

GenderED Coalition

D2.1 Gender-Based Mapping

A cross-country report on Online Gendered Disinformation
(Bulgaria, France, Greece, Italy)



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Executive summary

Background

This report aims at analysing a variety of initiatives about online gendered disinformation in the four partner countries (France, Greece, Italy and Bulgaria) of the Gender-Ed Coalition project. The main objective was to gain some insights of what is currently being undertaken, in the absence of any major mapping exercise to survey the field of gender disinformation in Europe, though it does not aim at covering all countries and all initiatives.

The report provides an overview of the main trends, coming out of a selection of 20 featured projects across the four partner countries (5 projects per country). The projects were identified through a questionnaire elaborated in close cooperation with the partners, and completed by the national experts who are part of Gender-Ed Coalition (Annex 1). The experts were asked to conduct a desk analysis of the national context and to identify, among their monitoring of existing projects, the five most significant ones, which have been used for the case-study research. The experts produced four national reports providing the results that served as the basis for this synthetic cross-country report (Annex 2). The 20 projects are featured on a mapping tool as a basis for community building and networking (Annex 3).

The main dimensions of the questionnaire aimed at identifying the types of projects and their scale, the competence frameworks and their

legitimising values and themes, the capacity-building forces and the main stakeholders and their networks. The experts were also asked to provide information about their national context (historical, legal and policy milestones about gender and disinformation) as well as to provide a set of recommendations coming out of their analysis, to foster awareness and promote change in the general appreciation of online gendered disinformation.

The results will be used 1/ to construct a competence framework based on the existing materials and in order to stop the identified gaps, 2/ to feed into an online mapping tool of good practices, and 3/ to build the Gender-Ed Coalition, drawing from the communities and stakeholders identified in the reports.

The full results can be found in this general report accompanied by 3 annexes:

- Annex 1 provides the template for the questionnaire to be completed by experts
- Annex 2 provides the links to the four national reports showing the findings of the four participant countries
- Annex 3 provides the link to the online mapping of GenderEd Coalition Projects

Main findings

- ❖ Gendered Disinformation is not addressed as a standalone topic. It is not currently the focus of project managers or policymakers. This fragility points at a lack of proactive measures to build resilience to disinformation in the countries analysed.
- ❖ The good practices identified show a variety of configurations across projects and across countries, that confirm the complexity of gendered disinformation and the diversity of correlated issues (health, education and social justice).
- ❖ No existing competence framework dealing with online gendered disinformation and no existing curriculum are confirmed. The competence frameworks, as anticipated, were not mentioned and were not clearly visible, neither in the descriptions of the projects nor in the training methods, even when specific competences are targeted.
- ❖ “Participation” is the leading competence for MIL-based projects whereas “Critical thinking” is the leading competence for gender-based projects. The most significant projects also feature “intercultural dialogue”, including competences around challenging hate speech and online disinformation.
- ❖ Out of the 20 cases examined, the most common category of projects is “resources” (15); the second is “end-user engagement” (9). These two together show the focus on providing front-line support to all kinds of citizens.
- ❖ A majority of projects targeted youth and teachers, in spite of the lack of curricular base, with a much lesser focus on children, yet an interest for seniors. The status of the main professionals involved is teachers, journalists and youth workers, with a surprising lagging behind of influencers.
- ❖ The main themes most likely to be treated in the projects are “Gendered role-modelling” (2), “Gendered stereotypes” (1), “Gendered hatred/Violence” (3) and “Gender disinformation” (6). The themes least likely to be treated in the projects are “Pornography and the pornographic gaze” (4), “Reproductive rights” (9) and “AI gender bias” (5). When crossing critical thinking and participation by themes there is a significant amount of overlap.
- ❖ As for legitimising values, the two leading concepts are “Legal approaches” and “Deconstruction of misogyny and patriarchy”. The least mentioned concepts are “Masculinity and new masculinities” and “Ecology & ecofeminism”.
- ❖ Concerning social media, about half of the projects (11) use or target 2 to 4 types of social media, whereas 4 projects do not use nor target any type of media outside their website. The type of social media use seems to correspond to the target public age, with the prominence of Facebook (for adults and seniors) followed by Instagram and Tiktok (more teen oriented).
- ❖ Most projects show a strong reliance on their websites for disseminating information. There is clearly a huge gap between the subject matter of gender disinformation, the social media impacted by or fostering it and their use or target by most projects.
- ❖ The capacity-building forces tend to rely on EU funding, though there are differences across countries and projects.

- ❖ Project evaluation is mostly internal. Projects that conduct both internal and external evaluation seem to be relying on EU funding and its accountability mechanisms.
- ❖ The main stakeholders show a very heterogeneous situation across EU countries. Funding appears multi-dependent on different stakeholders. A high level of presence of many stakeholders' points at a cross-sectoral approach to the issue of gendered disinformation.
- ❖ As for networks, over half are part of NGOs and public authorities. These types of actors do not necessarily have a statutory responsibility or mission on MIL or Gender education but still have a motivation for the issue.
- ❖ The public policies in presence tend to be dominated by the sector of education. The sector of justice plays a pivotal role, with a relative coherence with competences that deal with participation (gender mainstreaming tools and uses) and critical thinking (gender equity, diversity and visibility). When justice is mobilised, the projects seem to be boosted by the legal frameworks.

Key public policy recommendations

REC#1 – Establish a much-needed baseline for evaluating projects and competence frameworks, to be used by all EU member states.

REC#2 – Develop and implement a comprehensive MIL and gender competence framework, as the basis of specialised qualification programs for professionals.

REC#3 – Produce a Combinatorial Guide for Gender and MIL education as a means of promoting gender equality and democracy transactionally, in particular for public officials in gender equality and anti-discrimination bodies.

REC#4 – Increase awareness and training in online gender disinformation, clearly detailing descriptors and expected outcomes, in particular via Media Literacy and/or Gender education.

REC#5 – Implement effective evaluation by connecting academia and independent research with project management in the early design of the initiatives.

REC#6 – Provide funding, training, access to data and tools and knowledge sharing aimed at improving research and fact-checking capacities.

REC#7 – Enhance Policy Implementation, so as to bridge the gap between civil society's proactive efforts and the delayed and inadequate responses from public authorities.

REC#8 – Support trans-national research to collect data and information through appropriate monitoring systems and tools (like the Gender-Ed Coalition mapping tool) to inform and inspire other policy makers and key stakeholders.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Gendered disinformation (mostly against women) is a pervasive phenomenon that challenges the promotion of gender equality and, consequently, the democratic process. It can hinder progress toward man/woman equality and representation in society. It tends to undermine women's access to leadership roles in all sectors of society (politics, economics...) and can have a chilling effect that dissuades them from participating in civic activities.

As online violence increases, the fight against gendered disinformation has taken a new dimension, online, and brings the focus on social media and technological issues such as algorithmic bias. The malevolent broadcasting and amplification of “fake news” (rumours, deepfakes ...) can affect women by calling into question their credibility and their legitimacy but also by perpetuating gender stereotypes and prejudices. Additional attacks, especially against women in power (besides their professional and political lives, which they mostly share with men) target their physical appearance, with allusions of a pornographic nature (Stabile et al, 2019).

Defining gendered disinformation is not easy but researchers point to distorting facts so as to manipulate public opinion by promoting

misogynistic and stereotypical scenarios and eliciting online gender-based violence sometimes related to real life aggression (Sobirai 2020). This goes along with the definition of disinformation at large, in the EU (2018), that encompasses both the producers of misleading messages and also the amplifiers. Social media (and mass media gone digital) can influence the way information is presented and spread disinformation by reinforcing gendered narratives and portraying women in biased ways. This banalisation and thus normalisation of sexism has been denounced by researchers such as Rita Segato (2018) as patriarchal “media pedagogy of cruelty”. Both can foster a festered breeding ground for gendered disinformation. Such historical, educational and legal biases may be reinforced by algorithms that are trained on flawed datasets from previous eras (Jankowicz, 2017; Wagner 2022). The other factors that amplify the role of social media platforms are their large cross-border reach, their tendency to create “echo chambers” of like-minded individuals and their anonymity that can encourage people to engage in gender-based violence or defamation.

Among the solutions to this spreading issue, working on the literacy of users is becoming crucial so as to ensure that they are aware of the phenomenon and that they can modify their online behaviour so as not to propagate online gendered disinformation. This emphasis on literacy can take the form of formal education in school curricula or extracurricular initiatives to train youth and trainers alike. Bringing

awareness to gendered disinformation can be sought via gender education but also in media and information literacy.

“Media and Information literacy” (MIL) is a wide concept, coined by UNESCO in the Sfez Declaration of 2011 and defined as “Media Literacy” by the EU Directive on Audiovisual Media Services (2018), in its article 59: “Media literacy refers to skills, knowledge and understanding that allow citizens to use media effectively and safely. In order to enable citizens to access information and to use, critically assess and create media content responsibly and safely, citizens need to possess advanced media literacy skills. Media literacy should not be limited to learning about tools and technologies but should aim to equip citizens with the critical thinking skills required to exercise judgement, analyse complex realities and recognize the difference between opinion and fact.” It is an obligation of the member states and has been integrated in national policies, with reporting every three years.

Gender Education is also a wide concept, defined by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) as a “necessary part of curricula at all levels of the education system, which would enable both girls and boys, women and men to understand how constructions of masculinities and femininities and models for assigning social roles – which shape our societies – influence their lives, relationships, life choices, career trajectories, etc.” (<https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/132>). Though it does not benefit from an all-encompassing instrument, it can attach itself to the 2006 Directive on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal

treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation.

Bringing together these two types of literacies can be seen as a means to deal with the emerging issue of online gendered disinformation. The challenges for this report and the Gender-Ed Coalition project as a whole are multiple:

- 1/ the need to establish a first baseline, in the absence of a common evaluation framework to assess a diverse range of initiatives that deal with gendered disinformation via either media literacy projects or gender education projects
- 2/ the existence of various possible national interpretations of the definitions of MIL and Gender Education, including the social factors that shape the significance of literacy, media and gender per se.
- 3/ the difficulty of determining which “good practices” are or become “significant” and worthy of analysis and scaling up, as these bottom up initiatives tend to co-mingle with top-down instruments.

1.2 Objectives of the report

The purpose of the report is to identify the “good practices” that exist within the four European partners (Bulgaria, France, Greece, Italy) on the topic of online gendered disinformation as a threat to achieving inclusive environments on social media platforms (and other media), with a high Media and Information Literacy (MIL) component. The data gathered will hopefully contribute to a clearer understanding of the similarities and differences between the European countries

competence frameworks and their legitimising values, especially in terms of the various actors involved in the process.

Four major areas are considered that might yield pertinent answers: 1/the types of projects (scale, target public), 2/ the competences frameworks (standard setting tools, themes, legitimising values), 3/ the capacity-building forces and instruments (public policies, funding, evaluation) and 4/ the major stakeholders (media, networks).

The analysis of “good practices” as a case-study approach was adopted as it is the most likely to yield concrete results in the case of issues like MIL or Gender education that are optional and cross-cutting, with no baselines for evaluating them.

For the purpose of this study, “good practices” are defined as projects involving strategies and/or activities that have proven to be effective, sustainable and/or transferable, relying on resources and materials that have been shared and tested, with desired results, to be found via a dedicated website, to ensure that public awareness exists about them and that they are not a “one-shot” experiment (Frau-Meigs et al, 2019). They therefore reflect what is visible, with an online display, due to the focus on gendered disinformation via social media; they do not necessarily show the full range of existing strategies and actors.

For feasibility purposes, national experts were asked to select a limited corpus of 5 “good practices” reflecting a mix of MIL, gender education and/or online disinformation among a larger number of initiatives. Also, for feasibility purposes and in agreement with GenderED Coalition proposal, the selection was made on projects focusing primarily on

men/women relations, including the sexual orientation perspective if relevant. The expected results are therefore not fully exhaustive but reflect a modicum of representativity — and institutional as well as financial support — across a short period of time (2015-2024). They cannot be generalised but can point to major trends and emerging practices.

Such a mapping process can serve as a pilot for a more extensive diagnostic tool and as an inspirational guide to evaluate policies and practices in the European countries considered, so as to promote change in the area. The data gathered are published as country reports on the Gender-ED website (<https://www.genderedcoalition.net/>). They are compiled in a cross-country comparison report also published on the website. The results will further be disseminated in diverse venues and shared with policy-makers and other stake-holders in the shape of strategic policy recommendations.

1.3 Methodology

The methodology adopted for this report is adapted from the Mapping of Good Practices in media literacy conducted by the European Audiovisual Observatory (EAO, 2016) and from the “Transliteracy ANR project” conducted with the COST project “Transforming Audiences, Transforming Societies (Frau-Meigs et al, 2017). The methodology combines desk research as well as quantitative case-studies (20 projects examined). The responses from the experts were collected from February to May 2024, and the national reports were finalised in June 2024.

The four main areas of the questionnaires sought to gather information about 1/the types of projects (scale, target public), 2/ the competences frameworks (standard setting tools, themes, legitimising values), 3/ the capacity-building forces and instruments (public policies, funding, evaluation) and 4/ the major stakeholders (social media, networks). They were distributed across 12 dimensions to be coded for statistical calculation (Annex 1).

In the absence of existing validated competence frameworks at EU level regarding online gendered disinformation, the identification of the competences was based on the existing MIL competences determined by the EAO. They were: critical thinking, creativity, intercultural dialogue, media use, participation, and interaction. The same categories were used for Gender Education competences, with adjustments made for gender, using elements from the EIGE indicators.

The national experts were asked to proceed in three steps:

1. Identify 5 projects (from 2015-2024) that, according to the experts' experience, deal with a mix of gender, online disinformation, and MIL. Given the focus of project Gender-Ed Coalition, the main focus for selection was on women and man/woman interactions.
2. Enter the description of each using the online questionnaire to create an ID card for each project with 12 dimensions (ranging from competences to stakeholders to funding and evaluation).
3. Produce a synthesis (20 pages), with 1/brief national history/context, 2/national legal and political framework, 3/

most outstanding results of comparison of 5 projects, 4/ Conclusions derived from results (major trends, identified gaps...), and 5/ two recommendations for public policies.

The starting date for selecting the projects is 2015, based on EU legislation and frameworks such as Equality in action, Roadmap for equality between women and men (2010) and Strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015). It is also based on the moment when disinformation was identified as a real democratic issue in the USA and the EU (2015--). The closing date was 2024, to ascertain that the projects chosen could be taken into their final step (evaluation).

This kind of methodology presents some limitations:

1/ The sample selection bias is to be expected, with experts having to exert their discretion and make choices in terms of the "significance" of the good practices chosen and having to deal with not finding projects that were totally focused on online gendered disinformation. For feasibility purposes, they were asked to select a mix of projects that focus on either MIL or gender education.

2/ The sample size is small. Consequently, the results are indicative and point to trends that would need to be tested with a larger sample, using the same set of parameters as they provide the basis for potential indicators.

3/ Most selected projects are fairly new and sometimes evolving, which could affect the impact of the findings. Yet the pre-selection bias of requiring projects with a website was meant to ensure some public diffusion of findings and effectiveness of practices.

The results reported are not to be used as rankings or generalisations. Proportions are underlined rather than percentages; percentages are avoided every time numbers are referred to less than 100 value units. They tend to point at dominant trends, strengths and weaknesses, and

potential gaps. While the national country reports bring in more details and specificities, this cross-country report aims at providing a snapshot of the existing situation in four EU member-states.

2. Contextual overview (brief)

2.1 Historical context (see Annex 2 for more details on national situations)

The recent national histories of the countries considered create a very heterogeneous context for gendered disinformation, with specific strengths and vulnerabilities. External factors such as the role of the EU and its policies need to be taken into account, especially in the case of Bulgaria that joined the EU with the CESEE (*Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe*) in 2007. European integration has followed different timelines, France and Italy being part of the core process, in 1958, Greece joining in 1981, and Bulgaria in 2007. In Bulgaria, for instance, the history of gender studies is relatively short; academic studies and university programs first emerged after the fall of communism, as the previous regime did not foster attention to women's movements or gender issues. The same analysis could be applied to Media and Information Literacy, despite a strong tradition of film literacy.

The process of European integration has meant economic and political stabilisation as well as democratic consolidation, including of media institutions, with the promotion of democratic values and practices across many sectors (see Dimension “Legitimising values”). All countries, especially Greece, Italy and France have taken great steps in the institutionalisation of gender equality, from early on, and the same holds true for MIL in education. Existing differences, due to particular political, economic and social developments of the recent decades, remain, especially in Bulgaria that has been operating a rapid transition to liberal democracy, with multiple political parties and improved press freedoms.

