



2024 Paris Paralympics

MEDIA AND GENDER CASE STUDY

isentia



SPORT
NEW ZEALAND
IHI AOTEAROA



About this report

The 2024 Paris Paralympic Games ran from 28 August to 8 September.

This study analyses coverage of the games by New Zealand media and its impact on the gender balance of overall sports coverage during the Games period.

It forms part of the broader [Sport NZ - Isentia study](#), which involves analysis of around one-third of all New Zealand sports news coverage, selected randomly each day. It has been running since 2019.

The study includes television, radio, print and online sports news coverage. It does not include match broadcast and live blogging of sports fixtures. As a result, Sky Sport is not included in this case study.

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Coverage

This section looks at the overall presence of women in sports coverage. This includes the amount of media content that is focused on women's sport, the visibility of women across all sports coverage, and the impact of major sporting events.

Coverage

Balance and visibility

Half of the coverage of the Paris Paralympic Games focused on females, while visibility of women during Games coverage was 52%.

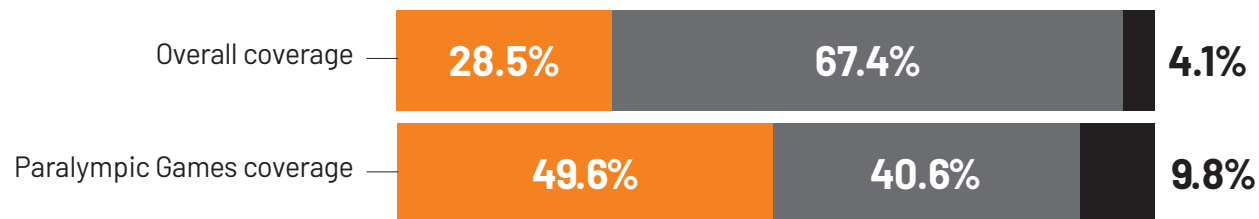
Note:

Balance refers to amount of coverage that was on women's sport, while visibility is the representation of women across sports coverage. Coverage of the Paralympic Games mentions multiple para athletes more than during a non-Games period, so we see a stronger difference between these figures.

'Other' represents mixed teams, non-binary athletes and non-specific sporting bodies. These numbers also include stories where the New Zealand Paralympic team was discussed as a collective, or stories that talked about Paralympics New Zealand as a sporting body that weren't connected to a specific gender.

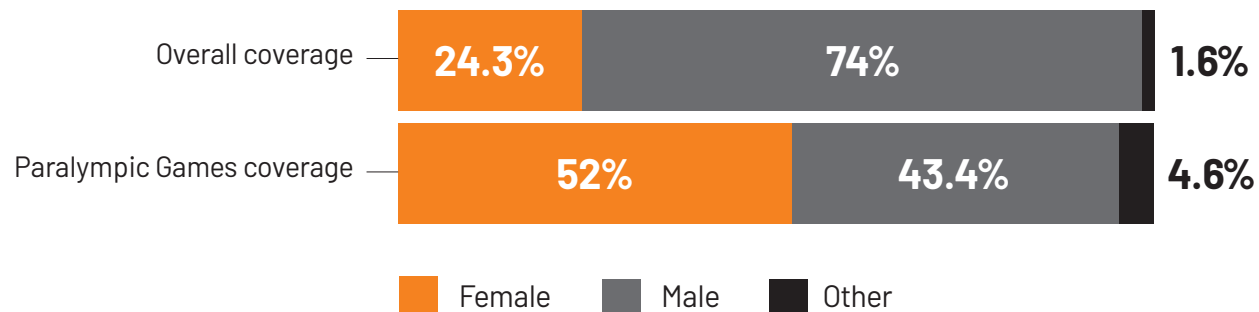
BALANCE

GENDER BALANCE – ALL SPORTS COVERAGE



VISIBILITY

FEMALE VISIBILITY – ALL SPORTS COVERAGE



Coverage

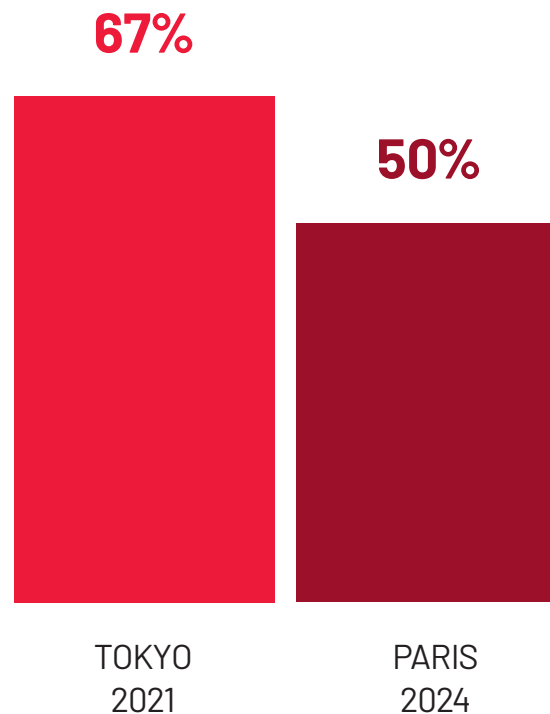
Gender balance comparison at the Paralympics

Coverage of female para athletes during the Paralympic Games dropped by 17% from the Tokyo Games to 50% in Paris. In Tokyo, female athletes won all 6 gold medals from a total of 12 overall. In comparison - there was just the one gold medal in Paris - won by a female athlete - from a total of 9 medals overall. This could account for the drop in female coverage.

