[BE] CSA study on the representation of women and men in radio programmes

IRIS 2026-9:1/28

Olivier Hermanns
Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel Belge

Since 2011, the Higher Audiovisual Council (*Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel* – CSA) of the French Community of Belgium has published several studies, known as "barometers", on the representation of people in the audiovisual media falling within its remit. The criteria analysed generally relate to gender, ethnic background, age, socio-professional category and disability. Since 2016, the CSA has had a statutory duty to periodically analyse the balanced representation of women and men in audiovisual media. In this regard, an initial equality barometer, published in 2019, focused more specifically on radio, though it was not limited to gender issues.

Against this backdrop, on 23 September 2026, the CSA published a new study on the representation of women and men in radio programmes. Given the new possibilities offered by developments in artificial intelligence, as well as the difficulties inherent in radio when it comes to identifying and categorising radio programme participants, the study's methodology was revised. In particular, the tools implemented made it possible to categorise the voices of those speaking on air in order to provide an indication of their gender. The sample comprised 27 FM radio stations broadcast by various radio networks, both public and private, including independent and regional stations.

The first part of the study examines the distribution of speaking time between voices identified as female and male over two reconstructed weeks, one in 2024 and the other in 2025. The second part focuses on the morning programmes of 11 radio stations.

Among its many findings, the CSA notes an under-representation of female voices on the radio, which became more pronounced between 2024 and 2025, when their speaking time across all programmes fell from 36.64% to 34.52%. Furthermore, in 2024, while 44.05% of voices in the morning radio programmes examined were identified as female, their speaking time amounted to only 38.98%. In other words, women who were present in the studio during radio programmes spoke less than men. The study points out, however, that "experts who appear on radio programmes are now almost as likely to be women as men, whereas in 2019 only around one in four were women."

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

Baromètre: L'égalité dans les programmes radio en 2024 et 2025

https://www.csa.be/egalitediversite/barometre-radio-2024-2025/

Barometer: Gender equality in radio programmes in 2024 and 2025

https://www.csa.be/egalitediversite/barometre-radio-2024-2025/

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026