Since 2018, all four countries have put in place fact-checking initiatives and MIL education programs that seem to have significantly improved in the past two years, since 2022, all being part of EDMO (European

Digital Media Observatory) via national or regional hubs (BROD for Bulgaria, DE FACTO for France, IDMO for Italy and MEDMO for Greece). Bulgaria, in particular, has sought to empower users as a vital component of strategies to analyse and tackle disinformation because of the specific vulnerability of Bulgarian discourse on various polarising issues, due to its proximity to Russia and to its potential porosity to Russian interference and propaganda. France is probably the most advanced in MIL, with the generalisation of this cross-cutting education to the whole curriculum, from K1 to K12.

The way countries deal with these issues tends to show a general shift towards participatory culture and civic literacies, including those about gender and media. This shift is happening mainly under the influence of non-governmental organisations, which can include academia and civil society organisations. This shift is visible when dealing with the challenges of the digital world. Of all four countries, the Western ones seem to have most addressed the online challenges of disinformation and online activism, especially Italy where hashtags such as *#NonUnaDiMeno* have sparked important conversations about sexual harassment, violence against women, and systemic discrimination. However, in all countries, the rise of online women's activism has also been met with a male backlash, with the rise of misogynistic networks and hate groups seeking to intimidate women, especially women in power, online and offline. Despite a growing number of initiatives to combat online harassment and/or gender-based violence, women are still vulnerable and overexposed in the URL arena as much as in the IRL arena.

In the absence of an actual baseline, the historical contexts can be further assessed by using two existing tools that shed some further insights, though they do not directly make it possible to assess the state of online gendered disinformation:

- The ML Index, conducted by Open Society Institute (Sofia), since 2017, “is an instrument for ranking societies in their potential for resilience in the face of the post-truth, disinformation, and misinformation (e.g. “fake news”) phenomena. The model employs several indicators – the quality of education, media freedom, trust in society, and the usage of new tools of participation.” The model provides several clusters, in terms of countries with similar characteristics: the 1st cluster comprises the “best-performing” countries, the 2nd cluster is composed of “well-performing” countries, the 3rd cluster is “transitional” with countries that are at risk of slipping further down the ranking, the 4th cluster is of already “problematic” countries, the 5th cluster is for the countries with the “poorest performance”. According to the latest 2023 index, France is part of the 2nd cluster; Italy and Greece are part of the 3rd cluster (Greece having moved from 4th to 3rd in 2023), and Bulgaria remains part of the 4th cluster, though registering a 2-point drop in the scoring. Bulgaria performs worst in indicators related to education and media freedom, and best in indicators related to new forms of civic participation (OSIS,2023).

- The Gender Equality Index, conducted by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), has tracked the painfully slow progress of gender equality in the EU since 2010, mostly due to advances in decision-making. The index is a composite indicator, with a total of six core domains (work, money, knowledge, time, power and health) and two satellite domains (violence against women and intersecting inequalities). The recent results show that “While equality is more pronounced in some Member States than in others, it is far from a reality for everyone in every area. Gender norms around care, gender segregation in education and the labour market, and gender inequalities in pay remain pertinent”. According to the latest 2023 index, the ranking shows that Bulgaria (16th) is one of the countries that progressed most while remaining under the EU score, as a whole. Italy (14th) and Greece (24th) are also below EU average. France (6th) is above the EU average. However, notably, the index could not take into account the “violence” scores (EIGE, 2023).

Both indices seem to place the four countries considered in similar categories or clusters, for MIL and Gender. Both consider France as performing above average, Italy and Greece as performing below average and Bulgaria as performing poorly. However, none of these indices have indicators for competences or for assessing “good practices”, or “public policies”. This leaves room for further analysis and interpretation of new findings.

2.2. Legal and political context (seen Annex 2 for more national details)

The legal and political framework for gendered disinformation shows a very fragmented situation across countries, but an acceleration of change and transition in recent, contemporary times. The tendency for institutionalisation of gender equality and of MIL is very present in all countries. It goes hand in hand with a strong motivation and legitimization in terms of social cohesion, with “gender equality” as the main field-structuring concept to the detriment of potential others, such as gendered disinformation or gender-based violence (see Dimensions “Legitimizing Values” and “Public policies” and “Stakeholders”).

This trend seems to be attached to several international institutions such as the EU and the Council of Europe. Their instruments and regulatory tools that hold a strong influence and acts as a levelling process. Among the most mentioned are:

- The 2006 EU Directive on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation.
- The Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence or “Istanbul Convention” adopted in 2011 entered progressively into force across the countries covered by the Council of Europe and was signed by the EU in 2017. France ratified it in 2011 and Italy in 2013.

Greece ratified it in 2020, by contrast with Bulgaria that did so, only partially in 2023, in areas that fall within the competence of the EU.

- the 2018 EU Directive on Audiovisual Media Services, that required translation into national law by 2020, was instrumental in establishing MIL policies in education, but mostly in Audiovisual Regulatory Authorities, in charge of reporting about it.

The development of political structures and public policies in all four countries considered is a result of European integration. Accordingly, many legal actions have been implemented into the national legislation in the field of democracy, human rights and citizenship, which includes MIL and gender. These legal actions are due to the mandatory harmonisation of public policies with the European standards set by directives. Various sectors are touched, in particular justice, labour (and health), whereas education tends to be the least directly touched, as the Division of Education and Culture is subject to the subsidiarity principle, where EU institutions can only have a supporting or overseeing role in relation to national school systems.

Some dynamics are visible in terms of implementation that impact the activities of other sectors in society, including education. This is particularly true in terms of raising public awareness and understanding of what is behind information, disinformation and when gender is concerned, gender equality primarily. One of the potential hindrances to full implementation, and to going beyond gender equality as a field-

structuring concept, comes from the discrepancies in understanding and translating the terms “gender” and “sex”. Bulgaria has experienced difficulties in coming to an acceptable definition of “gender” and “gender identity”. For its part, France (together with Germany) has resisted a standard consent-based definition of “rape”, as proposed by the 2023 European Union new directive to protect women from violence. This is problematic for purposes of protection from Gender-Based Violence.

However, all four countries have also moved towards national strategies on gender and disinformation without relying on EU instruments or waiting for their adoption. Italy passed the "Red Code" (*Codice Rosso*) law, in 2019, to accelerate the judicial process for cases involving domestic violence. Italy has recognized femicide as a distinct crime since 2023, acknowledging the gender-specific nature of violence against women and aiming to address it through targeted legal and social measures. Moreover, in 2011, the “Golfo-Mosca” Law mandated that women must make up at least one-third of the boards of publicly listed companies, thus demonstrating that pioneering laws are effective in enforcing gender equality. France moved towards a national strategy on gender equality per se with the 2014 Act on Real Equality between Women and Men that references gender mainstreaming, as an “integrated approach on gender” that makes gender equality a transversal necessity across all policy fields. This has led to several inter-ministerial plans to foster gender equality. In 2024, France modified its Constitution to include the right to abortion in its text, the first country in the world to do so. In Bulgaria, the Law on Equality between Women and adopted in 2016 is the main legal document on gender equality. It

includes a legal obligation to implement gender mainstreaming and provides for national, regional and local policies. However, there are no provisions regarding enforcement or sanctions. In Greece, the General Secretariat for Gender Equality is in charge of preparing the framework strategy for the integration of equality policies in all areas of action (gender mainstreaming). All countries have plans for their National Strategy for Promoting the Equality of Women and Men that are updated regularly

All four countries have developed their own independent bodies and tools for monitoring and regular reporting. In France, the Deputy Minister of Gender Equality publishes a report on key figures related to gender equality, in the fields of employment, education, health, culture, and violence against women for instance. In Bulgaria, the Commission for Protection against Discrimination (CPD) is the independent semi-judicial body which aims to prevent discrimination and ensure equal opportunities, since 2005. In Greece, The National Council on Equality between Women and Men is the permanent body for consultation and cooperation between institutions and civil society on the development of gender equality policy.

As for Media and Information Literacy, reporting and monitoring via independent bodies is also fostered, like ARCOM in France or the Hellenic Telecommunications and Post Commission (EETT) in Greece. However, there is relatively fluid and porous insertion and legitimization of MIL via the Digital agenda and digital rights of the four countries considered. In France, several entities share the burden, like CLEMI or

CANOPE for the Ministry of Education and CNIL for data security and privacy. In Greece, MIL is partly overseen by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, in collaboration with the Ministry of Digital Governance. Also in Greece, the National Alliance for Digital Skills and Employment, a coalition of organisations, works to bridge the digital gap and promote digital skills. Italy follows a similar trend, with Repubblica Digitale, coordinated by the Department for Digital Transformation of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, focuses on reducing the digital divide and promoting future technology education. In 2021, it established a working group on the digital gender divide, aiming to ensure equal access and opportunities in the digital space for all genders, thus recognizing a gendered disparity in the online presence and digital competences. In Bulgaria, the law must be implemented through the preparation of a national media literacy policy by the Minister of Culture with the participation of the Council for Electronic Media. However, there are not yet any strategic frameworks in place to develop and measure media literacy or digital competences.

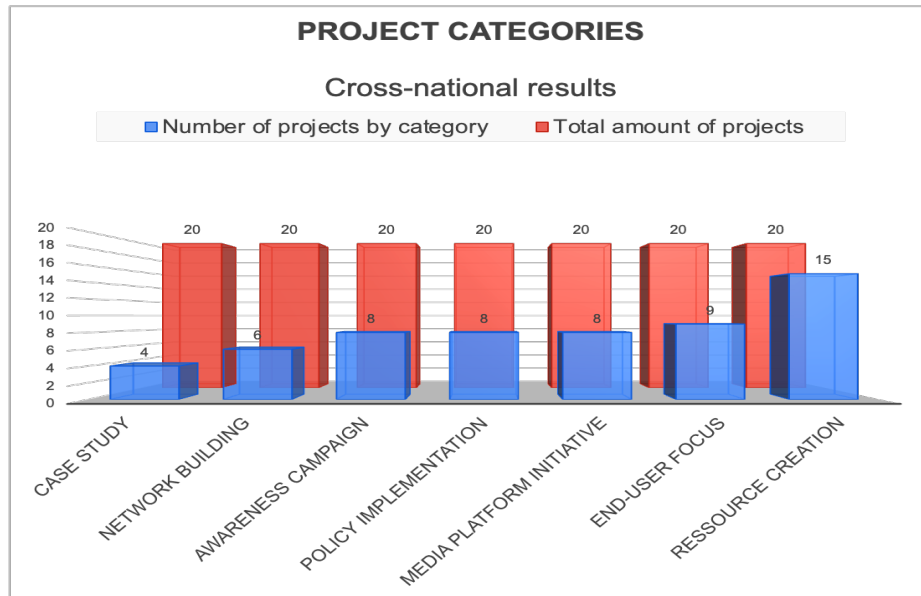
Thus, despite a strong presence of legal and policy frameworks on gender equality and on MIL, most countries are still weak in their responses, struggling to grasp the scale and complexity of sexual violence, not to mention GBD. This calls for more societal awareness and institutional evolution, to create trust in institutions and enforce compliance within the democratic societies under study. Despite the recognition of the digitization process in all sectors, the existing policy frameworks seem to favour technocratic procedures, that slow down

the implementation of measures in favour of gender equality. Despite the transversal nature of both Media Literacy and Gender literacy, there are no special provisions to bring them together and they seem to belong to two different realms of official policy, and state agencies. Additionally, there is little attention to addressing gender violence from

a cultural perspective, with few educational efforts in that direction. The response seems to be generic, using “gender equality” as a catch-all phrase that tends to identify women as victims, not actors, and fails to address the perpetrators and the systemic prevalence of patriarchal power.

3. Main results of cross-country comparison

3.1 Project category

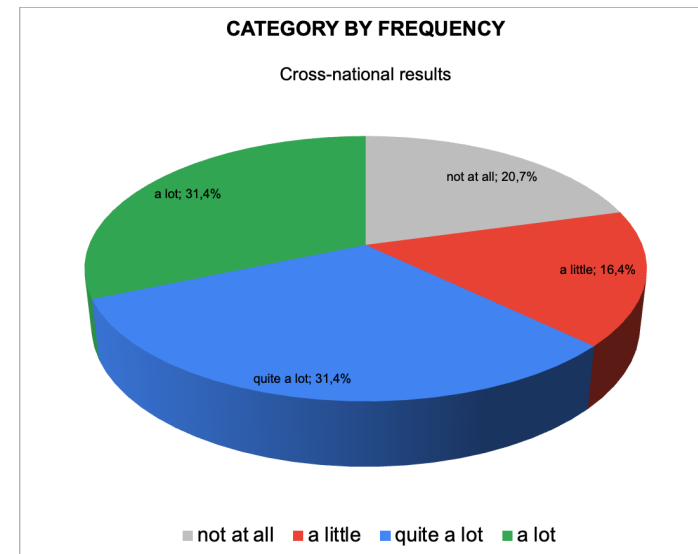


Frequency of categories by projects (Frequency scale 0 = not at all / 1 = a little / 2 = quite a lot / 3 = a lot)

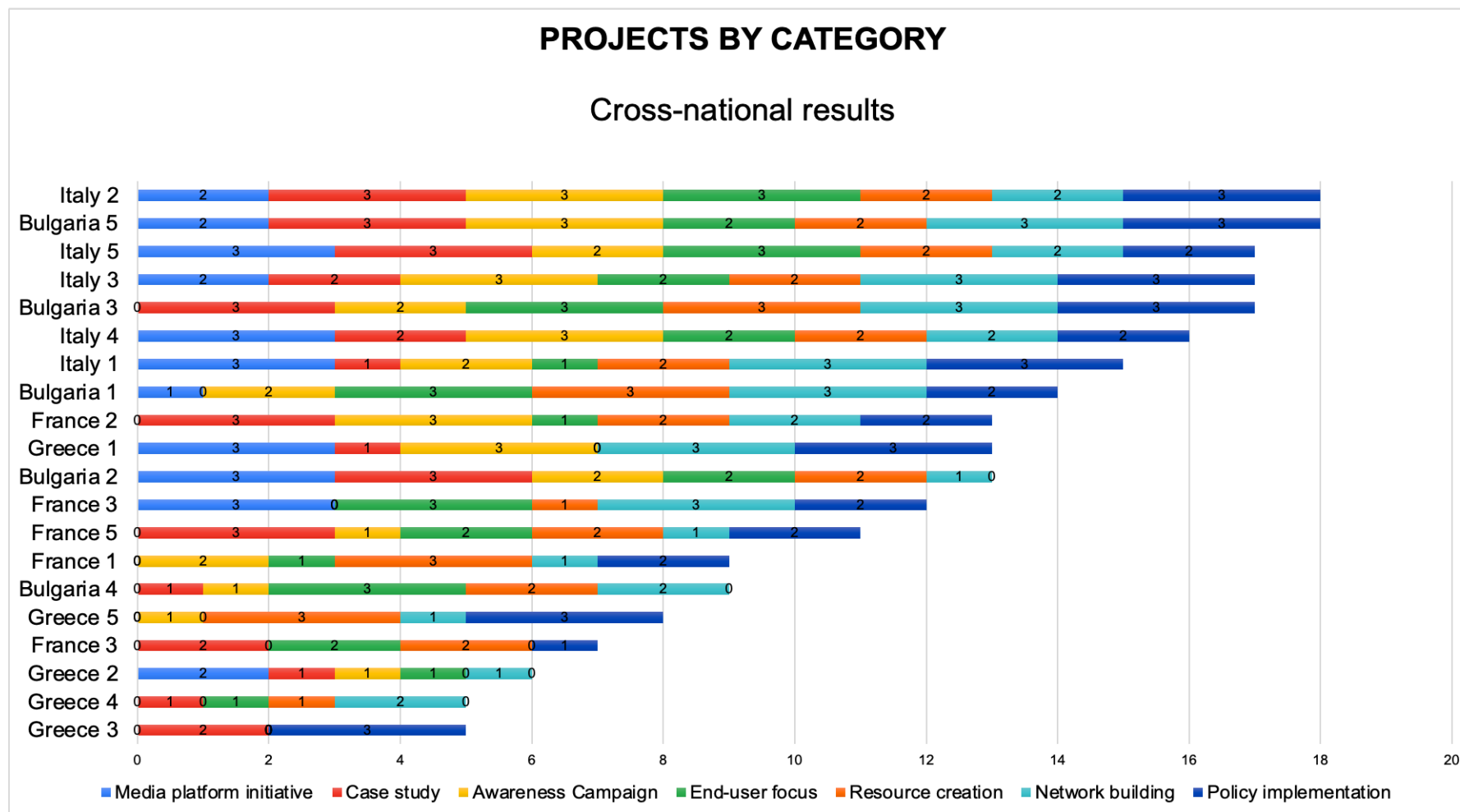
- All the projects assessed the 7 categories on a Likert scale going from “not present” to “quite a lot”.
- More than a third (37,1%) of these assessments showed no presence at all or a little presence.
- About two thirds of the categories (62,8%) showed “quite a lot” or “a lot” of presence.

