support female journalists.

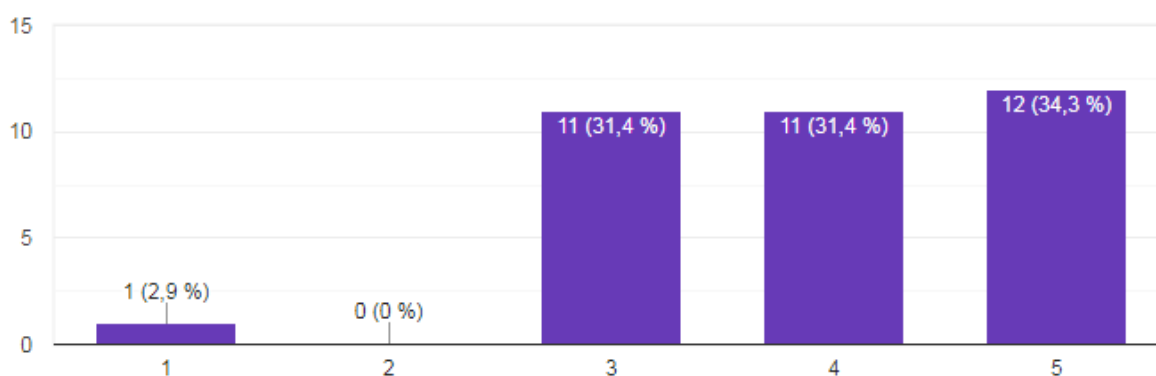
Chart 26: Rating the editorial support to female journalists in their daily work and disputable situations



44.1% of students estimated that there is self-censorship with the journalist, and 38.2% think that self-censorship is "partially" present. However, when they are concerned, 34.4% of female students said they are "more than willing" to be engaged in investigative journalism. We have concluded from the in-depth interviews with their colleagues in practice that none of them is engaged in investigative journalism.

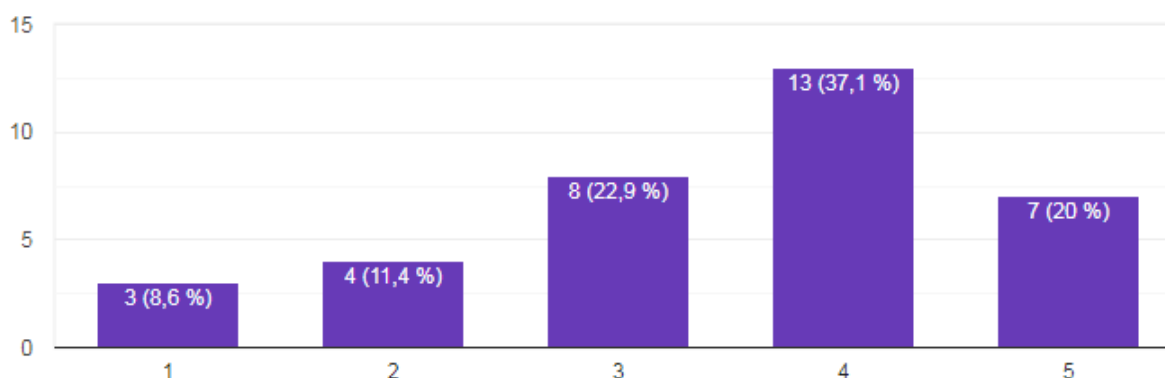


Chart 27: Willingness of female students to be engaged in investigative journalism



Students rated the desire to become editors one day with an average grade 3.5, and desire to become directors in the media graded with 3.3. Most female journalists media outlets in Bosnia and Herzegovina, however, said they did not want to be on editorial positions, and that these position are mostly get by political connections.

