

Representation in the Media

As a means of ascertaining whether the media adequately represents the interests of the public, participants were asked to assess whether both domestic and international media adequately represent issues of *gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity, and disability* (please see Table 4 below). Overall, participants agreed that international media is significantly more representative of diversity than domestic media.

Table 4 Representation in Domestic and International News Media

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree, nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
Gender	Domestic Media	13.0%	39.1%	34.8%	13.0%	0%	0%
	International Media	8.7%	60.9%	21.7%	8.7%	0%	0%
Sexual Orientation	Domestic Media	8.7%	21.7%	47.8%	17.4%	4.3%	0%
	International Media	8.7%	47.8%	26.1%	8.7%	4.3%	4.3%
Race	Domestic Media	13%	21.7%	34.8%	26.1%	4.3%	0%
	International Media	8.7%	47.8%	21.7%	17.4%	0%	4.3%
Religion	Domestic Media	17.4%	26.1%	26.1%	26.1%	4.3%	0%
	International Media	13%	43.5%	21.7%	17.4%	4.3%	0%
Ethnicity	Domestic Media	8.7%	34.8%	17.4%	34.8%	4.3%	0%
	International Media	13%	39.1%	26.1%	21.7%	0%	0%
Disability	Domestic Media	4.3%	13.0%	56.5%	17.4%	8.7%	0%
	International Media	8.7%	26.1%	30.4%	21.7%	8.7%	4.3%

When asked to explain their views concerning representations of diversity in domestic media, a number of respondents noted that the media – due to its foremost concern with accruing funding – is oftentimes concerned with subjects which are either popular (in that they appeal to majority groups and their interests) or have the potential to gain popularity due to their outrageous nature. In this latter scenario, participants noted that “[the media] do not care about minorities unless put into a poor light”. Respondents also noted that they thought that domestic media either severely “miscalculate what the public consists of” or “just don’t care about representation [because] it is easier for them not to bother” addressing public concerns. By comparison, international media outlets were regarded as “making an effort to be representative, but this [goal] is not always achieved”.

Participants who declared to engage with domestic news media on a regular basis were further asked to rate the extents to which it reflects *the interests of citizens and residents* and *the concerns of citizens and residents* respectively (please see Table 5). The results show that while all respondents think that the media reflects the interests of citizens and residents at least to some extent, 4.2% of participants believe that domestic news media rarely reflects the concerns of citizens and residents. Further variances can be seen in whether participants assess the representation of *interests* and *concerns* by the media to be “to a good extent” or “to some extent”. Significantly fewer respondents indicate that the *concerns* of citizens are reflected by the media “to a good extent” by comparison to their *interests*.

Table 5 Domestic Media’s Representation of the Citizens’ and Residents’ Interests and Concerns

	To a great or full extent	To a good extent	To some extent	Rarely
To what extent does domestic news media adequately reflect the interests of citizens and residents?	8.3%	37.5%	41.7%	0%
To what extent does domestic news media adequately reflect the concerns of citizens and residents?	8.3%	25%	50%	4.2%

Participants note that while the “plurality of sources generally ensures that many types of stories are covered”, “the outlets are politicised in their coverage” and find themselves “influenced” by funders and partisan concerns. One participant noted that this political influence is so prominent that the media becomes a mere “reflection of the establishment talking to itself...and has no interest in broadening [the scope]” of reporting. Another participant, who noted that they were a media insider, observed that “it is not in [the media’s] interest to reflect what people want, as opposed to what they [powerful élites] want”. It was also noted that, at times, media outlets may make efforts to reflect the interests and concerns of citizens and residents, but that it may simply be “too difficult to incorporate the views of a very diverse population”.