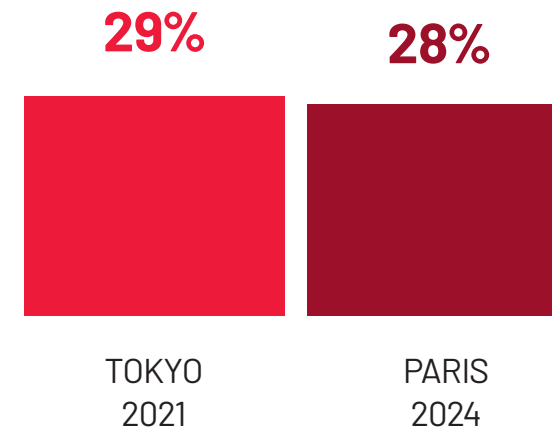
Gender balance for the overall coverage during the Paris Games period was down by just 1% to 28%.

COMPARING BALANCE AT THE PARALYMPICS

PARALYMPIC GAMES COVERAGE



OVERALL COVERAGE DURING THE GAMES PERIOD



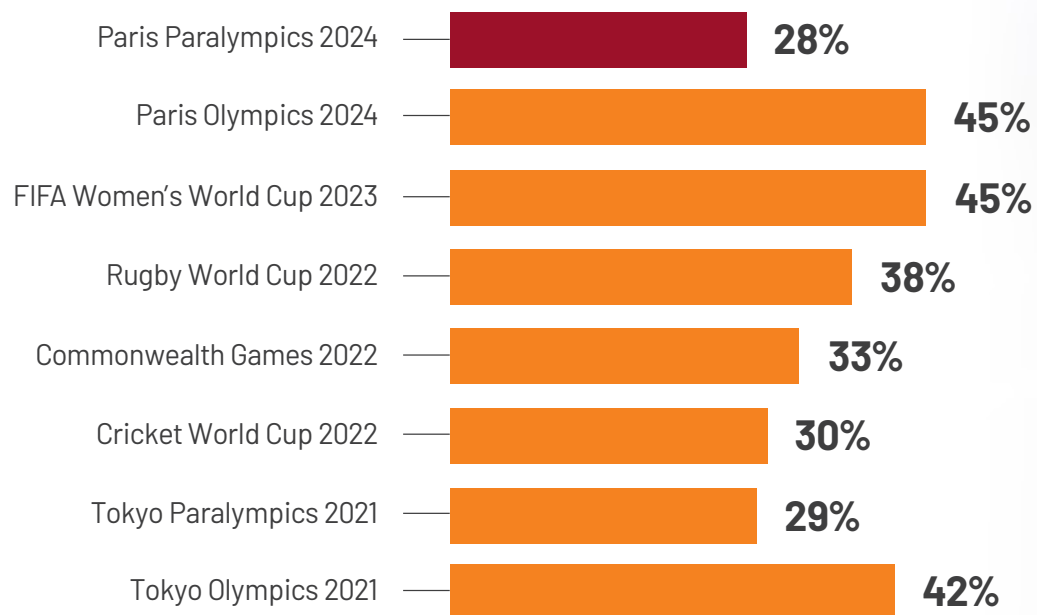
Coverage

Gender balance during major events

This chart shows the gender balance of sports news during the event windows, demonstrating the impact that major events have on overall gender balance and visibility.

The Paris Paralympics maintained similar levels of coverage as seen in Tokyo, with 28% of coverage dedicated to women's sport, compared to 29% in 2021.