Type of categories

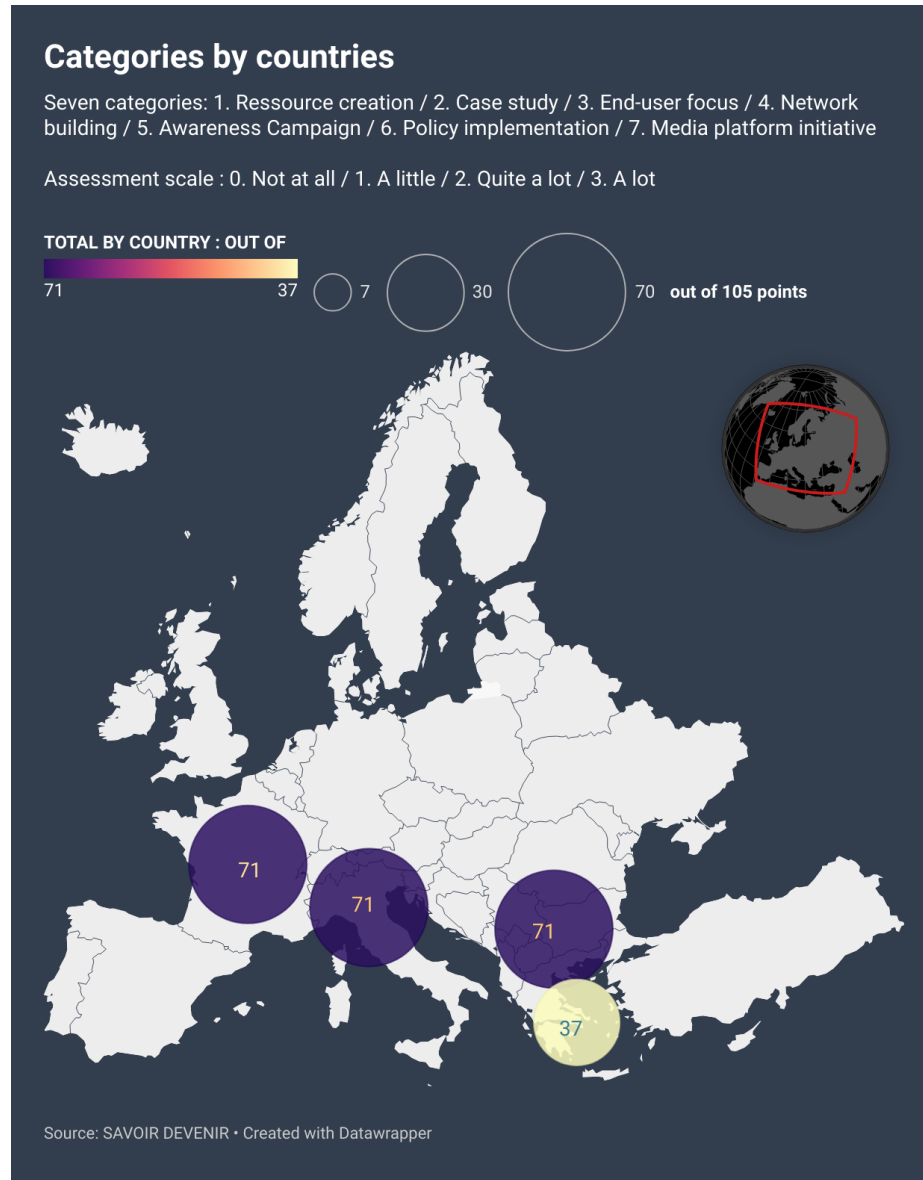
- Most projects are about generating resources (15 out of 20).
- A minority of projects deals with case studies (4 out of 20) and network building (6 out of 20).
- Awareness campaign, Policy implementation, Media platform strategy (8 out of 20) and end-user focus (9 out of 20) are present in less than half of the projects.



Types of categories by projects (Frequency scale 0 = not at all / 1 = a little / 2 = quite a lot / 3 = a lot)



- Out of the 20 projects, 6 tend to cover all categories.
- Out of the 20 projects, 4 show the least number of categories, with at least three of them missing.
- The other half cover all categories but one or two of the seven, in a very heterogeneous way.



Mapping of Categories by countries:

(<https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/0cCNH/2/>)

- The mapping of categories by countries shows large homogeneity among three out of the four countries (France, Italy and Bulgaria), with three scoring the same frequency although spreading differently among projects.
- One out of the four countries (Greece) shows a narrower range of categories.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Policy implementation seems to follow more than drive resource creation.

The projects seem to aim at large-ranging issues rather than specific issues, at least in the declared objectives.

These projects have a lot of overlapping categories which points to their complexity.

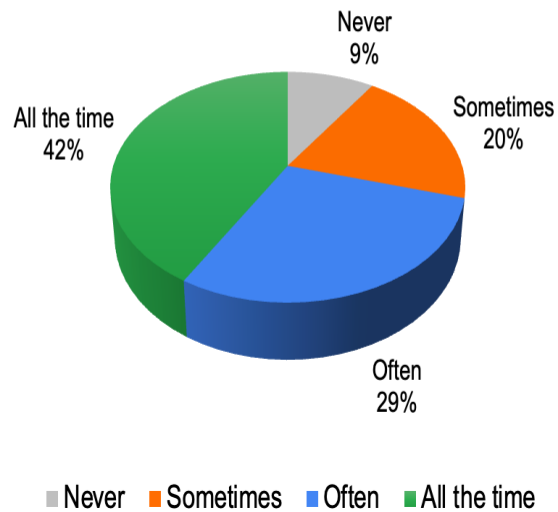
The combination of categories is very heterogeneous across projects showing no consensus nor preferred way to lead projects. It may point to a dissipation of energy and a lack of clarity (about objectives, dissemination purposes and means...)

The leading strategy involves producing resources for specific target groups.

3.2 Project MIL competences that mention Gender

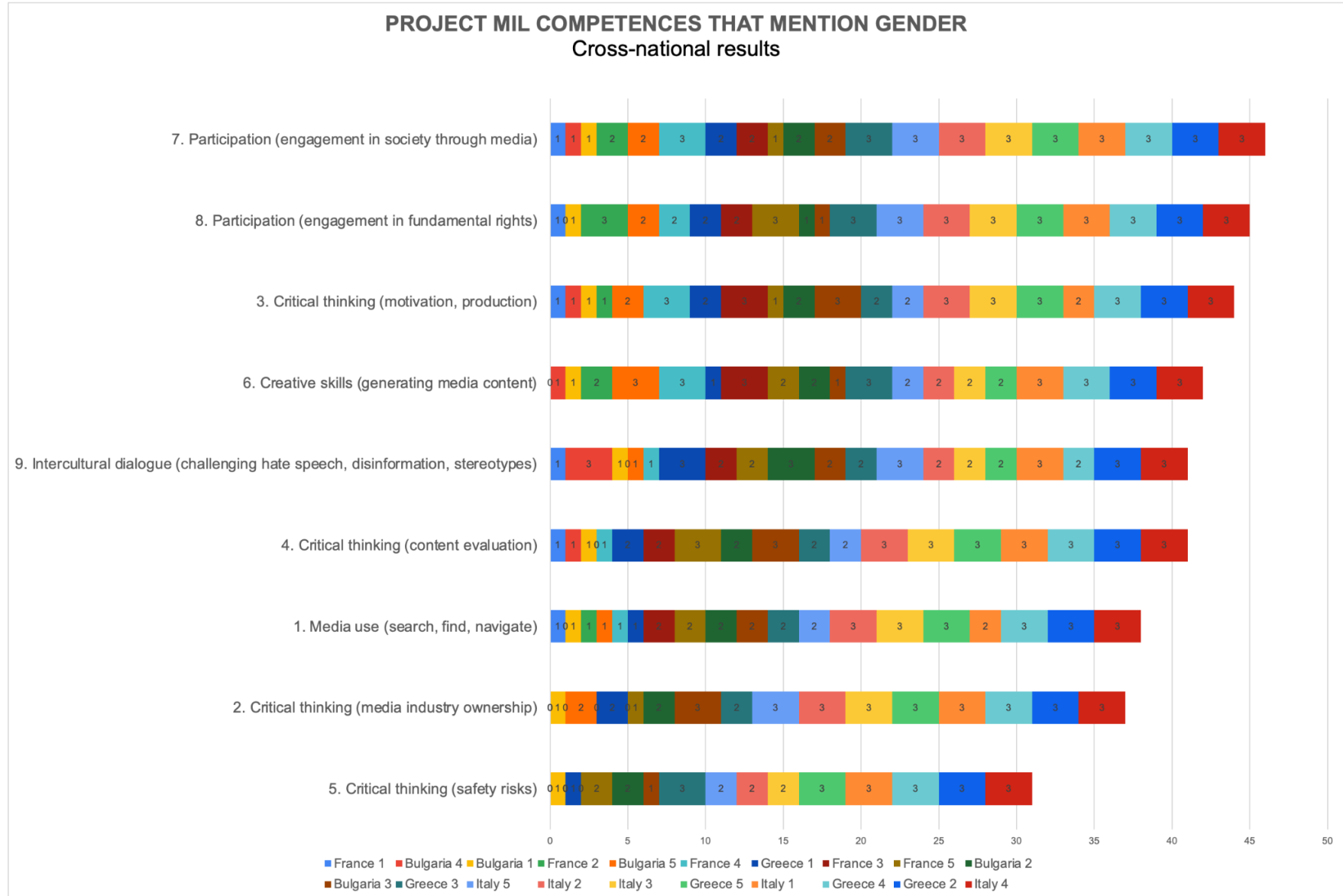
Frequency of all competences throughout all of the projects (Frequency scale 0 = never / 1 = sometime / 2 = often / 3 = all the time)

PROJECT MIL COMPETENCES THAT MENTION GENDER by FREQUENCY
Cross-national results

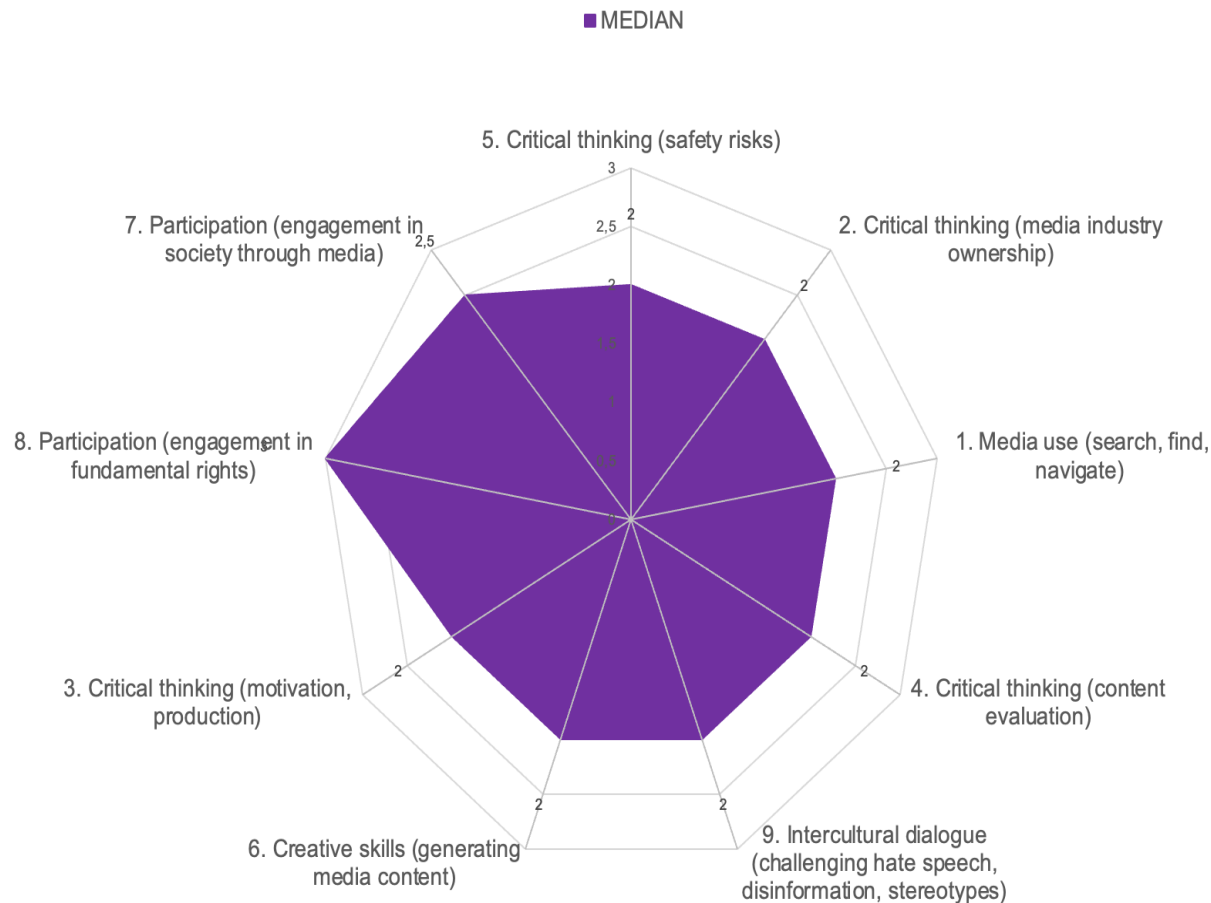


- All the projects assessed the 9 categories on a Likert scale going from “never” to “all the time”.
- Less than a third (29%) of these assessments showed “never” and “sometimes” to the nine categories of competences.
- More than two thirds of the categories (71%) showed “often” and “all the time” to the nine categories of competences.

