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**Gendering European Communication Governance: The challenge of gender mainstreaming twenty years after Beijing**

The paper addresses issues of gender equality and women’s empowerment in the context of European communication governance twenty years after the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995.

The Platform for Action (PfA) adopted on that occasion indicated ‘Women and media’ as one of the critical areas to be addressed in view of promoting gender equality within and across societies. Since then, the Beijing PfA stands as a normative reference for governments, international organizations, media associations and civil society actors to foster gender-aware developments in media structures, content and conduct. Several efforts have recently been made to assess the progress made over the past twenty years; also engaging European institutions like the European Institute for Gender Equality and the Council of Europe, civic and professional organizations like the European Federation of Journalists and academic networks connected to organizations such as the ECREA and IAMCR.

The paper sketches out findings from these activities, with a particular focus on policy and normative developments, at the European as well as national level. Against this background, an effort is made to articulate, for the European context, a research and advocacy agenda the proponent has elaborated with the aim of addressing gender gaps in media and communication governance[[1]](#footnote-1) . Different dimensions - normative, regulatory and contextual; formal and informal processes; multiactors interactions - will be highlighted and discussed, in relation to concrete examples derived from European policy interventions in areas such as gender equality, media policies, Europe 2020 and the Digital Agenda.

By connecting the normative dimension of gender equality, with persisting challenges and emerging policy issues in a multilevel context, the aim of the paper is to contribute an analytical framework to assess contemporary European communication governance from a gender perspective.

1. This was part of the IAMCR contribution to the UNESCO-promoted Global Alliance for Media and Gender (GAMAG) and is available in *Media and Gender: A Scholarly Agenda for the Global Alliance on Media and Gender,* Unesco 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)