KEY EVENT COMPARISONS

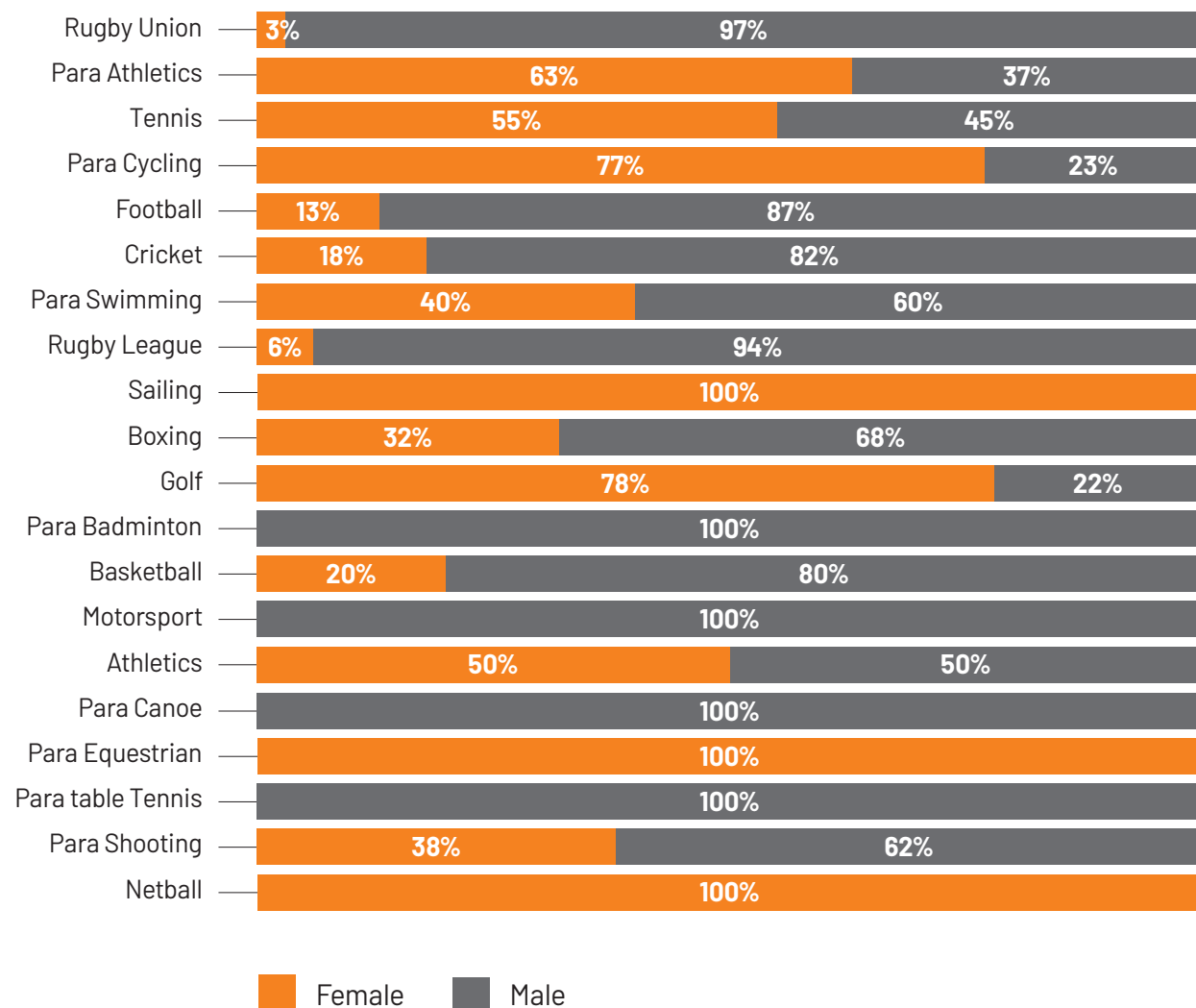


Coverage

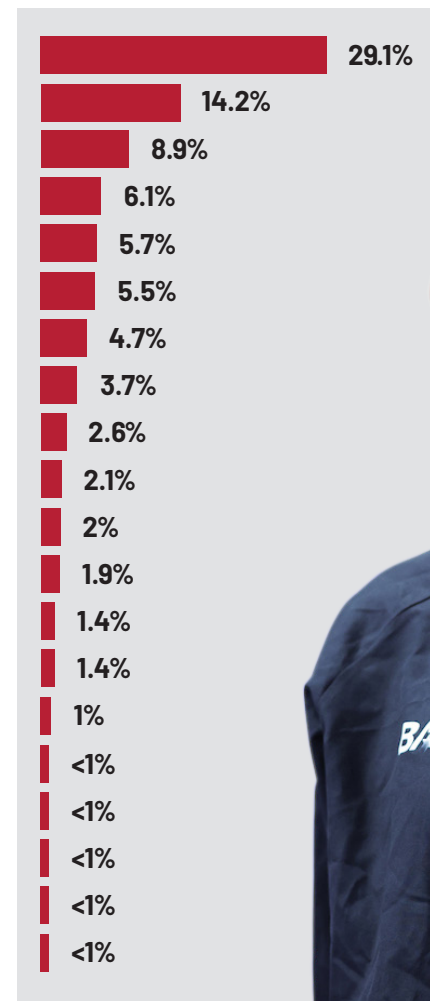
Gender balance by sport

Para athletics had the greatest share of Games coverage at 47.1%, while para cycling had the greatest share of female coverage at 77%. The All Blacks played South Africa during the Games period which accounts for the coverage rugby received. Para athletics, para cycling and para swimming were all in the top ten sports covered during the Games period.