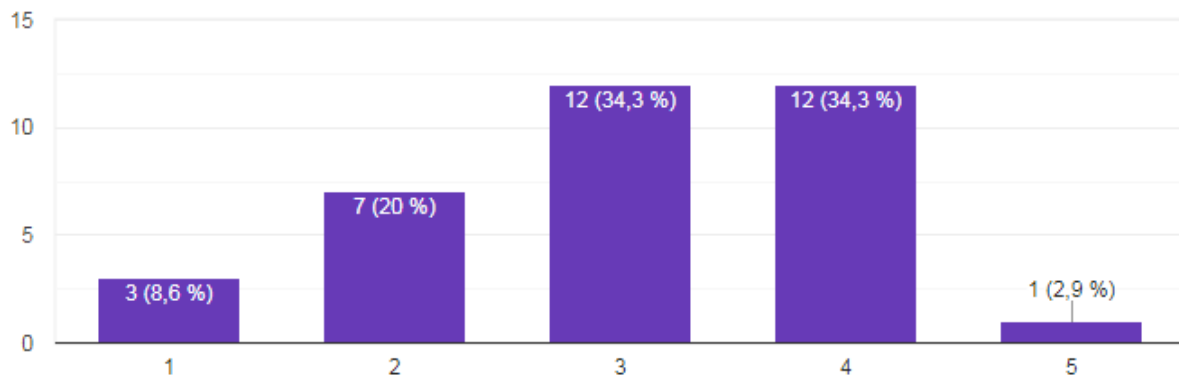
Chart 28: The aspiration of female students to become editors in the media one day



The respondents rated that the following things would contribute the improvement of the status and rights of female journalists: higher financial benefits, safer work position, improvement of law, implementation of existing laws, adoption of new laws, increased penalties for perpetrators of offenses, activity in journalistic associations, organizing trade unions, greater collegiality within the profession and greater support from the fellow journalists.

Students rated the representation of the topic on the protection of rights and freedoms of female journalists during the studies with an average grade 3. Chart 29 shows that the majority of students partially or often taught about gender rights, freedoms and mechanisms for journalists' protection.

Chart 29: Rating the representation of the topics on gender rights during the studies



Students mostly learn about the rights and mechanisms of journalists' protection on the courses of Media Policy, Media Ethics/Deontology, Media Law and Investigative Journalism.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE STATUS OF FEMALE JOURNALISTS

This study, as well as other research, activities that are being carried out and the current initiatives concerning improvement of the status of female journalists suggest that the main problems can be divided into three categories: matters of awareness, cooperation and solidarity; legislation and mechanisms for their implementation, and socioeconomic factors. In this regard, recommendations for improving the status of female journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been defined, paying special attention to the measures implemented in the European Union and the Member States. As a matter of fact, there are high standards in the EU as regards the degree of media freedom and pluralism, but they should not be taken for granted, as it has been stated by representatives of European institutions.<sup>57</sup> There are also various challenges in different countries and specific actions organized by journalists. In some countries there is a problem of the concentrated media ownership and commercialization (eg., Bulgaria and France), and direct political pressure of the representatives of authorities in others (eg., Poland and Hungary).<sup>58</sup> During 2016, journalists in Slovenia organized email campaign because police and Prosecutors' Office do not take threats to media employees seriously, and penalties in Croatia are more severe now for those who threaten journalists and withhold information. In some countries (eg., Portugal, Croatia and Slovenia) special

<sup>57</sup> European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2016). *Violence, threats and pressures against journalists and other media actors in EU*.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, p. 8.

protective clauses are being introduced in employment contracts in order to ensure safety and independence at work.

Female journalists are especially exposed to numerous threats, insults and assaults on the basis of gender and sexuality, and therefore employers take special measures for their protection, including the provision of psychological or similar counseling.<sup>59</sup> Solidarity actions are taken as well. In Estonia, for instance, these problems had been reported in the public service broadcasters and then in other media outlets as well.<sup>60</sup> Early Warning Strategies with elaborated monitoring mechanisms have been created at EU level, especially concerning the Internet and raising awareness, involving different institutions (especially the police and Prosecutor's Office) and the general public.<sup>61</sup> Because of the global nature of the Internet, the Council of Europe has created a special strategy which focuses on synergies within and among states, international institutions and organizations (UN, OSCE, the global Internet bodies and Networks), civil society, the private sector (Internet Providers), the academic community and youth forums.<sup>62</sup> Planning, implementation and monitoring of strategies is gender balanced and inclusive on the principles of good practice.<sup>63</sup>