Types of MIL competences that mention gender: (Frequency scale 0 = never / 1 = sometime / 2 = often / 3 = all the time)

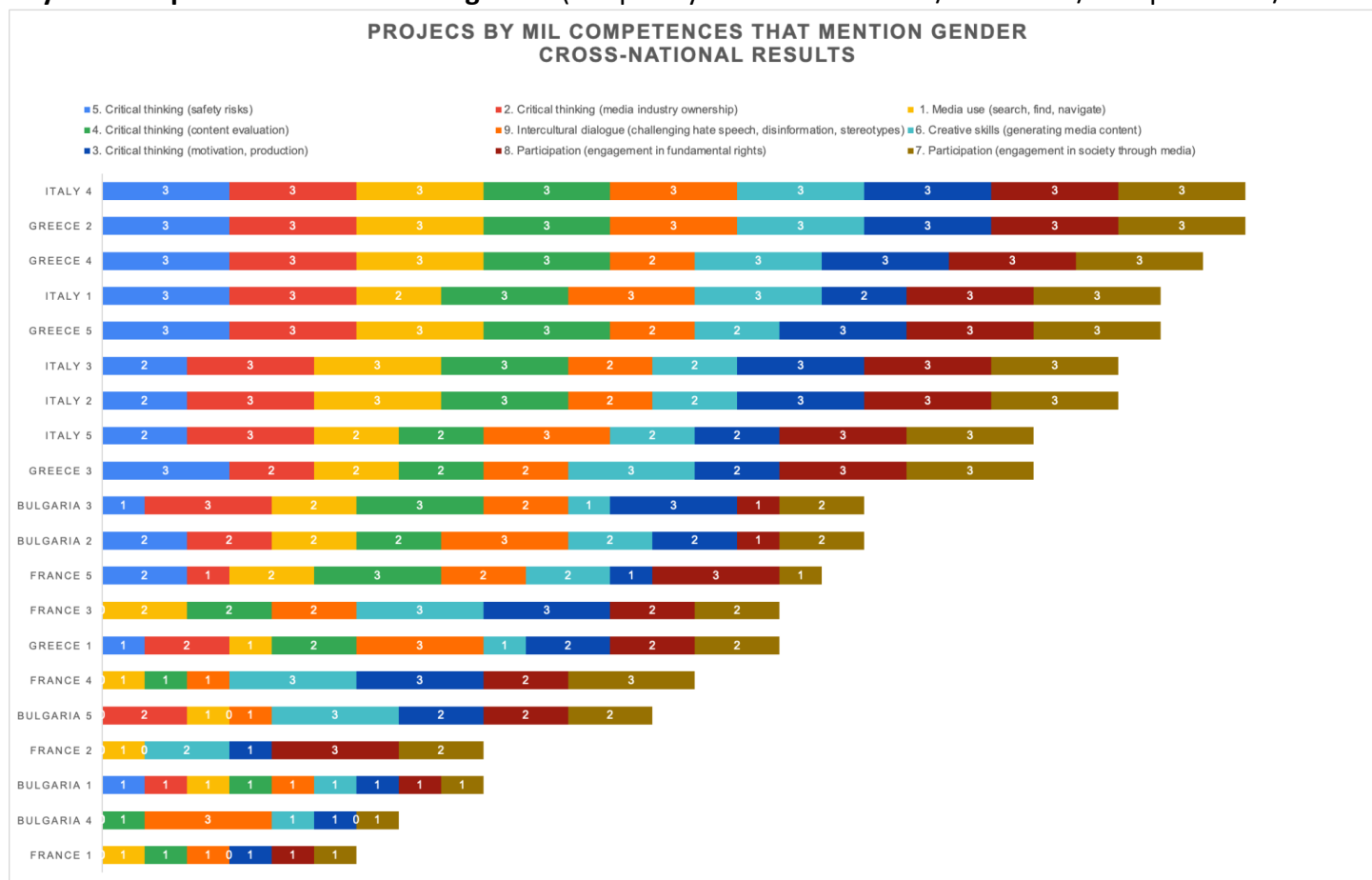


PROJECT MIL COMPETENCES THAT MENTION GENDER Cross-national results



- The MIL competences most likely to convey gender issues are: Participation (7/ engagement with media and 8/ engagement with human rights), as well as Critical thinking (3/ motivation, production).
- The MIL competences least likely to convey gender issues are: Critical thinking (2/ media industry ownership and 5/safety risks) as well as Media use (1/search, navigate)
- Creative skills (6/generating media content), Intercultural dialogue (9/challenging hate speech, disinformation, stereotypes) and Critical thinking (4/Content evaluation) are moderately likely to convey gender issues.
- The central tendency (median) shows that most projects tend to use all the other competences often.
- The radar confirms that emphasis is placed on participation and engagement in fundamental rights

Projects by MIL competences that mention gender (Frequency scale 0 = not at all / 1 = a little / 2 = quite a lot / 3 = a lot)



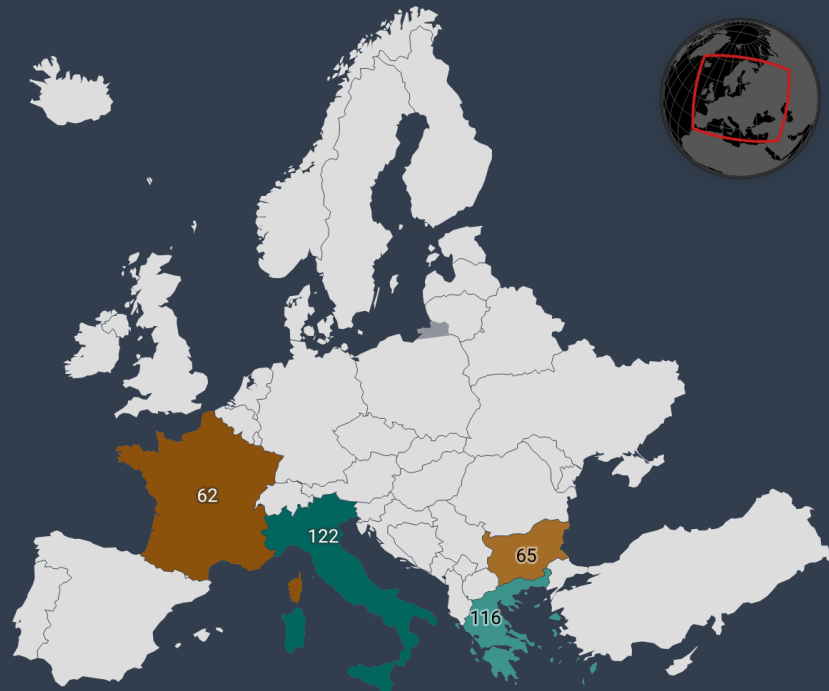
- Out of the 20 projects, 9 projects cover all the MIL competences (with totals above 20 points), with a gender focus or concern (often or all the time).
- Out of the 20 projects, 4 show the least amount of MIL competences (with totals below 10), with a gender focus or concern (never or sometimes)
- The other 7 projects cover some of the MIL competences (with totals 10-20) with a gender focus or concern (sometimes or often)

PROJECTS MIL COMPETENCE THAT MENTION GENDER

Experts specified the frequency of 9 MIL competences evaluated on a 3-point Likert scale:

1. Media use (search, find, navigate)
2. Critical thinking (media industry ownership)
3. Critical thinking (motivation, production)
4. Critical thinking (content evaluation)
5. Critical thinking (safety risks)
6. Creative skills (generating media content)
7. Participation (engagement in society through media)
8. Participation (engagement in fundamental rights)
9. Intercultural dialogue (challenging hate speech, disinformation, stereotypes)

Totals out of 135 points



Map: Irma Velez • Source: SAVOIR DEVENIR • Created with Datawrapper

Mapping of MIL competence that mention gender by country:

(<https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/Oonv6/7/>)

- Projects MIL competence that mentions gender by countries show a large distribution of differences.
- Two countries mobilise most MIL competences mentioning gender (Italy) or many of them (Greece).
- Two countries (Bulgaria and France) mobilise those competences much less.

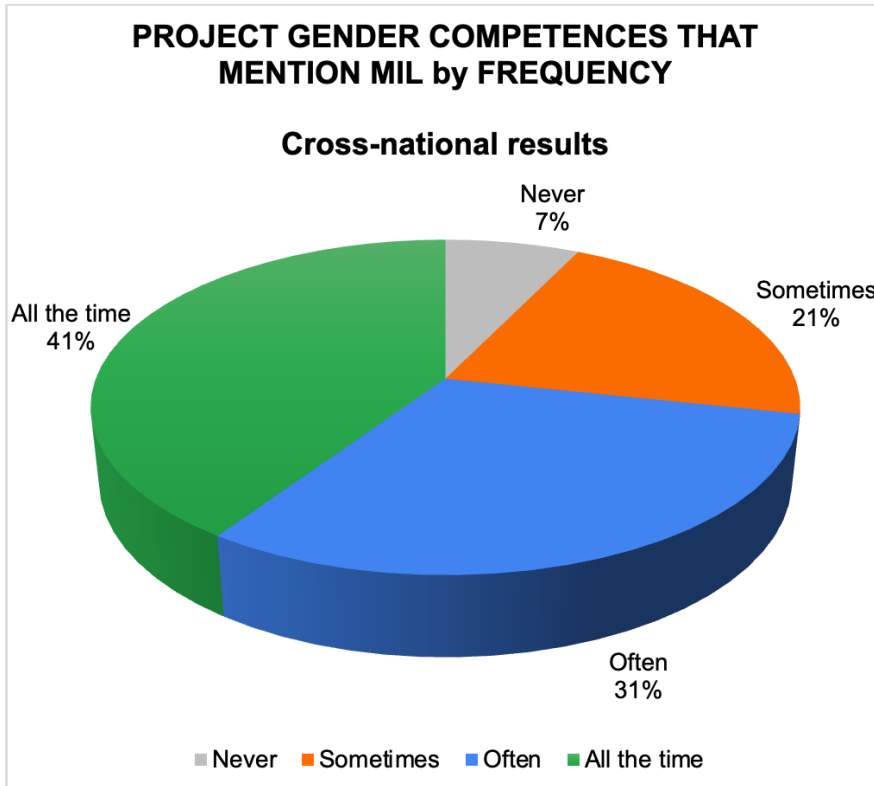
GENERAL COMMENTS:

The most important MIL competences to deal with gender disinformation (Creative skills-6/generating media content, Intercultural dialogue-9/challenging hate speech, disinformation, stereotypes) and Critical thinking (4/Content evaluation)) are not the most solicited even though they are the most likely to trigger gender issues and appear to be pivotal in their implementation.

The prominence of participation competences is interesting because it shows the concerned parties are involved in the process and that concerted dialogue among all actors is solicited by the competence.

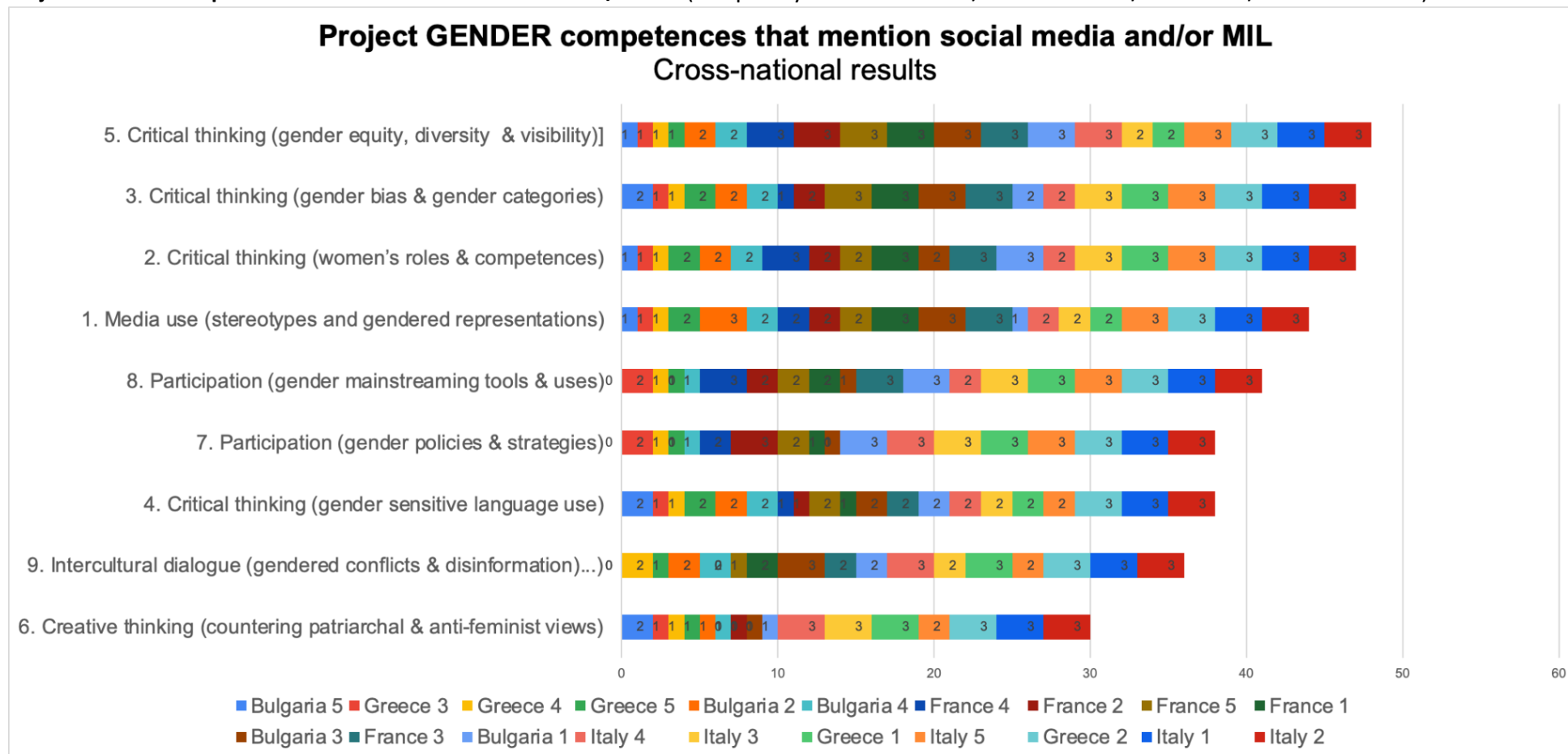
3.3 Project gender competences that mention social media and/or MIL

Frequency of all competences throughout all of the projects (Frequency scale 0 = never / 1 = sometime / 2 = often / 3 = all the time)



- All the projects assessed the 9 categories on a Likert scale going from “never” to “all the time”.
- Less than a third (28%) of these assessments showed “never” and “sometimes”.
- More than two thirds of the categories (72%) showed “often” and “all the time”.

Project GENDER competences that mention social media and/or MIL (Frequency scale 0 = never / 1 = sometime / 2 = often / 3 = all the time)

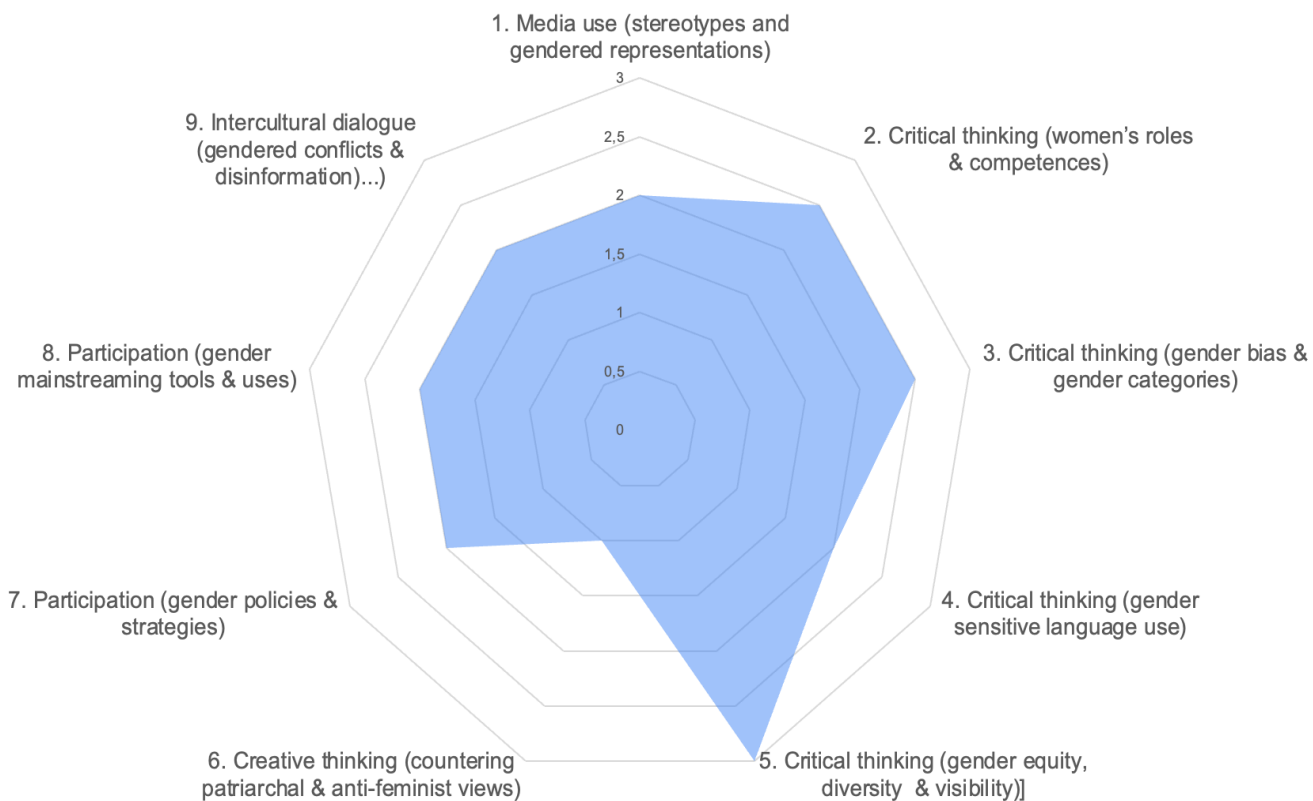


- The Gender competences most likely to convey MIL issues are: Critical thinking in its three dimensions (5/ gender equity, diversity & visibility, 3/ gender bias & gender categories & 2/ roles & competences).
- The Gender competence least likely to convey MIL issues is Creative thinking (countering patriarchal & anti-feminist views)

- Media use (1/stereotypes & gender roles), Participation in its two dimensions (8/ Gender mainstreaming tools and 7/ Gender policies), Critical thinking (4/ Gender sensitive language use) and Intercultural dialogue (9/ gendered conflicts and disinformation) are moderately likely to convey MIL issues.

