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From female quota to megatrend

Since the 1980s, there has been a debate about female quotas, or gender quotas in general, for appointments to management bodies or supervisory board seats. But it was only last year that the Future Institute declared the gender shift a megatrend. Megatrends are global phenomena with a half-life of at least 50 years, affecting all areas of life.

The gender shift predicts that “women will push into leadership positions, and the behavioral patterns of ‘toxic masculinity’ will come under further criticism and eventually lose importance and power.

All in all, the awareness of the value of diversity in business and politics will increase.” In economic terms, in particular, the megatrend is already showing what it's made of. Studies suggest that gender-diverse teams contribute significantly to business success. Enterprises with a high degree of gender diversity are 25% more likely to be successful, not to mention the sales-promoting effect that individual offerings for women and men have.



“

If you can't measure it, you can't manage it.”

- Peter Drucker, Economist

Media - present image and future outlook: Where do companies stand today?

Although these studies are impressive, diversity management in Germany is still in its infancy. Some progress has already been made, but we are nowhere near the goal. Carrie Wooten, managing director of Rise, an organization that promotes gender diversity in media technology, has noted progress since the organization's founding in 2017 in that the issue and discussion of diversity are more entrenched in society than ever before.

Companies recognize the importance and significance of diversity and want to support it.

“

If we want women to feel comfortable and included at work, especially in male-dominated environments, we have to stop this ingrained language use difference.”

- Ruth MacLaren, BBC

The problem is often not a lack of female talent but properly approaching and attracting them to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) career paths. She describes male-dominated companies, where female applicants, especially students and interns, are discouraged and frequently turn away from the company. It is the responsibility of the companies' leadership to prevent this from happening.



We're not short of diverse talent; we're short of understanding how to reach and engage with that diverse young talent.”

- Carrie Wooten, Rise

Francesca Scott, Diversity Equity & Inclusion Officer at the EBU (European Broadcasting Union), also stresses the importance of reaching young girls well before they make pivotal life decisions. Hence, campaigns are being launched in the EBU to “demystify” the field of STEM and gender stereotypes.

Ruth MacLaren, a Broadcast Engineer at the BBC, recalls moments “being asked to make coffee or tea; that someone on the phone asked to speak to another engineer when I picked up and then hung up when my female counterpart answered it; or people calling me 'honey' or 'sweetheart.' Women cannot feel comfortable in such a work environment. There has to be a shared language and equal treatment within the company.”

Another solution to the shortage of female staff, according to Judy Parnall, Head of Standards and Industry at the BBC, is representation. So, female role models should appear on the screens, as well as more mentoring by women.



Diversity Charter

According to the current “Diversity in Germany” report of the 10th Diversity Charter, two out of three companies in Germany have not yet implemented any diversity management measures, and only 19% are planning to implement specific measures in the future. However, all the signatories of the charter focus on diversity training, personnel development measures, and applicant selection. One conclusion of the charter has been that there is tremendous potential for development in various diversity measures across organizations, and that the mindset shift has not yet taken hold in most German companies.

An interview with Dr. Hartmut Klusik, a member of the Management Board at Bayer AG and responsible for Human Resources, Technology, and Sustainability, reveals which measures are essential: inclusion is the watchword here. The company is not concerned with a female quota but with a “balance of cultures and genders that also reflect global markets and customer groups.”

Milagros Caiña-Andree, Member of the Board of BWW Group, explains the importance of diversity and the development of different talents within the company as follows: A work environment free of prejudice, where every employee is equally valued, regardless of gender, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, disability, age, or sexual identity. Only then can sustainable success be achieved.

The BBC's equality project and diversity in the media

Of course, corporate diversity management is also reflected in the media because media plays an indispensable role in shaping public opinion. Moreover, with their objective reporting and investigative journalism, they contribute to the stability of the political system and continual change within society.

Members of society should be able to gather information, communicate and form opinions. In this way, the media make an enormous contribution to democracy, whose supreme principles are to protect the human personality. This includes the press producing diversity and distinctiveness. It also means reflecting different viewpoints that exist in a culture, putting them up for discussion, and presenting media content as it is – without prior censorship. And above all, it includes the true representation of society in all its diversity.

The media are incubators for gender roles, producing images of representation that fall far short of value proclamations and promising trailblazers like Netflix. We see every day how underrepresented women are in the current media supply. They still have less to say, and fictional female characters follow well-worn role clichés.

The 50:50-Challenge

The 50:50 Challenge aims to gather better data on women's representation in media content and how that translates into our daily editorial and production considerations and processes. The longer this data is monitored regularly, the likelier companies will bring about cultural change. In addition, the more data, the easier it is to identify subject areas where women are underrepresented.

Take science or technical professions, for instance. This information allows people to think differently about stories, to include perspectives and possibilities that enrich content with more diversity even before the content is created.