OVERALL COVERAGE DURING THE GAMES PERIOD



Female Male



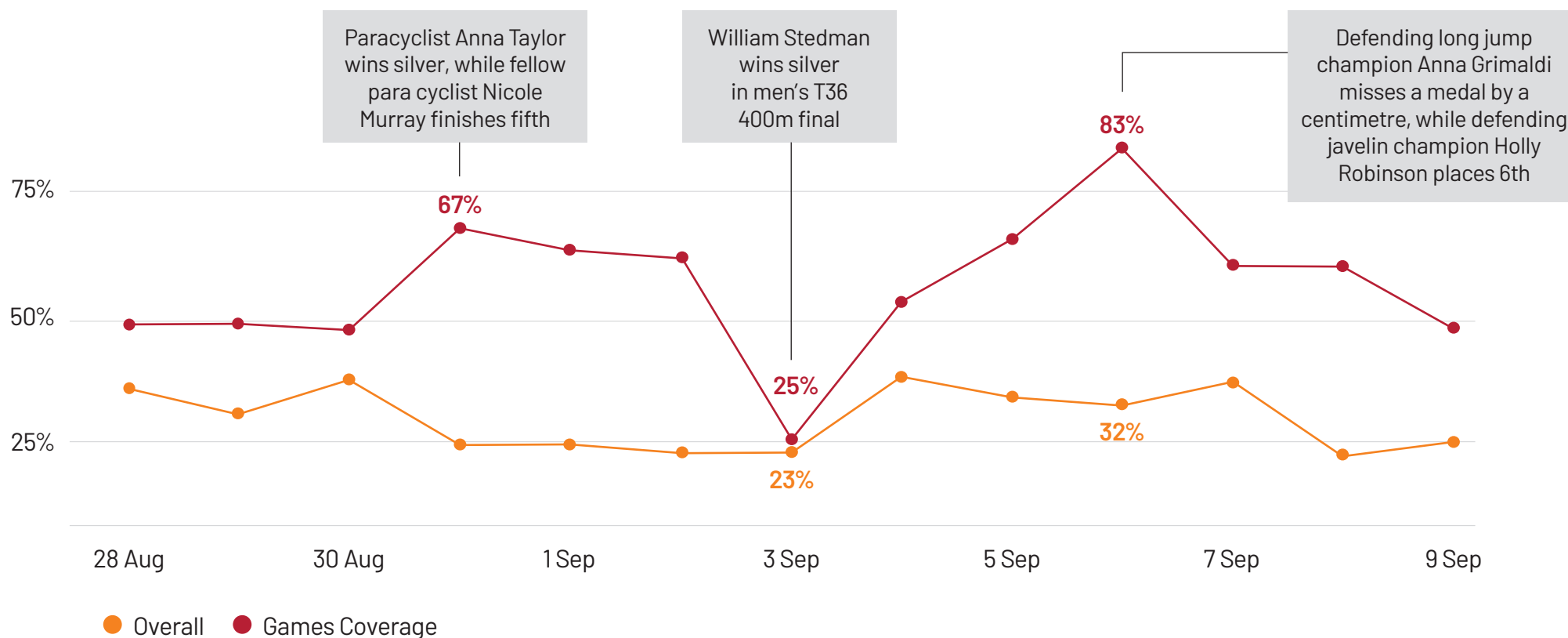
Share of all sports coverage



Coverage

Women's sports coverage daily trend

This chart shows the daily breakdown of coverage of female athletes - comparing the overall coverage to the games coverage. Results significantly influence the coverage of the Paralympics. Medal success gained more coverage as did athletes not meeting expectations. On 7 September, Anna Grimaldi's gold medal win was widely reported. However, there was also coverage of the men's Paralympic efforts - including Scott Martlew making it through to the KL2 200m canoe sprint final, William Stedman qualifying for the T36 100m final, and Cameron Leslie finishing fourth in the 50m backstroke final, which drove the gender balance down.



The Media

This section looks at the gender balance of major media outlets to explore what kind of preferences can be seen by network and sport.