In the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and considering the results of research and practices conducted in the EU, it is particularly important to implement the following measures:

- familiarity with legislation and protection mechanisms, because female journalists are mainly informed about their rights only when they are violated;
- encourage female journalists to denounce cases of violation of their rights and freedoms; this would provide more precise statistical data, a greater number of denounced cases will enhance the recognition of the need to denounce this issue more in the media and not just *ad hoc*;
- obtain solidarity and be better organized within the profession, as journalists can help each other in other ways than just writing about these cases and gaining public awareness. This can be done through exchanging advice and experiences on the mechanisms that can be used for protection, as well as through joint actions of pointing to the failures of institutions etc. ;
- raise awareness and encourage female journalists who have relevant experience and competence to make progress and advancement in their profession;
- introduce more subjects related to genders to Journalism/Communications studies, which is an important theoretical and practical tool for raising awareness from the early period of studying, or introduce adequate teaching units in the syllabus of

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid, p. 19.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, p. 11.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, p. 5–20.

<sup>62</sup> Council of Europe (2016). *Internet Governance- council of Europe Strategy 2016–2019. Democracy, human rights and the rule of law in the digital world.*

<sup>63</sup> p. 15.

existing subjects (such as Deontology of Journalism, Media and Law); keep working through non-formal education and in cooperation with relevant associations on improving the awareness of female students;

- amend the Law on Freedom of Access to Information by provisions that will accelerate the access to information;
- implement laws and mechanisms already available at the Prosecutor's Office and the courts (eg., although there is no specific law against online violence, apply the provisions of the Defamation Law and similar laws);
- introduce mechanisms for sanctioning officials who do not respect the Law on Freedom of Access to Information;
- educate representatives of the institutions on the uniqueness of the journalistic profession by emphasizing cooperation rather than confrontation; although there is a significant number of examples in which the employees of the institutions are the initiators of the violation of rights of female journalists, and also identify positive examples which can serve as models;
- adopt a Law on Transparency of Media Ownership;
- arrange the financing of public broadcaster services and examine ways of financing public media broadcasters at the local level where political pressures for funding from local/cantonal budgets are vastly present, which exposes female journalists to the specific pressures and forms of gender based harassment;
- establish a register of media outlets with information on the type and structure of the ownership in the media;
- arrange online space in a manner of introducing mandatory registration of Web portals, specifically define the term of the online media, define obligations of online media; introduce responsibility for public speaking in order to prevent misuse of the Internet and cyber abuse of female journalists and their sources of information as well as abuse of all citizens (eg., online users often use comments to insult interlocutors, ie. the sources of information in the media content, without specifying valid arguments; this may eventually lead to the competent and responsible persons' refraining from giving statements to the media, what will make the work of journalists more difficult);
- to amend the Criminal Code of BiH so that assaults on journalists and reporters are treated as assaults on public official in the performance of official duties;
- adopt guidelines to prevent harassment in the media on the principle of internal mediation;
- reintroduce the position of the Deputy Ombudsman for the Media at the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman;

- provide safer work place respect employment contracts and sanction media outlets in which female journalists work without appropriate contracts in order to improve their socioeconomic status, and adequate evaluation of journalistic work.

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## ANNEX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MEDIA EMPLOYEES AND ASSOCIATES

Dear Sir/Madam,

This questionnaire is a part of the study on the relationship between rights and the employment status of female journalists and the quality of their daily work, job satisfaction and social engagement. Participation in the study is voluntary and anonymous. Please answer the questions honestly in order to obtain representative results. Thank you for your cooperation!