In 2017, the BBC launched the 50:50 Challenge with a mission to inspire and support organizations worldwide to foster journalism and consistently create media content that portrays our world fairly and authentically. Since then, participants have grown to 145 organizations in 30 countries, with the current network including partners in the private and public media, academia, law, the public, and the corporate world.

Participating countries

30

Number of organizations

145



What started five years ago as a simple idea on one BBC News program is now helping to drive sustainable and measurable culture change right across the organization.”

*- Tim Davie, BBC Director of Nations
about the 50:50-Challenge*

Lewis James is Managing Editor at CBBC's Newsround program (News and Fun Facts for Kids) and greatly appreciates the 50:50 Challenge. Newsround's key question: "If children don't feel represented in their news service, where will they? The inclusion of ethnicity and disability in the program has shown what needs to continue to be focused on. Participating in the 50:50 Challenge is one way to measure that."

One thing is certain: Nothing influences our thinking more than the media. So why not amplify the cultural shift here? Rather than making announcements, we should act and create diverse content well before the first screenplay page or show concept is written. Media always had, have, and will have an influence on how diverse our society is.

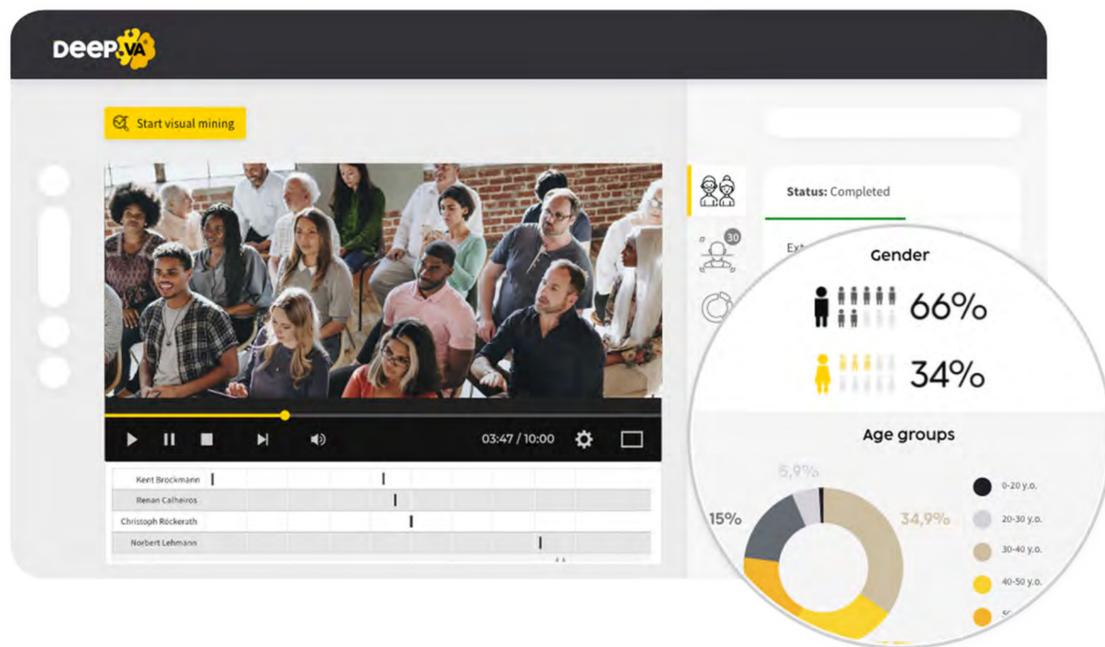


Serving our audiences is at the heart of everything we do, and we will continue to make this monitoring a key priority for everyone."

- Rhodri Talfan Davies, BBC Director of Nations



DeepVA's diversity analysis



Our AI evaluates not only gender and age, but also screen and speech time of shown individuals.

Gender and age recognition in images and videos

With DeepVA diversity analysis, we offer media companies a convenient foundation for their diversity decisions. Diversity analysis scans entire content quickly and easily. Here, the AI evaluates not only the gender and age but also the screen and talk time of each person being shown. Then, at the push of a button, you receive a complete analysis report in PDF format, ready to be used as a reference for your business decisions and journalistic work.

DeepVA seeks to raise awareness about where media currently stand in terms of diversity and pave the way for more inclusive, diverse content.

At this point, DeepVA can evaluate gender equality and age diversity. In the future, we would like to work with DeepVA on the recording of different ethnicities, such as skin color or origin, and are looking for partners to advance this topic with us.

Diversity Charter
Factbook Diversity, March 2021

95%

of companies name women as the main target group for their diversity activities, and 80 percent focus exclusively on taking measures for the benefit of women.

Diversity is a success factor in today's business world

Statista, 2021

65.7%

of respondents in one study believe that pursuing diversity goals helps build a positive corporate image.

Share of women in German TV programs (ARD, ZDF)
tagesspiegel.de, 2022

2020 | 29%

2010 | 11%