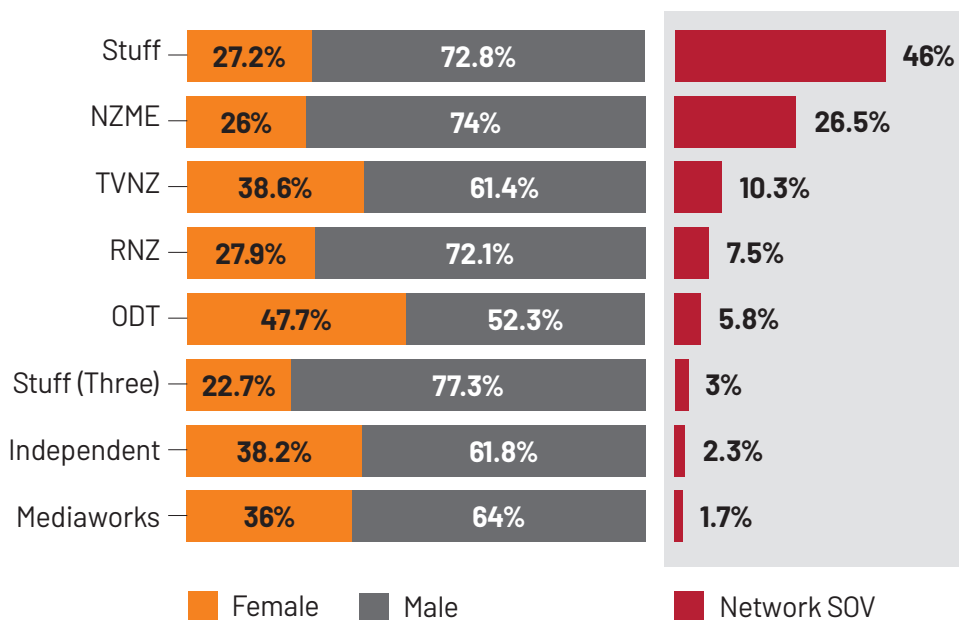
The Media

Gender balance by media outlet

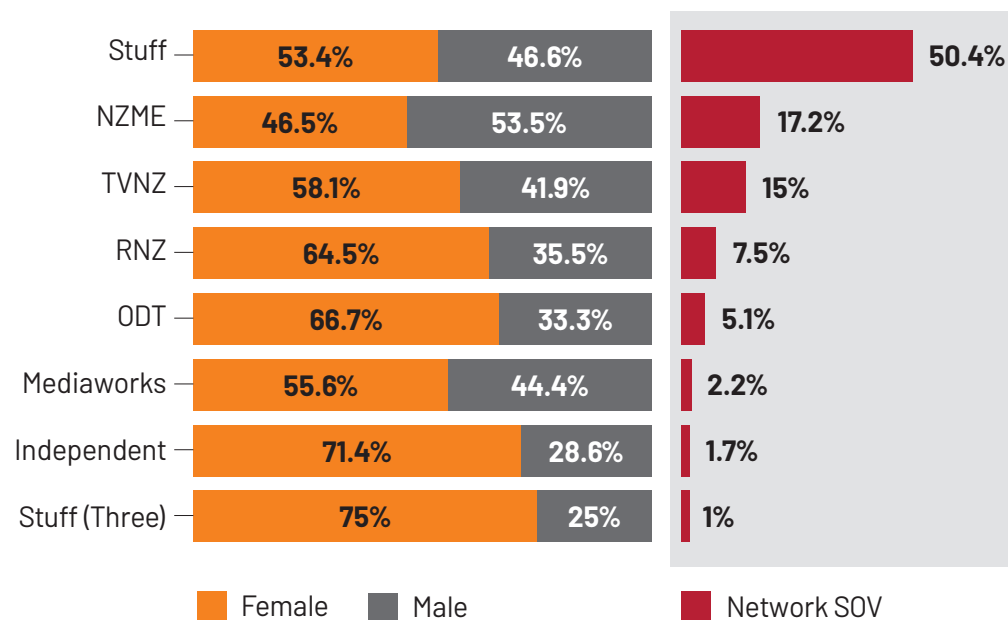
While Stuff led the way with the most Paralympic Games coverage at 50.4%, Three News had the most female coverage of the Games at 75%. It is worth noting that all media outlets had close to, or more than, 50% female coverage of the Games.

In overall coverage during the Games period, the ODT stood out - 47.7% of their coverage was about female athletes.

OVERALL COVERAGE DURING THE GAMES PERIOD



PARALYMPIC GAMES COVERAGE

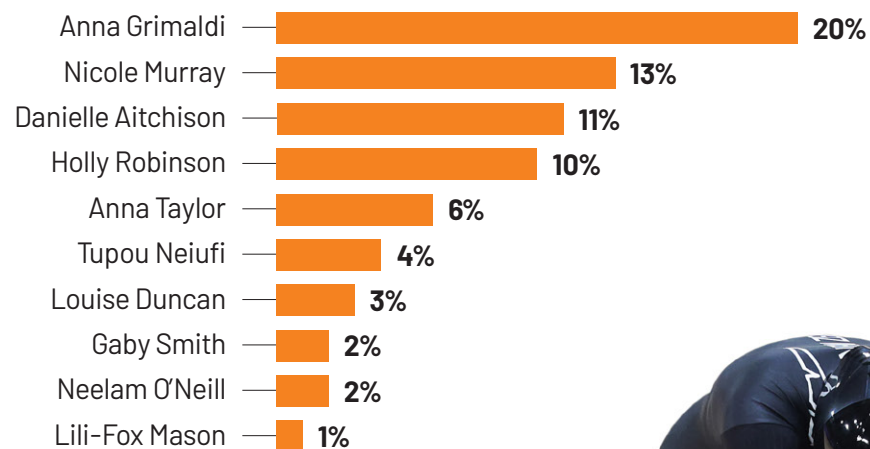


The Media

Most mentioned New Zealand Para athletes

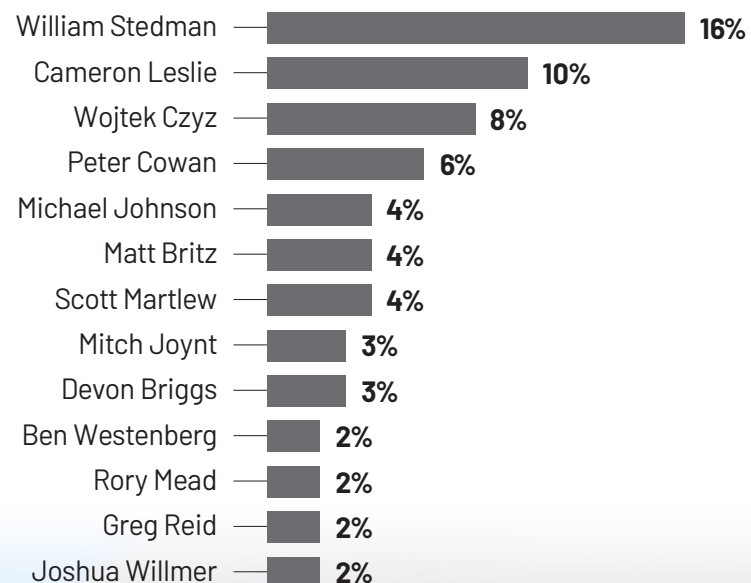
Anna Grimaldi was the most mentioned Para athlete overall after winning New Zealand's only gold medal, along with a bronze medal.