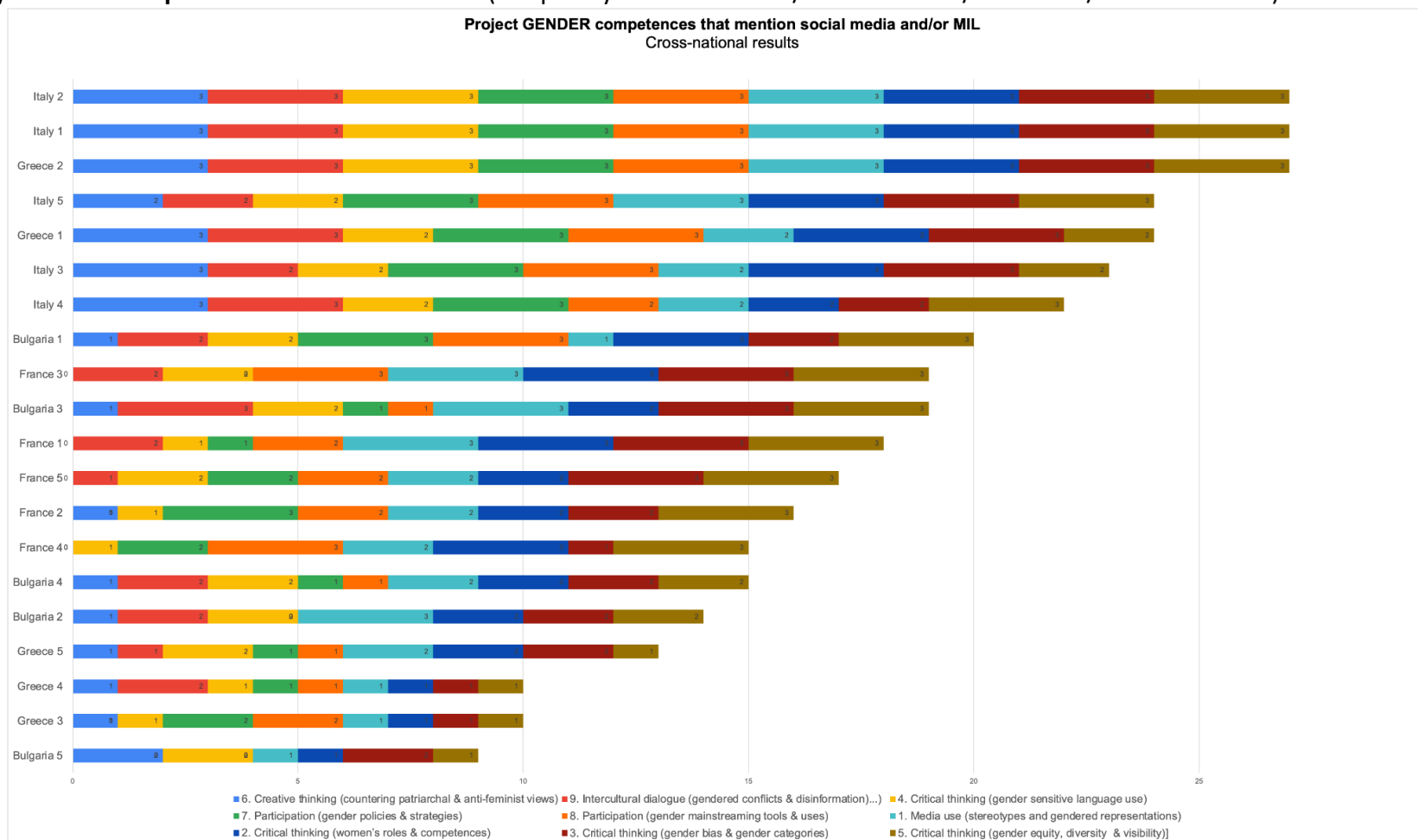
PROJECTS GENDER COMPETENCES THAT MENTION MIL

■ PROJECTS MEDIAN GENDER COMP mentioning MIL



- The central tendency (median) shows that most projects tend to use often 8 out of the 9 competences.
- The radar reveals the lack of creative thinking (6/Countering patriarchal & anti-feminist views)

Projects by GENDER competences that mention MIL (Frequency scale 0 = never / 1 = sometime / 2 = often / 3 = all the time)



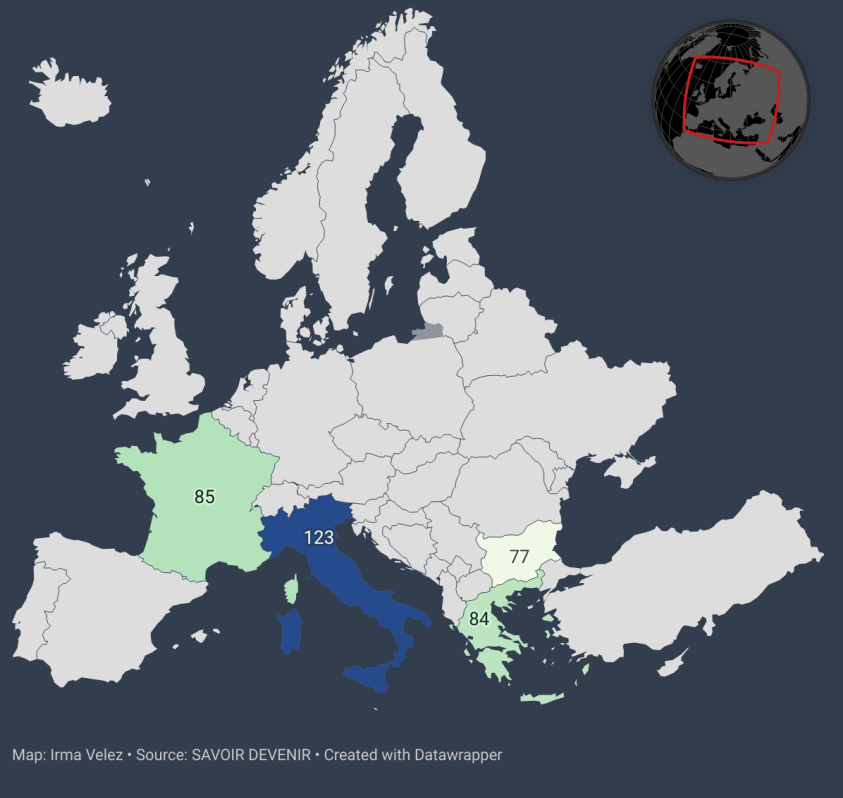
- Out of the 20 projects, 3 projects cover all the Gender competences (with totals above 20 points) with a media focus or concern (all the time).
- Out of the 20 projects, 12 show the least amount of Gender competences (with totals below 10) with a media focus or concern (never or sometimes).
- The other 5 projects cover some of the Gender competences (with totals 10-20) with a media focus or concern (sometimes or often).

PROJECTS GENDER COMPETENCES THAT MENTION MIL

Experts specified the frequency of 9 MIL competences evaluated on a 3-point Likert scale:

1. Media use (search, find, navigate)
2. Critical thinking (media industry ownership)
3. Critical thinking (motivation, production)
4. Critical thinking (content evaluation)
5. Critical thinking (safety risks)
6. Creative skills (generating media content)
7. Participation (engagement in society through media)
8. Participation (engagement in fundamental rights)
9. Intercultural dialogue (challenging hate speech, disinformation, stereotypes)

Totals out of 135 points



Map: Irma Velez • Source: SAVOIR DEVENIR • Created with Datawrapper

Mapping of Projects GENDER competence that mention MIL by country:

(<https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/czf2h/2/>)

- The mapping of projects Gender competences that mention MIL by countries shows a large distribution of differences.
- One country mobilises most Gender competences mentioning MIL (Italy).
- France, Greece and Bulgaria use about half of them.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

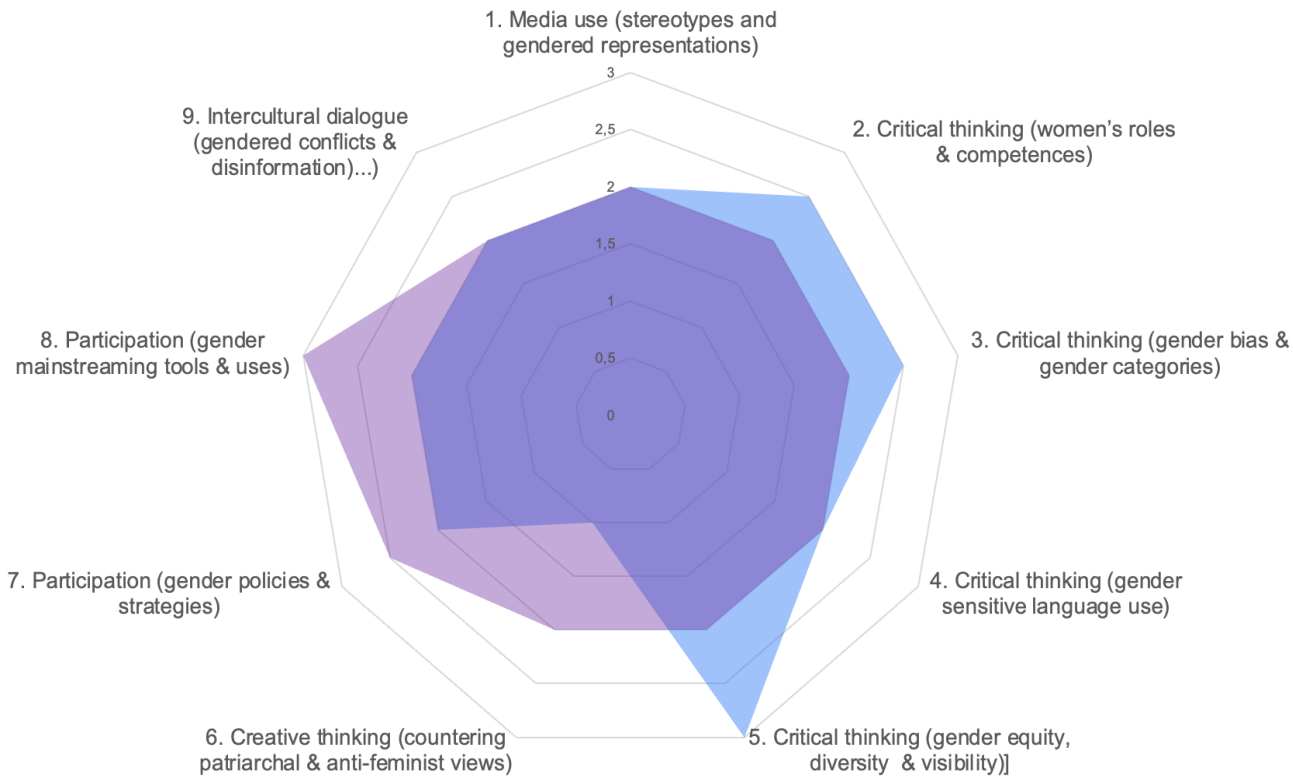
The most important Gender competences to deal with media and disinformation are Critical thinking in its three dimensions (5/ gender equity, diversity & visibility, 3/ gender bias & gender categories & 2/ roles & competences). It reflects a 1960s second wave feminism approach that can be seen as a successful appropriation of women's rights in society and deconstruction of systemic misogyny.

The absence of creative thinking (countering patriarchy and anti-feminist views) points to a weakness across all projects. It shows the media are not being used to disenfranchise women fully and their production system and functioning are not countered fully.

Participation of women through media is encouraged rather than them being full-fledged actors in media production and action.

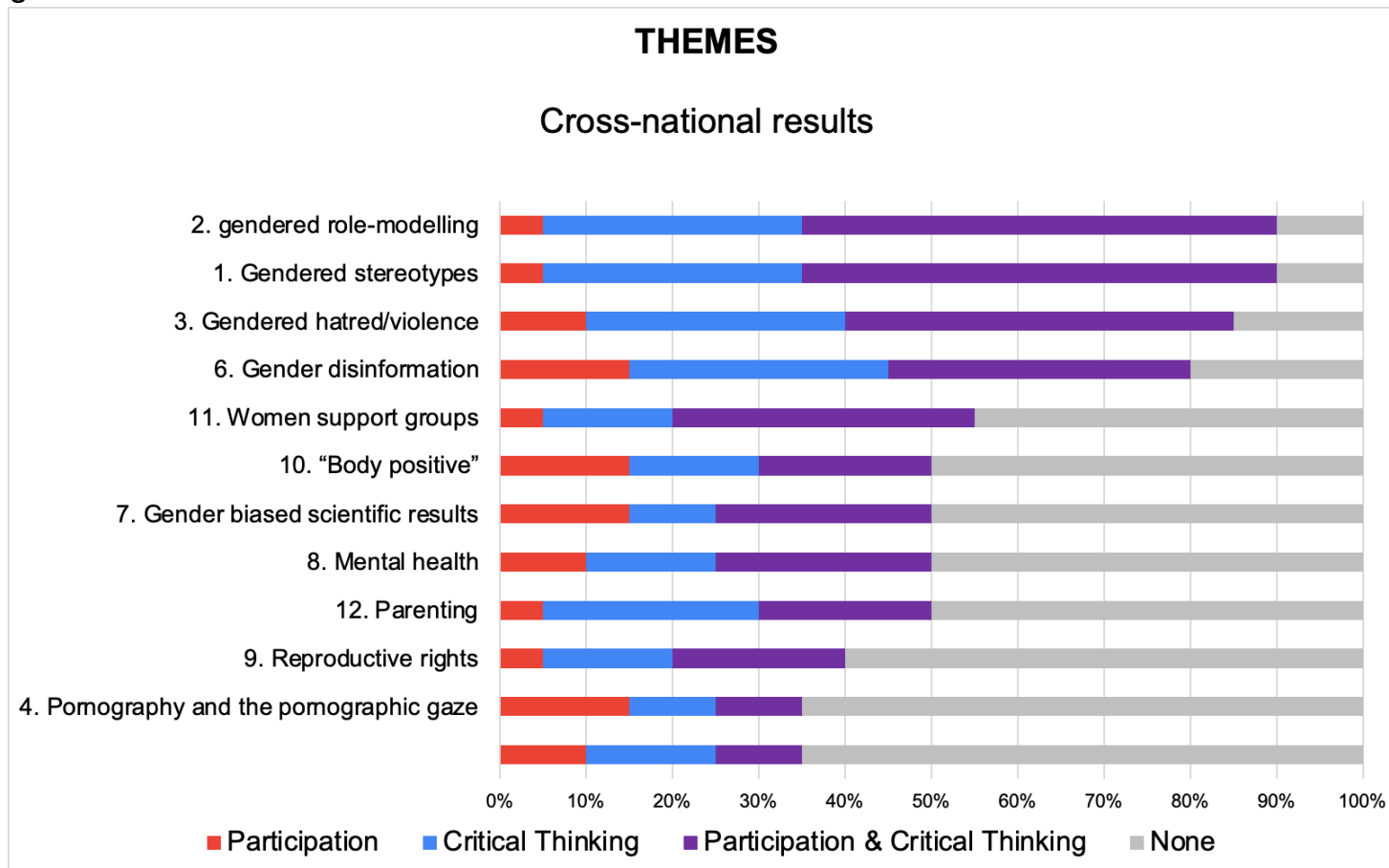
PROJECTS BY MIL & GENDER COMPETENCES

■ PROJECTS MEDIAN GENDER COMP mentioning MIL ■ PROJECTS MEDIAN MIL COMP mentioning GENDER



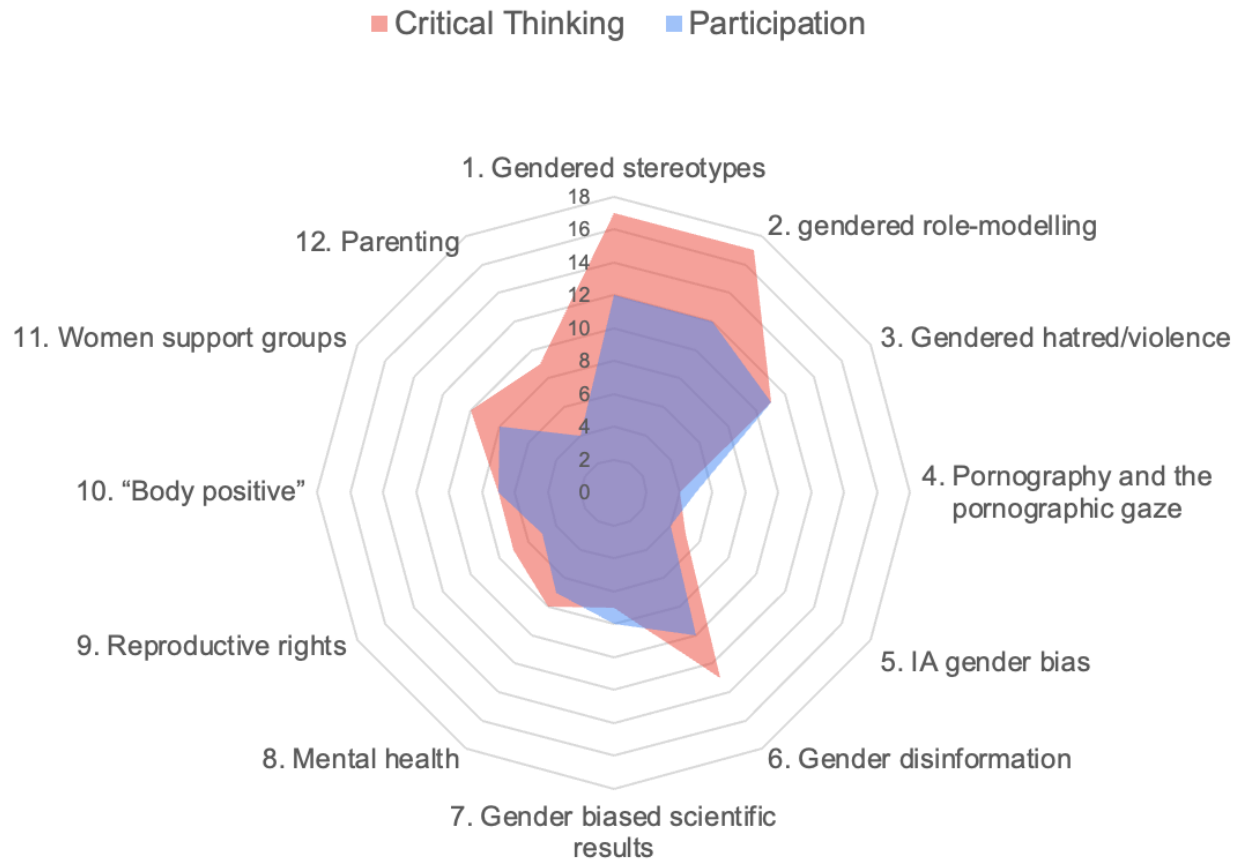
- When crossing both types of competences (MIL & Gender) there is a significant amount of overlap.
- Some competences are poorly covered or missing.
- There is a discrepancy between the main MIL competence (participation) and the main Gender competence (critical thinking).