1. **Age:**..... (type in the number!)
2. **How many years have you worked in the media?**
  - a) up to 5 years
  - b) 5–15 years
  - c) 15–25 years
  - d) 25–35 years
  - e) more than 35 years
3. **In which type of the media outlet are you currently employed?**
  - a) print media    b) electronic media    c) online media
4. **What is the ownership structure of the the media outlet you work for?**
  - a) private local    b) private foreign    c) public    d) non-profit
5. **Name of the media outlet you work for:** .....
6. **What is your position ?**
  - a) editor    b) director    c) reporter    d) presenter
  - e) ..... (other)

*Note: If you do a job of a presenter apart from a reporter, circle the answer c! If you do only a job of a presenter (without reporter tasks), circle the answer d!*
7. **Are you a member of a journalistic association?**
  - a) yes    b) no    c) I do not want to answer
8. **Rate the status of female journalists in BiH society on a scale from 1 to 5! .....**  
(1 means very poor, 2 poor, 3 neither poor nor good, 4 good, 5 very good)
9. **Rate the familiarity of female journalists with their rights on a scale from 1 to 5!.....**
10. **Are there laws in BiH that contribute to protection of the rights and freedoms of female journalists?**
  - a) yes    b) no    c) I do not know
11. **Rate the legal framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the segment of the rights and freedoms of female journalists on a scale from 1 to 5!.....**



12. **Rate the status of female journalists in the media outlet you work for on a scale from 1 to 5!.....**
13. **Are there, in the media outlet you work for, internal regulations that provide protection of female journalists from the violation of their rights and freedoms?**  
 a) yes                      b) no                      c) I do not know
14. **If there are any, rate their implementation and effects on a scale from 1 to 5!.....**
15. **In your opinion, to what extent are the following forms of violations of rights and freedoms of journalists present, rate on a scale from 1 to 5? (1 not present, 2 rarely, 3 partially present, 4 present, 5 quite present)**  
 a) mobbing  
 b) political pressure  
 c) defamation  
 d) verbal threats  
 e) death threats  
 f) physical attacks
16. **Have you personally been exposed to any of the following forms of violation of your rights?**  
 a) yes                      b) no                      c) I do not want to answer
17. **If you have, which one/s?.....**
18. **If the answer is affirmative, have you and if you have, to whom have you turned to help? (more answers possible).....**  
 .....
19. **If you have not turned to help to anyone, what was the reason for that?**  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....
20. **On a scale from 1 to 5, rate willingness of female journalists to denounce threats!.....**
21. **Rate how the following actors contribute to jeopardising the rights and freedoms of female journalists on a scale from 1 to 5! (1 do not contribute, 2 poorly contribute, 3 partially contribute 4 contribute 5 contribute a lot)**  
 a) politicians  
 b) institutions representatives  
 c) powerful individuals  
 d) extreme groups in society  
 e) journalists from other media outlets

- f) unidentified actors
22. **Rate the work of the following institutions and organs on prevention of endangering the rights and freedoms of female journalists!** (from 1 poor to 5 excellent)
- a) police
  - b) prosecution
  - c) courts
  - d) gender centres
  - e) Agency for Gender Equality
  - f) Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees
  - g) Institution of Ombudsman
  - h) journalistic associations
  - i) trade unions
  - j) international organizations
23. **Rate cooperation within the journalistic community to protect the rights and freedoms of female journalists (on a scale from 1 to 5)! .....**
24. **On a scale from 1 to 5, rate on the amount of public exposure and public reports on rights, freedoms and employment status of female journalists! .....**
25. **Rate cooperation in the media outlet you work for (on a scale from 1 no cooperation, to 5 excellent)!.....**
26. **On a scale of 1 to 5, rate how much support and protection do you get from your editor in your daily work, as well as in specific situations? .....**
27. **On a scale of 1 to 5, rate the level of selfcensorship in your own work!.....**
28. **How would these factors contribute to the eventual improvement of the rights of female journalists (on a scale from 1 no at all, to 5 extremely would)?**
- a) better reimbursement rates
  - b) work safety
  - c) improvement of laws
  - d) implementation of existing laws
  - e) adoption of new laws
  - f) increased penalties for perpetrators
  - g) activism in journalistic associations
  - h) organizing trade unions
  - i) collegiality within the profession
  - j) higher support from the fellow colleagues
29. **On a scale from 1 to 5, rate how often have you had opportunities to participate in training courses on the rights and mechanisms for protection of female journalists? (1 never, 2 rarely, 3 occasionally, 4 often, 5 regularly) .....**

30. On a scale from 1 to 5, rate how much do you follow reports of professional associations, international and other organizations on the situation of journalists' freedom, rights and employment status? .....