FEMALE ATHLETES



Female Male

MALE ATHLETES



The Media

Bylines - reporters

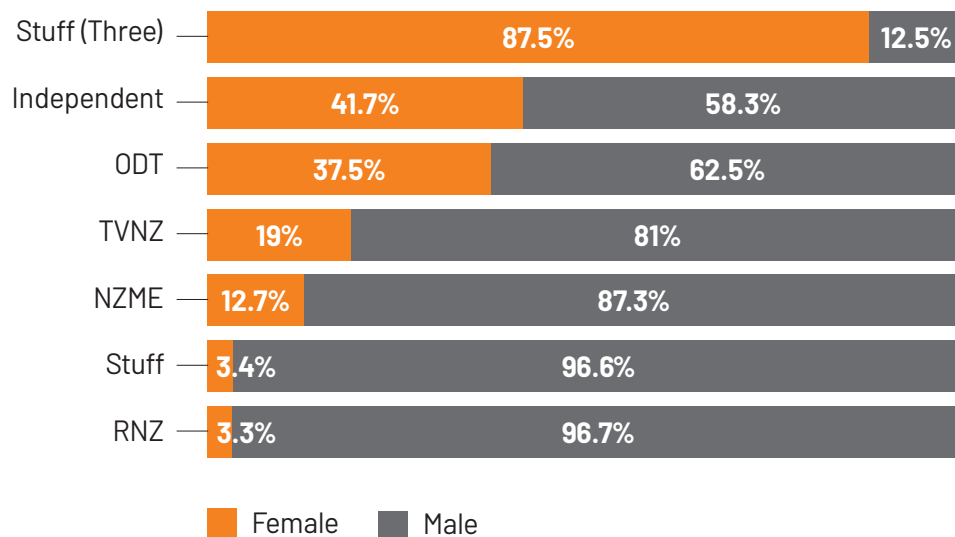
Three News and Independent media organisations, which include Newsroom, The Spinoff, Gisborne Herald, both had only female reporters covering the Paralympic Games. While Three News also led the way in overall coverage during the Games period with 88% of their coverage produced by female reporters.

Overall, there was a much stronger representation of female reporters compared to the Tokyo Games where over 90% of the reporters covering the Games were male.

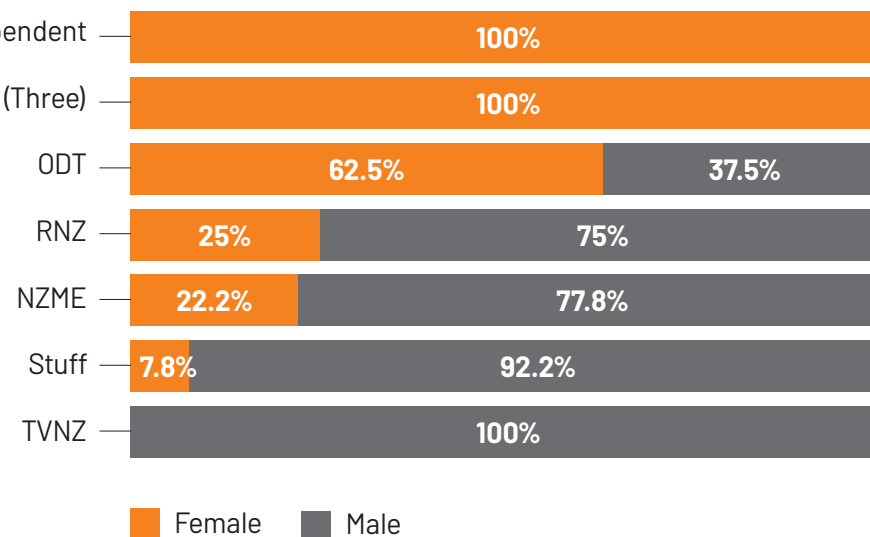
Note:

Broadcast - In this analysis we account for the gender of the presenter, as well as any named reporters. It does not account for voiceover stories read by a presenter, or where the presenter may have been the reporter on a story.