3.4 Project gendered disinformation themes



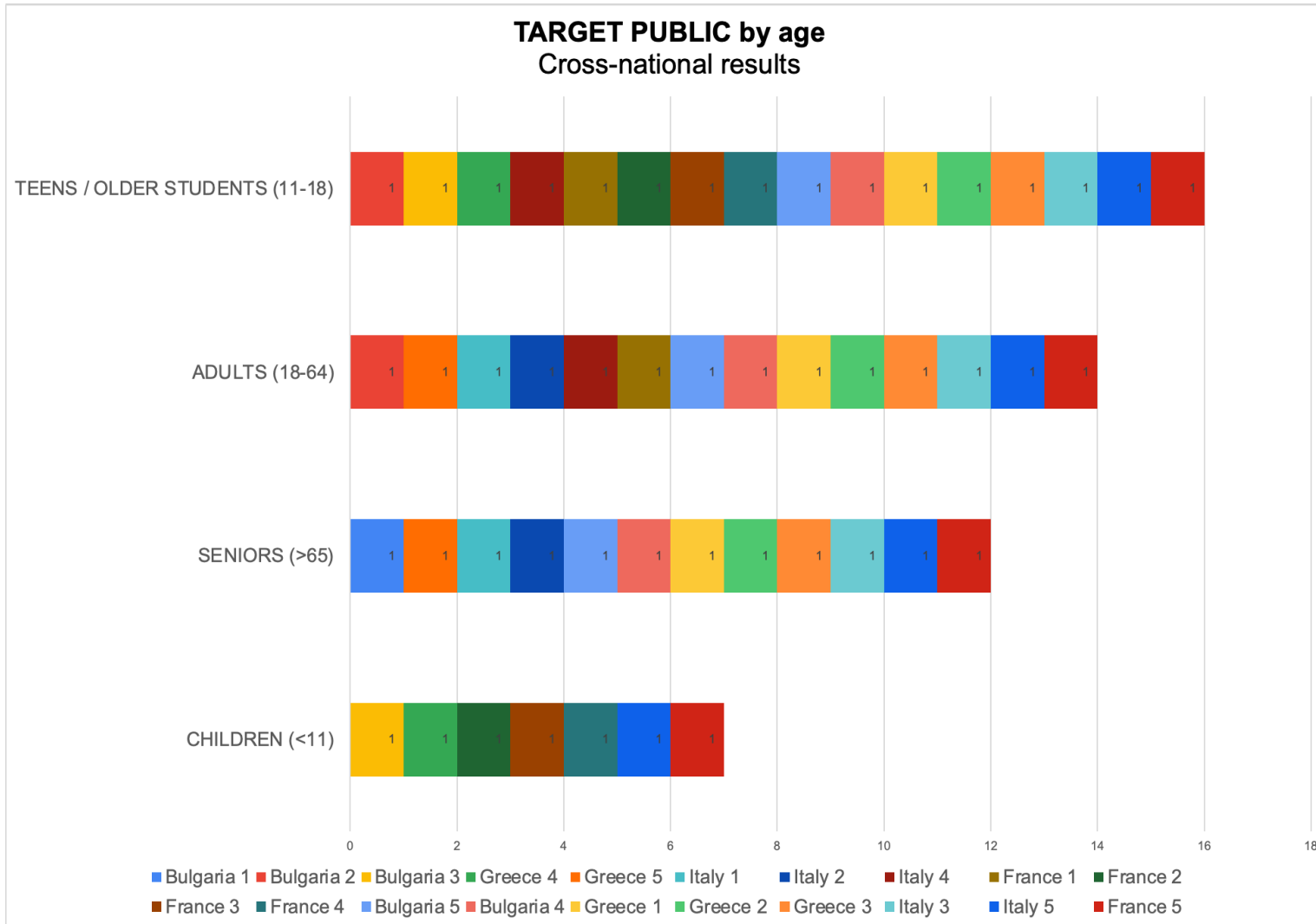
- The themes most likely to be treated in the projects: Gendered role-modelling (2), Gendered stereotypes (1), Gendered hatred/Violence (3) and Gender disinformation (6).
- The themes least likely to be treated in the projects: Pornography and the pornographic gaze (4), Reproductive rights (9) and IA gender bias (5)
- The other themes (Women support groups, Body positive, Gender biased scientific results, Mental health and Parenting) are moderately treated in the projects.

THEMES BY CRITICAL THINKING & PARTICIPATION CROSS-NATIONAL RESULTS



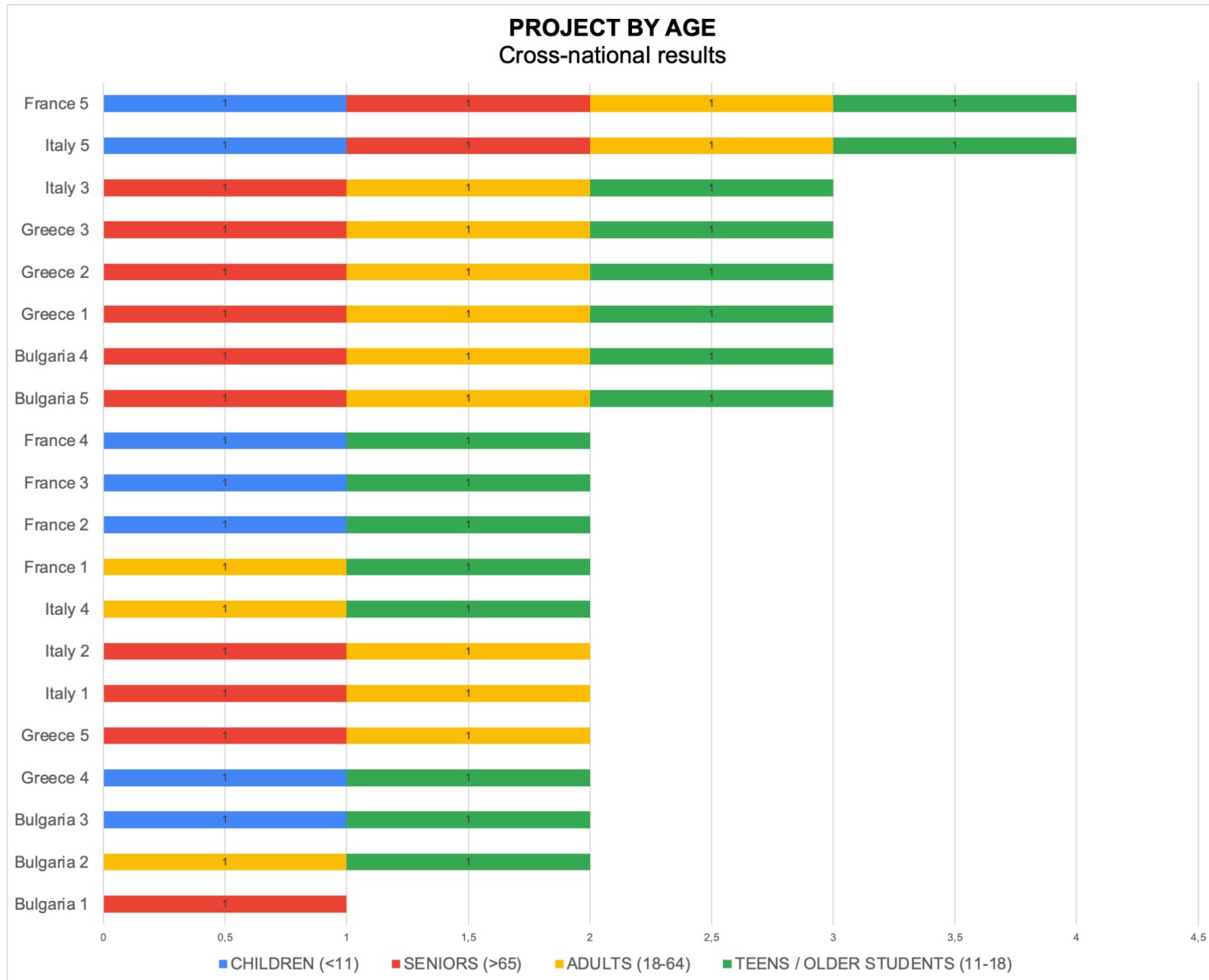
- When crossing critical thinking and participation by themes there is a significant amount of overlap.
- Some themes are poorly covered.
- There is a discrepancy between participation and critical thinking in favour of the latter.

3.5 Project target public



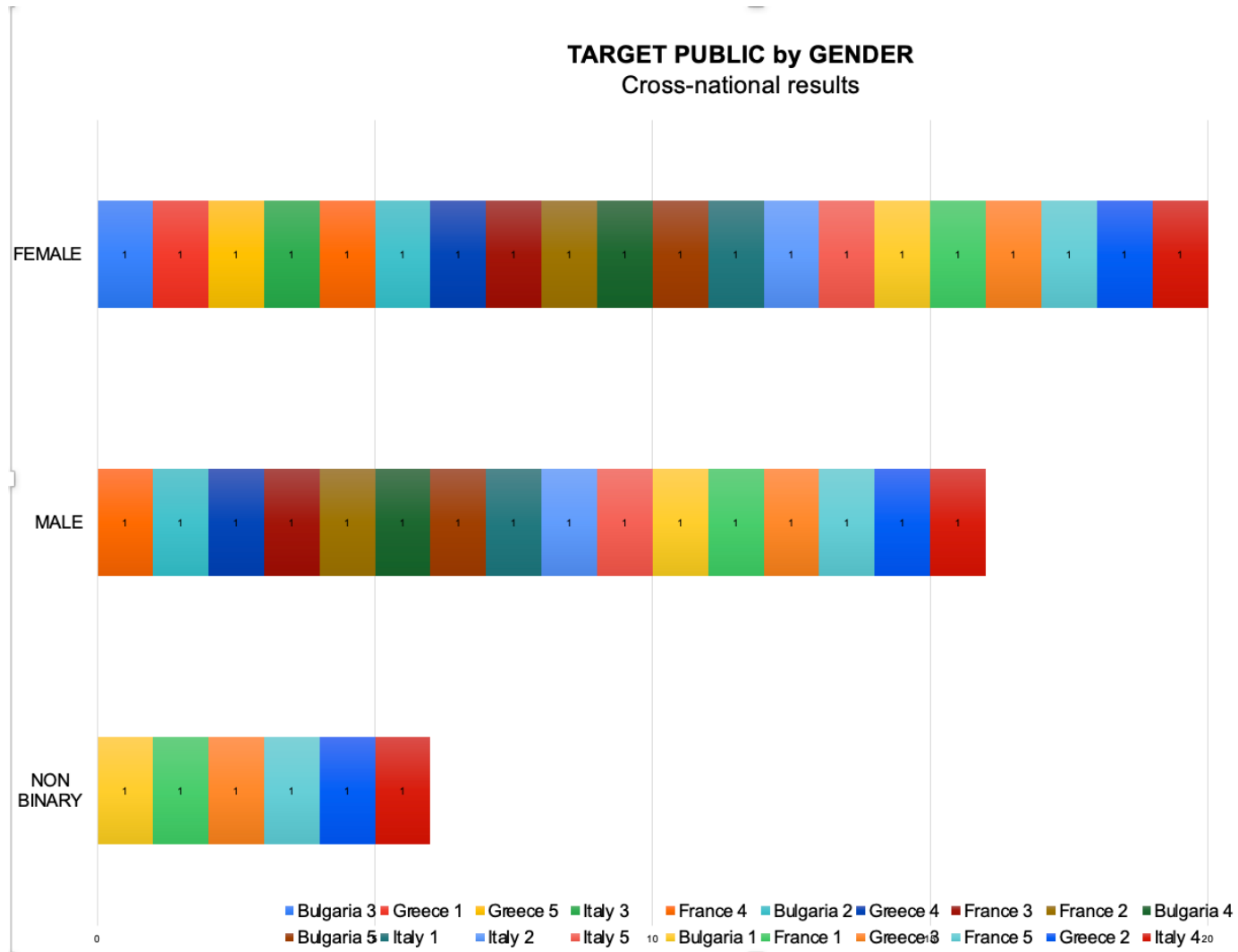
by age

- The largest age category is teens/older students (11-18) targeted by about three quarters of the projects (16 out of 20).
- The smallest age category is children (<11), targeted by a third of the projects (7 out of 20).
- Adults and seniors are present in about two thirds of the projects (12 and 14 out of 20 respectively).