31. Please add/recommend ways of improving the status of female journalists or solving their problems that are not covered by this questionnaire!

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**ANNEX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FEMALE STUDENTS OF JOURNALISM/COMMUNICATION**

Dear colleague,

This questionnaire is a part of the study on the relationship between rights and the employment status of female journalists and the quality of their daily work, their job satisfaction and social engagement. Participation in the study is voluntary and anonymous. Please answer honestly the following questions in order to obtain representative results. Thank you for your cooperation!

**1. What year of studies are you?**

- a) third    b) fourth    c) fifth

**2. Do you volunteer or work for a media outlet?**

- a) no
- b) yes, I volunteer
- c) yes, I am hired part time
- d) yes, I am employed in the media

Note: *If you do not work in the media, please skip questions 3 i 4.*

**3. If you volunteer/work in the media, what type of the media is it?**

- b) print media    b) electronic media    c) online media

**4. What is the structure of the ownership of the media outlet where you volunteer/work?**

- b) private local    b) private foreign    c) public    d) nonprofit

**5. Rate the status of female journalists in BiH society on a scale from 1 to 5! .....**

(1 very poor, 2 poor, 3 neither good nor poor, 4 good, 5 very good)

**6. Are there laws in BiH that contribute to protection of the rights and freedoms of female journalists?**

- b) yes    b) no    c) I do not know

**7. Rate the legal framework in the segment of the rights and freedoms of female journalists in BiH on a scale from 1 to 5!.....**

**8. In your opinion, to what extent are the following forms of violations of rights and freedoms of female journalists present, on a scale from 1 to 5?**

(1 not present, 2 rarely, 3 partially present, 4 present, 5 quite present)

- g) mobbing
- h) political pressure
- i) defamation
- j) verbal threats
- k) death threats
- l) physical attacks

**9. Whom can the female journalists turn to in case of violation of their rights and freedoms?**

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**10. On a scale from 1 to 5, rate willingness of female journalist to denounce threats!.....**

**11. On a scale from 1 to 5, rate your willingness to denounce potential threats while doing journalistic job! .....**

**12. Rate how much the following actors contribute to jeopardising the rights and freedoms of female journalists on a scale from 1 to 5! (1 do not contribute, 2 poorly, 3 partially, 4 contribute, 5 extremely contribute)**

- g) politicians
- h) institutions representatives
- i) powerful individuals
- j) extreme groups in society
- k) journalists from other media outlets
- l) unidentified actors

**13. Rate the work of the following institutions and organs on preventing endangering the rights and freedoms of female journalists! (from 1 poor to 5 excellent)**

- k) police
- l) prosecution
- m) courts
- n) gender centers
- o) Agency for Gender Equality
- p) Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees
- q) Institution of Ombudsman
- r) journalistic associations
- s) trade unions
- t) international organizations

**14. Rate cooperation within the journalistic community in order to protect the rights and freedoms of female journalists (on a scale from 1 no cooperation to 5 extremely good cooperation)! .....**

**15. On a scale from 1 to 5, rate the editors' support to female journalists in their daily work, as well as in specific situations?.....**

**16. On a scale from 1 to 5, rate the level of self-censorship with female journalists in BiH!.....**

**17. On a scale from 1 to 5, rate your willingness to do investigative journalism!.....**

**18. On a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (extremely), rate your aspirations to become an editor one day!.....**

**19. On a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (extremely), rate your aspirations to become a director one day!.....**

**20. How could these factors contribute to the possible improvement of the rights of journalists (on a scale of 1 not at all to 5 very much)?**

- k) better reimbursement rates
- l) work safety
- m) improvement of laws
- n) implementation of existing laws
- o) adoption of new laws
- p) higher penalties for perpetrators
- q) activism in journalistic associations
- r) organizing trade unions
- s) collegiality within the profession
- t) higher support of fellow colleagues

**21. On a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much), rate how much have you learned about labor rights, freedoms and mechanisms of protection of female journalists during the studies?.....**

**If you have had a chance to learn about these topics during the studies, please indicate the subject in which you have learned the most about the rights and protection of female journalists!  
.....**