OVERALL COVERAGE DURING THE GAMES PERIOD



PARALYMPIC GAMES COVERAGE



The Media

Bylines - presenters

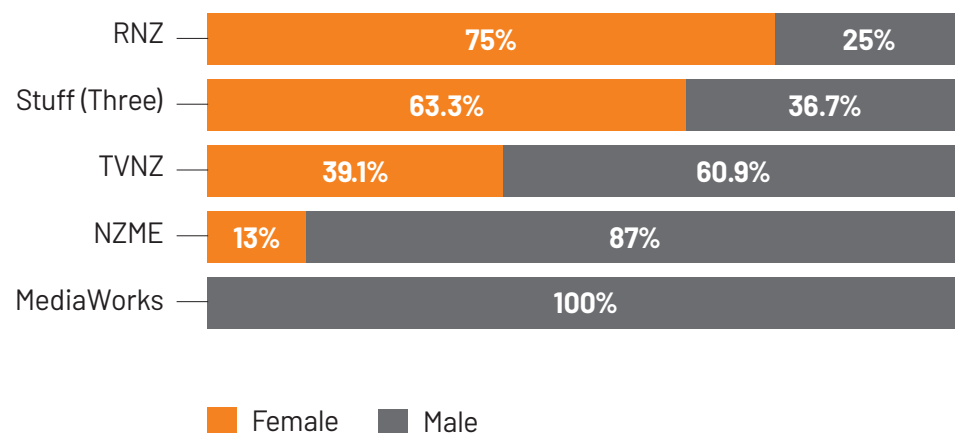
Broadcast presenters and newsreaders are separated from reporters here due to the impact that a high level of representation of women reading the sports news can have on balance.

There was strong representation of female presenters at these Games, particularly on RNZ and Three News where more than 50% of the coverage was presented by females.

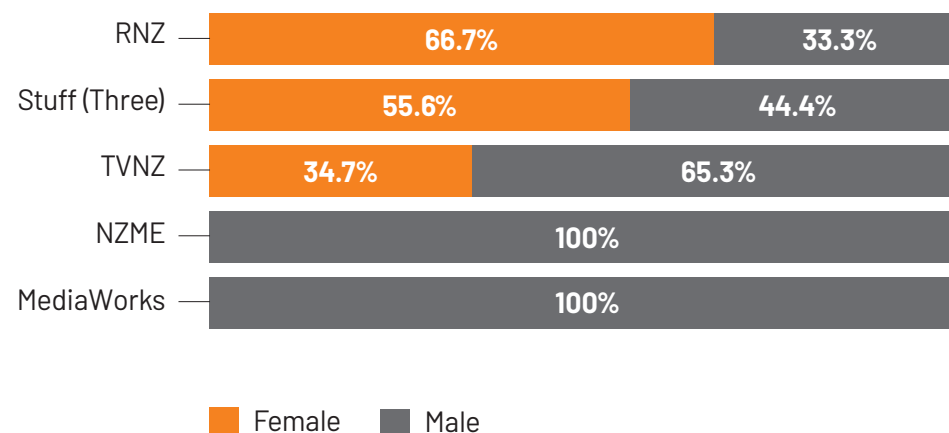
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OVERALL COVERAGE DURING THE GAMES PERIOD



PARALYMPIC GAMES COVERAGE



Portrayal

This section examines the differences in how men and women are reported in the media by topics, language and images.

While levels of coverage of women's sport are increasing, it remains important to consider the content of media coverage to ensure that both the quantity and quality of coverage continue to improve. Over the years of this study, gender bias in athlete portrayal has decreased significantly.

Portrayal Topics

Portrayal markers are influenced by media commentary that the Paralympic campaign was less successful than previous years, with many medals 'missed'. There was also more reporting on the age of the team than is standard due to the high number of debuts and younger athletes that will likely compete in Los Angeles in 2028.