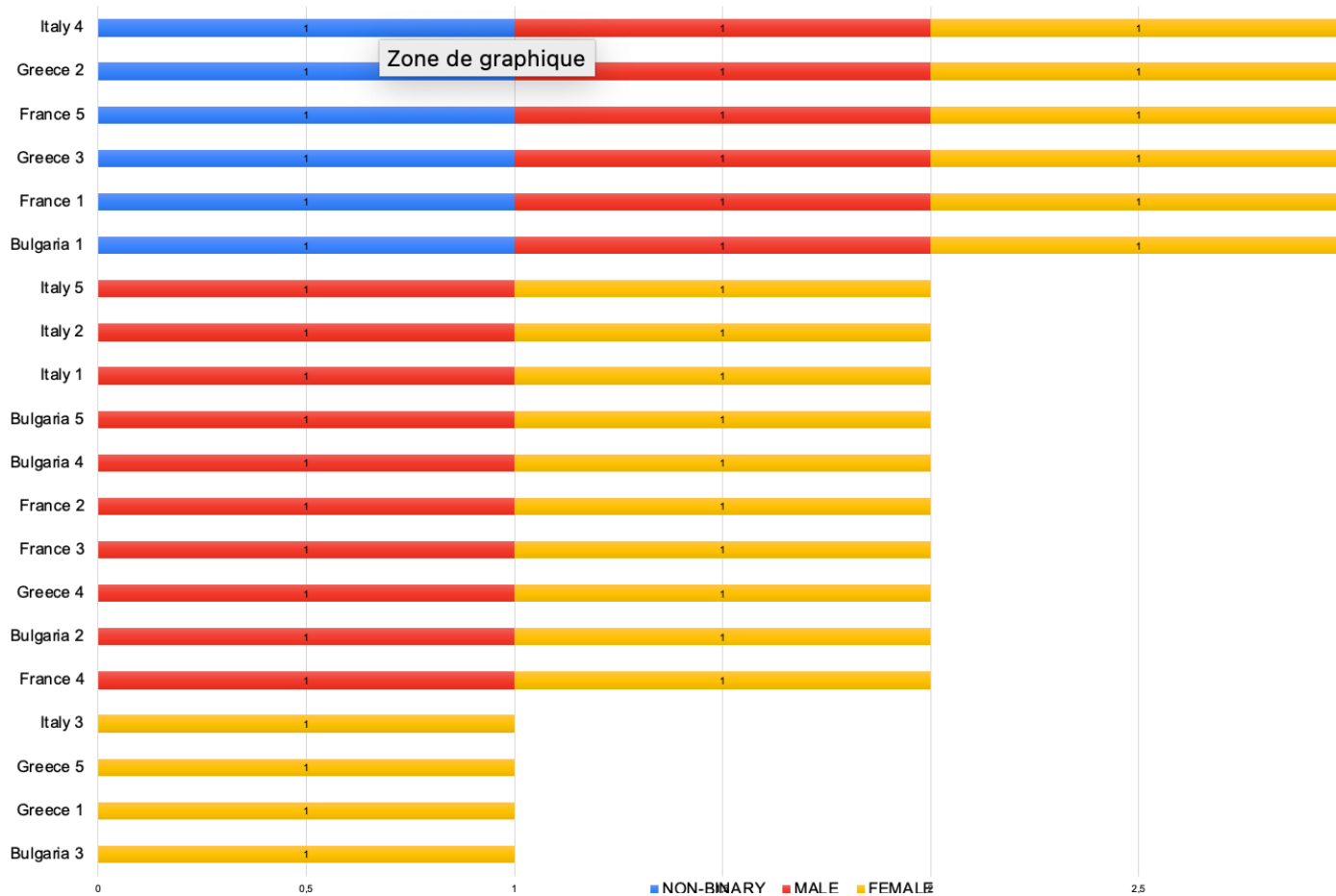
- Only two projects target all age categories
- About a third of the projects (6 out of 20) target the three main age categories, except children
- More than half of the projects (11 out of 20) target two age groups.
- Only one of the projects targets a single age group (seniors).

by GENDER



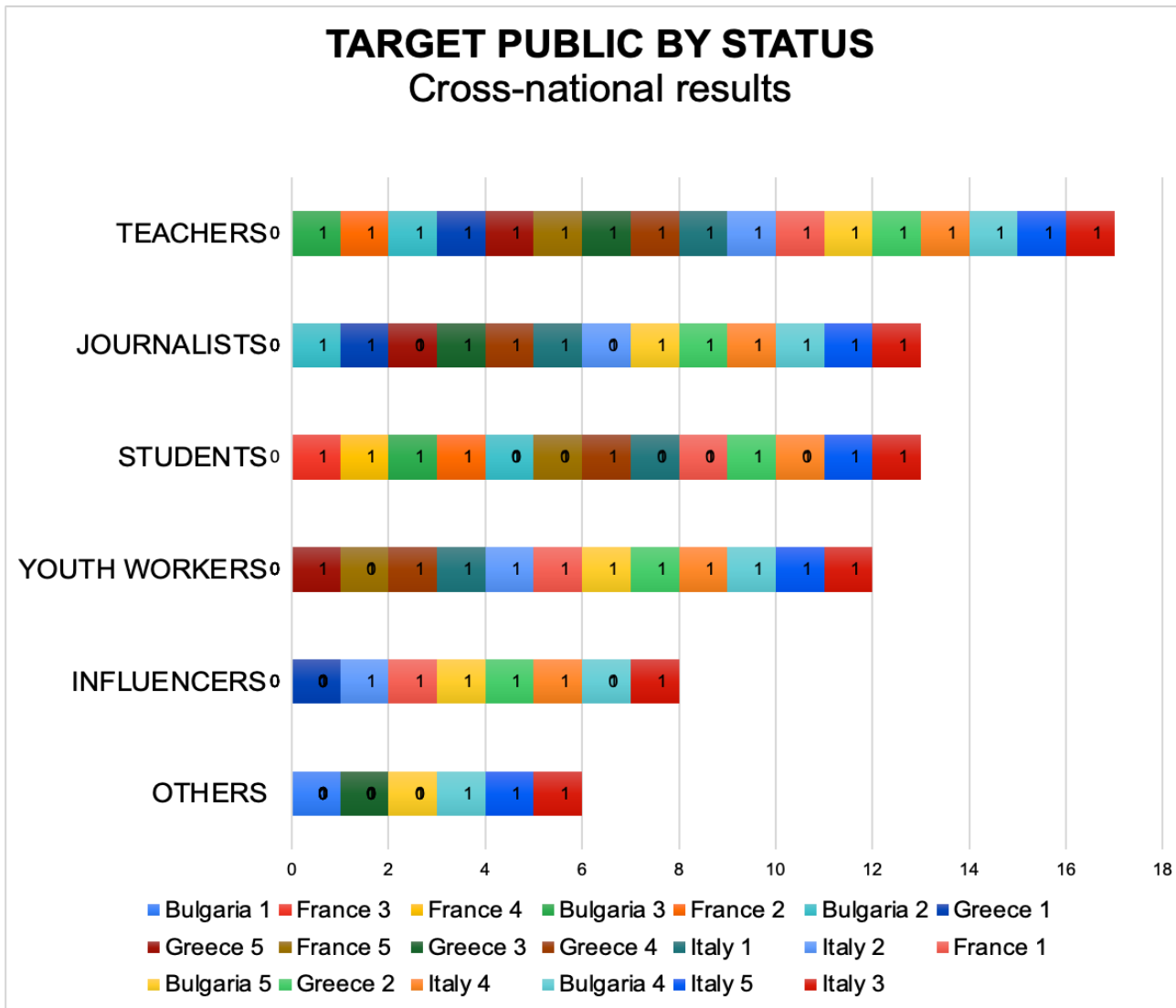
- The largest gender category is female targeted by all the projects.
- The smallest gender category is non-binary targeted by about a third of the projects (6 out of 20).
- The male category is present in more than three quarters of the projects (16 out of 20).

PROJECT by GENDER Cross-national results



- All projects (20) address women and a majority of them also target men (16 out 20).
- About a third (6 out 20) address women, men and non-binary public.
- 4 projects address women only.

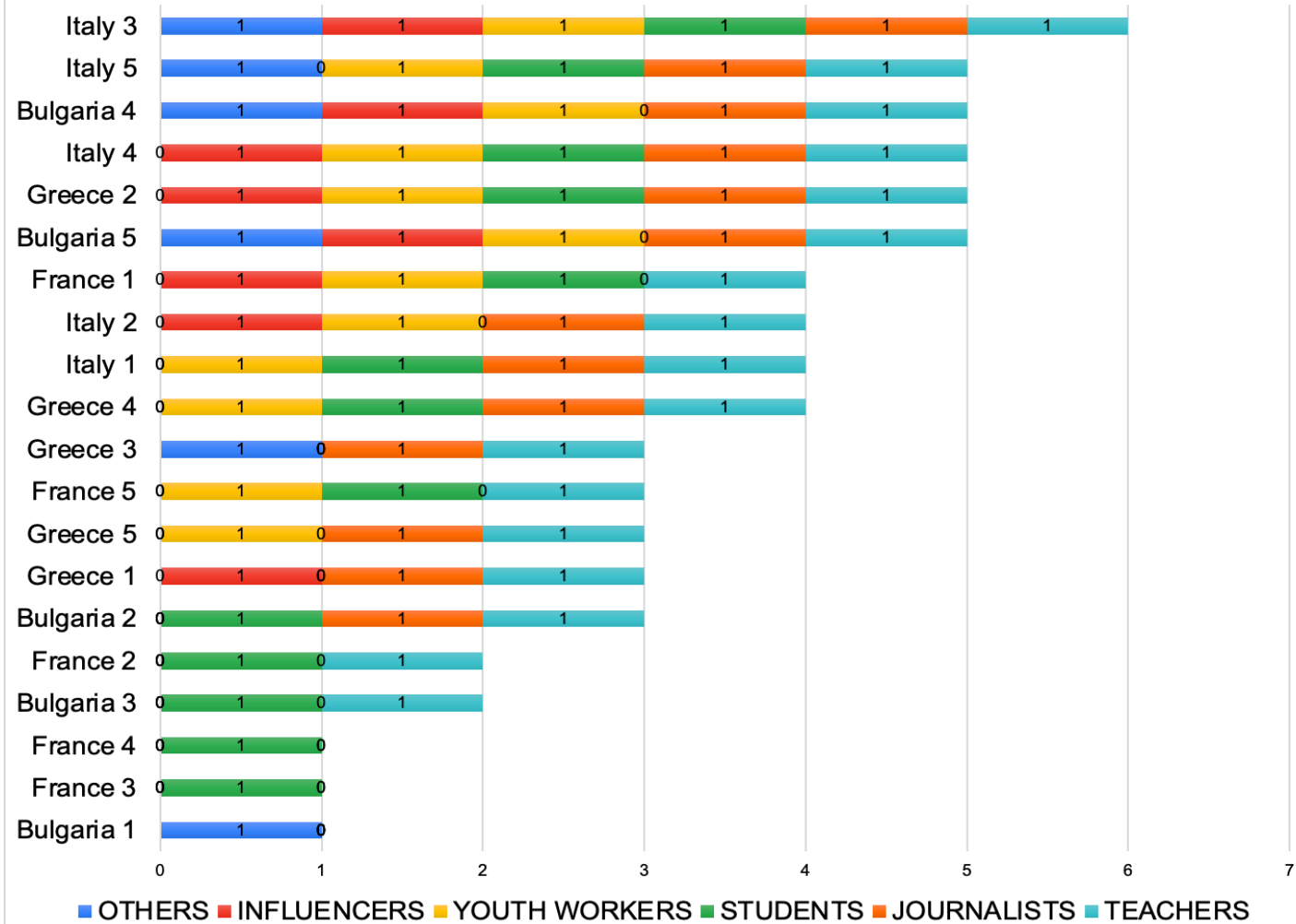
by STATUS



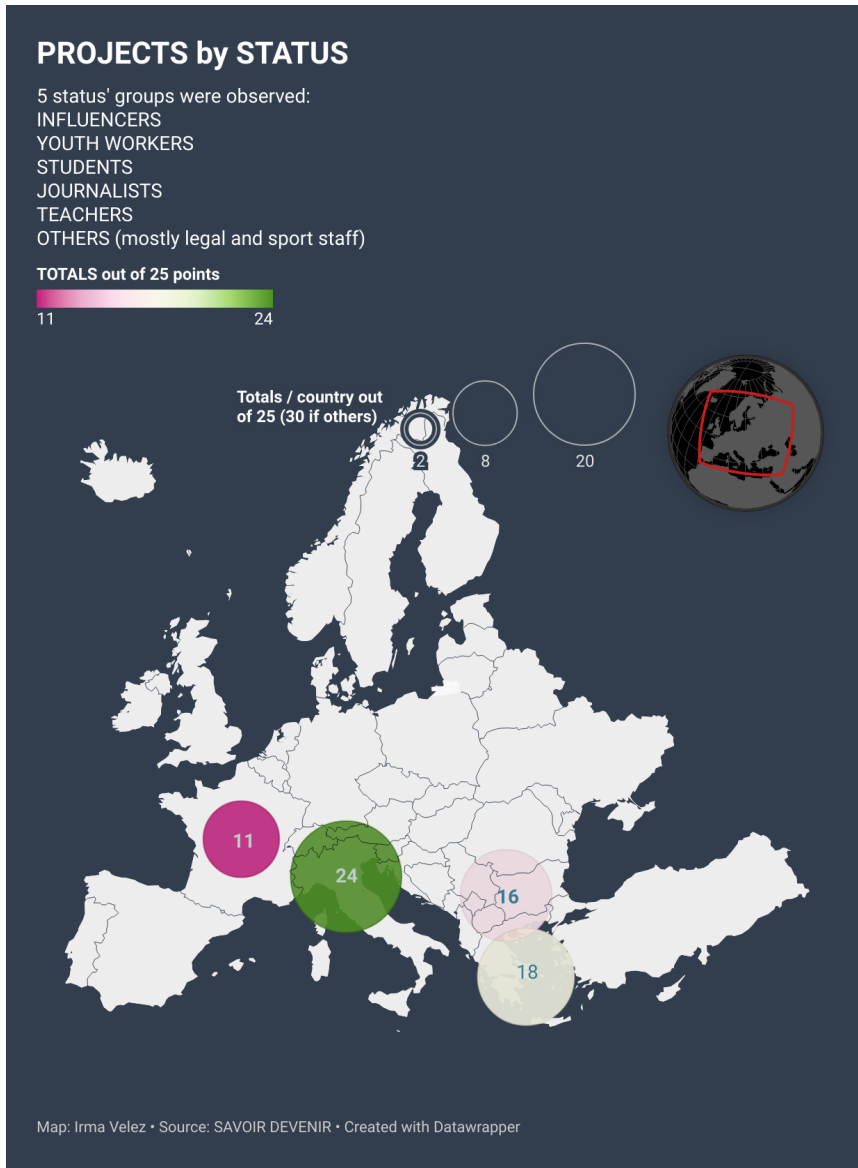
- Teachers are the most targeted groups (17 out of 20 projects).
- Influencers are the least targeted group (8 out of 20 projects)
- Youth workers, Students and Journalists are the second most targeted groups (between 12 and 13 out of 20 projects).

PROJECT BY STATUS

Cross-national results



- Only one project addresses all status categories.
- Three projects out 20 address only one category.
- Half of the projects address at least four status categories



Mapping of Projects by status: (<https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/1cAle/3/>)

- One country, Italy, incorporates a very broad range of professionals.
- Two countries (Greece, Bulgaria) incorporate an average range of professionals.
- France incorporates a narrow range of professionals.

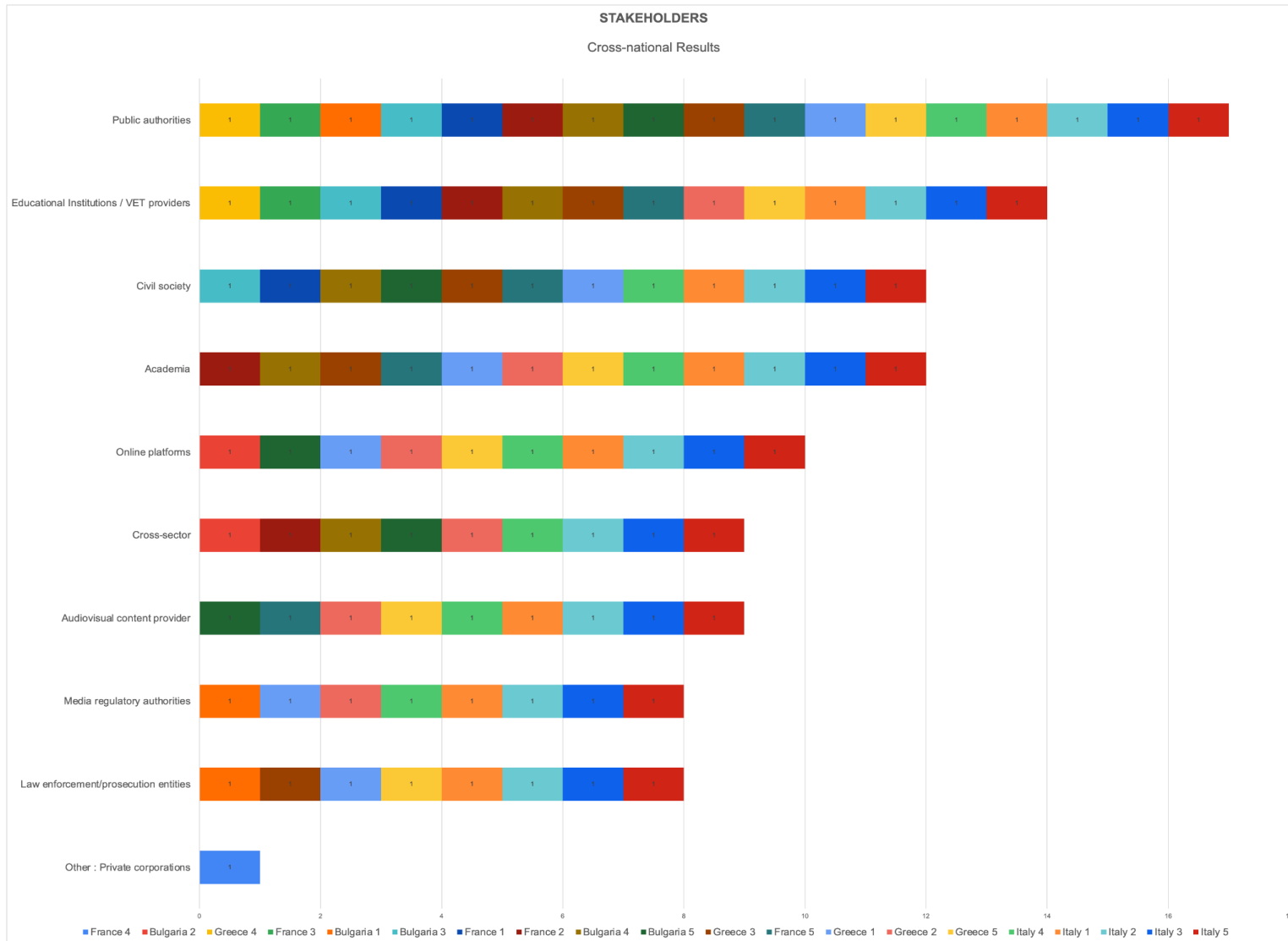
GENERAL COMMENTS:

Age: Most projects address teens but neglect children. Yet some attention is devoted to seniors.