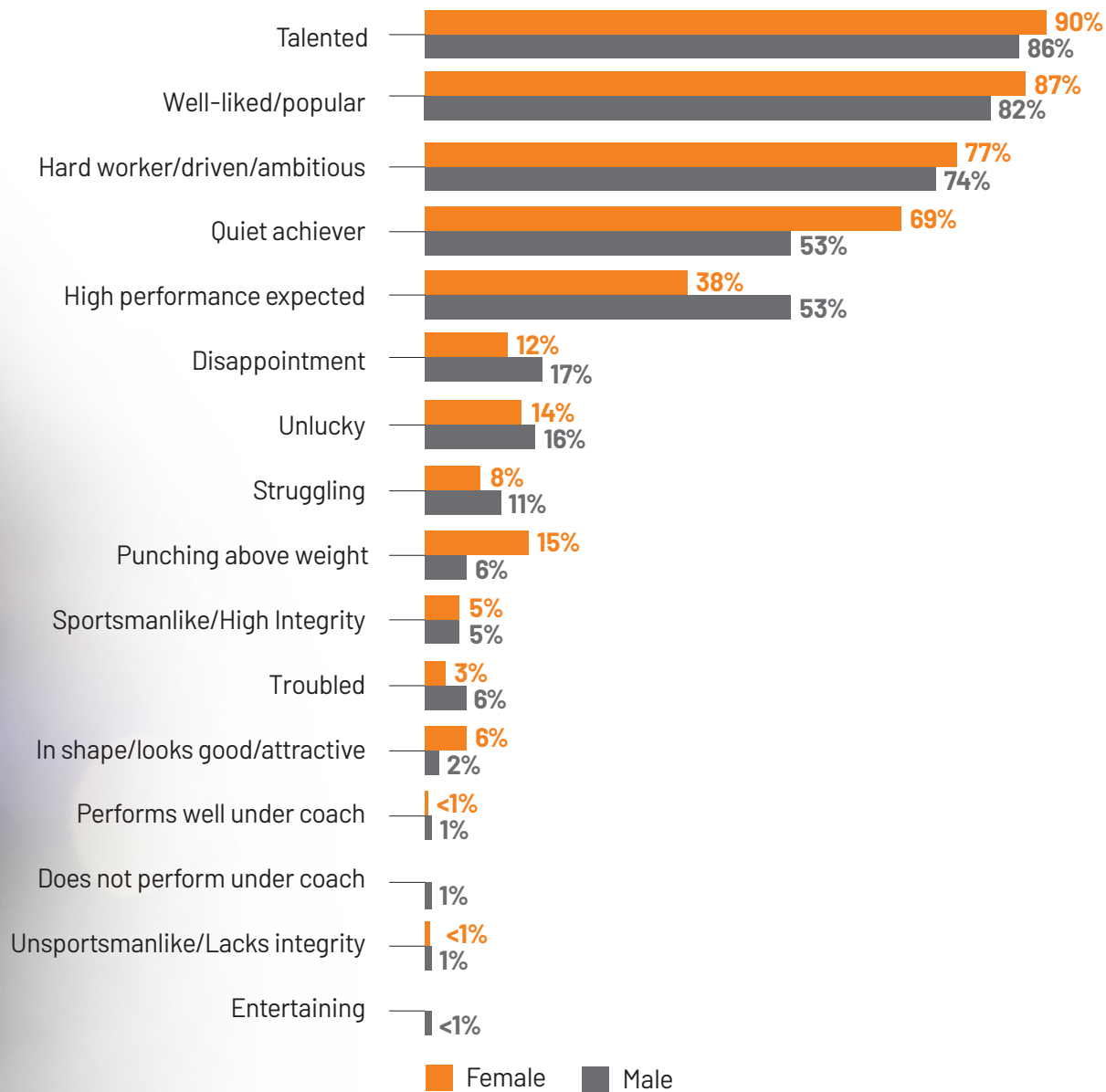
TOPICS – FEMALE VERSUS MALE COVERAGE



Portrayal Narratives



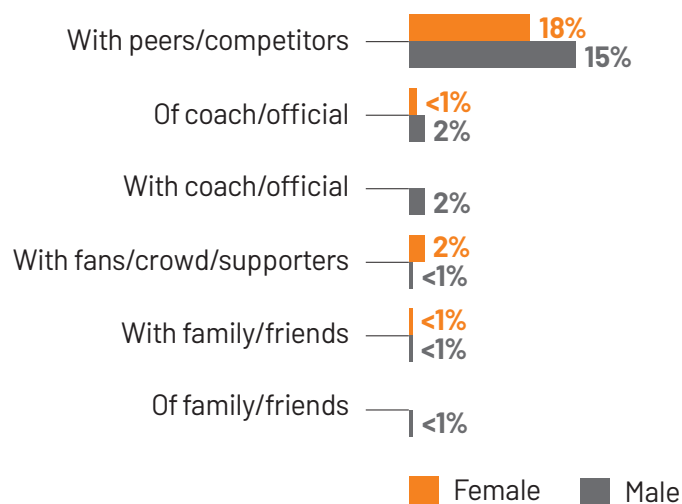
NARRATIVES – FEMALE VERSUS MALE COVERAGE



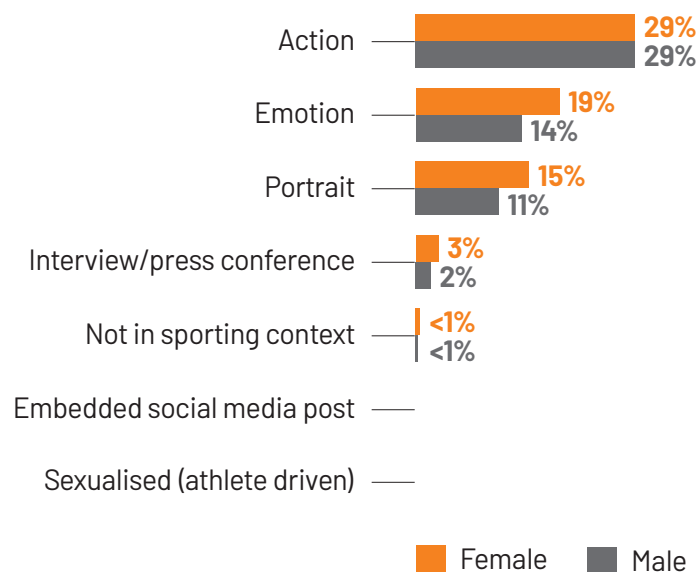
Portrayal Imagery

The way female and male Para athletes were portrayed in imagery was comparable overall. Female Para athletes won 7 of New Zealand's 9 medals at the Paralympics, and the only gold, so were more likely to be portrayed in imagery as showing emotion than their male counterparts. Male Para athletes were more likely to be shown with peers/competitors than females.

IMAGE COMPOSITION



IMAGERY TYPE



IMAGERY APPEARANCE