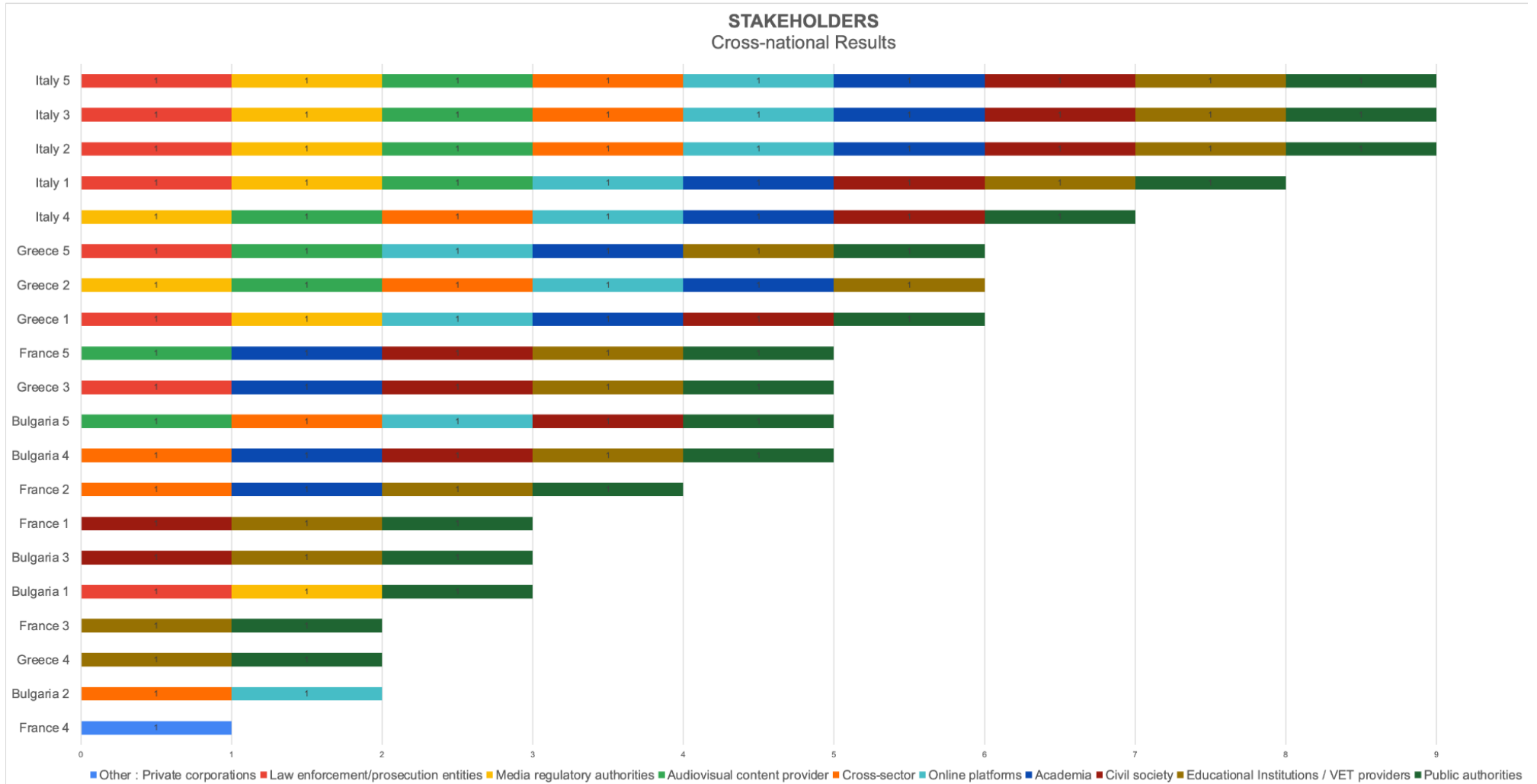
Gender: In spite of the main selection criteria of projects centred on women, most projects also address men. Non-binary public is included in a lesser proportion. This is not a country specific result but a cross-national trend.

Status: Journalists are an important professional target group by contrast with online influencers despite the focus on online gender disinformation. Legal staff was underrepresented (only 1 project in the "others" category). The main thrust remains on education (teachers and students).

3.6 Project Stakeholders



- Public authorities and Educational institutions are the leading stakeholders.
- The private sector (outside platforms) is the least engaged stakeholder.
- Civil society and academia are significantly engaged (12 out of 20 projects).
- Media (via Online platforms, Audiovisual content provider, Media regulatory authorities) are moderately engaged (less than half of the projects, 8 and 9 out of 20).
- Cross-sector and Law enforcement entities are also moderately engaged (less than half of the projects, 8 and 9 out of 20).



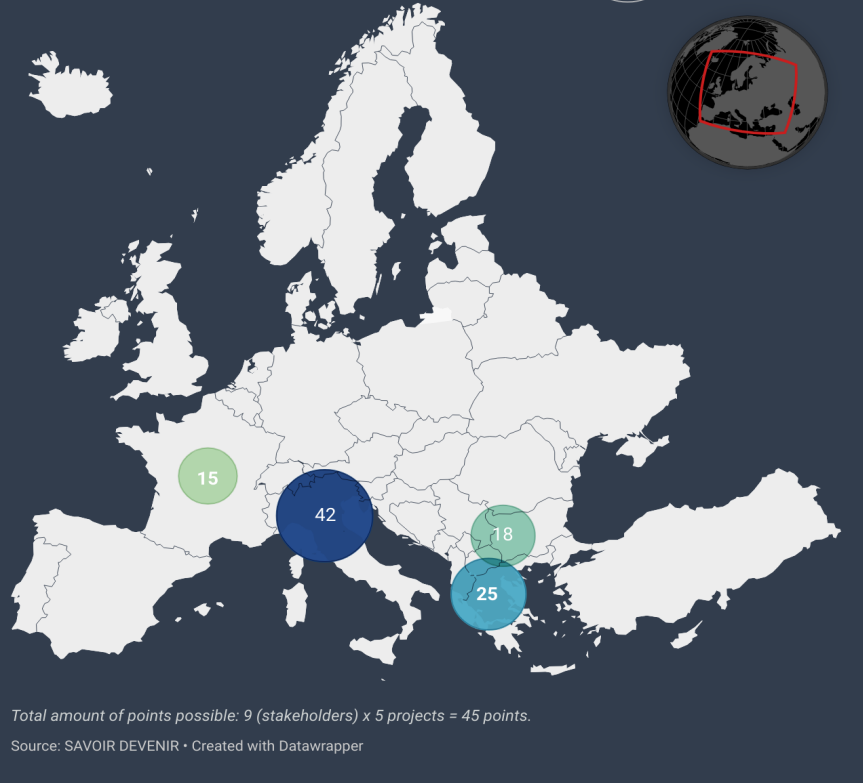
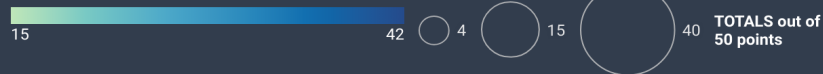
- 8 projects out of 20 involve more than 6 stakeholders and 3 of them involve them all.
- 5 projects involve 4 or 5 stakeholders.
- 6 projects involve 2 or 3 stakeholders (mostly public authorities and educational institutions).
- Only 1 project engages 1 stakeholder (private sector)

STAKEHOLDERS BY COUNTRY

10 Stakeholders were considered for each of the 20 MIL/GENDER projects:

1. Law enforcement/prosecution entities,
2. Media regulatory authorities,
3. Audiovisual content provider,
4. Cross-sector,
5. Online platforms,
6. Academia,
7. Civil society,
8. Educational Institutions / VET providers,
9. Public authorities
10. Others : Private corporations,

STAKEHOLDERS



Mapping of Stakeholders by country:

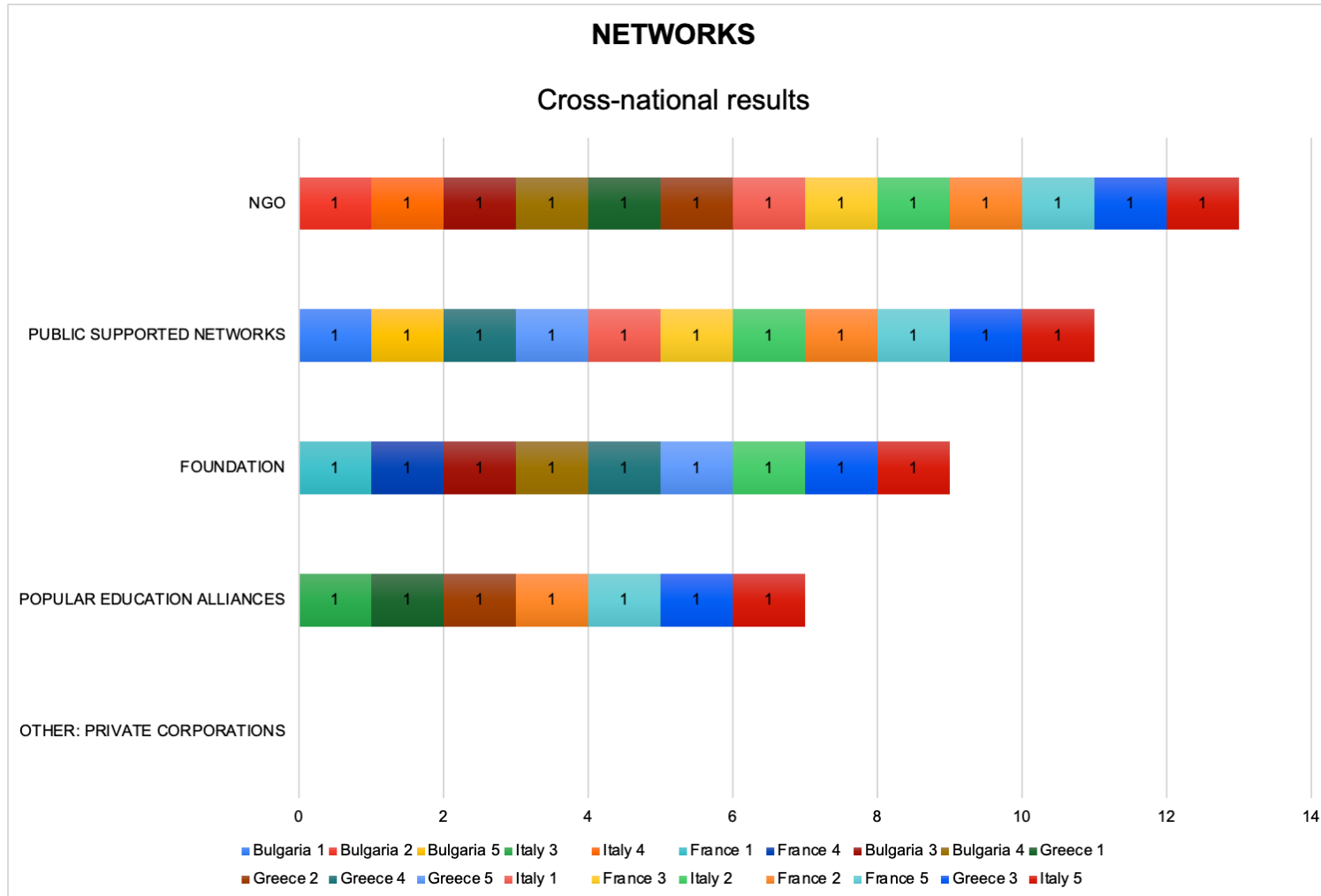
(<https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/YonMs/6/>)

- One country (Italy) incorporates all categories of stakeholders.
- Two countries (Greece, Bulgaria) mobilise an average range of stakeholders.
- France mobilises a narrow range of stakeholders.

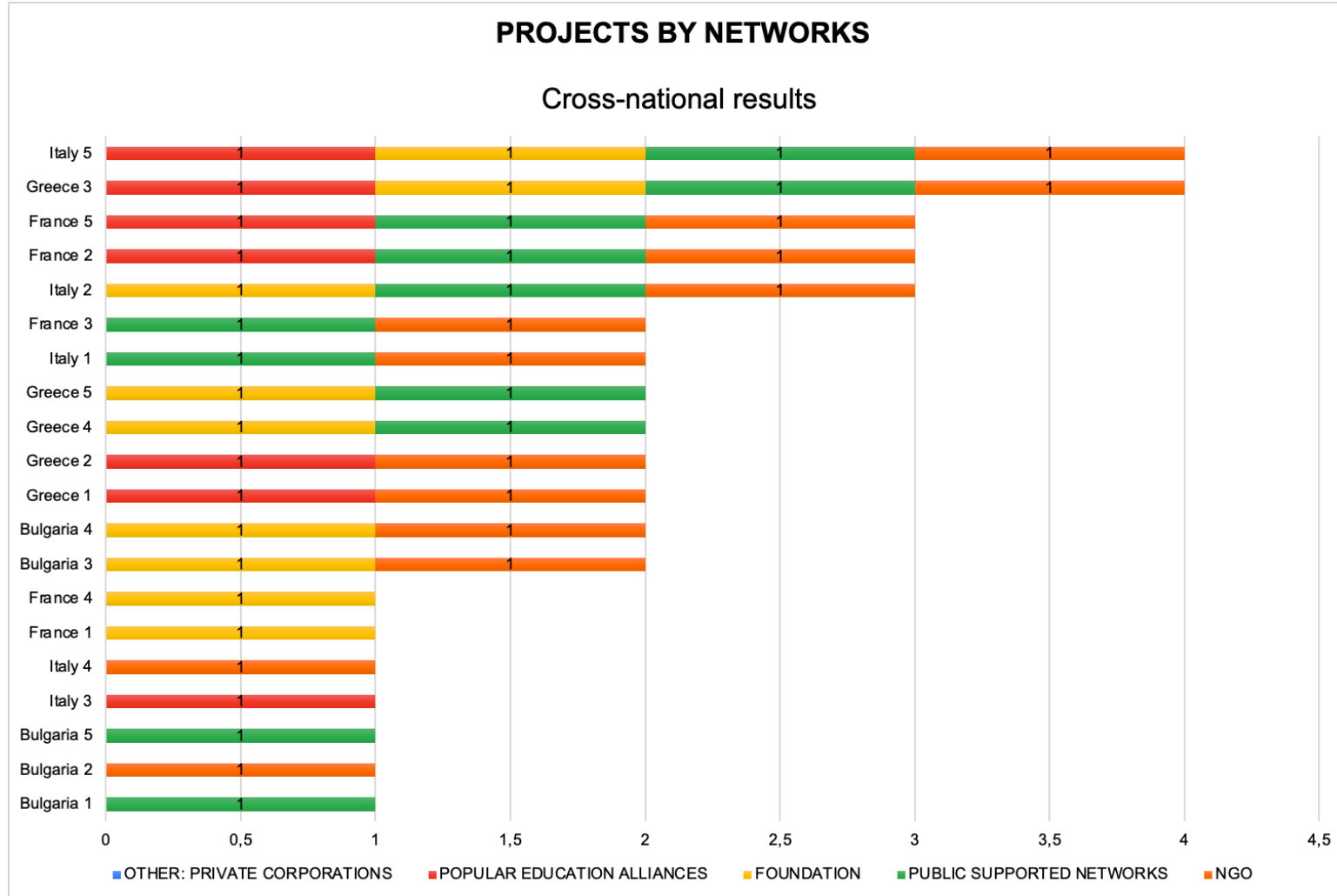
GENERAL COMMENTS:

Most projects are driven by institutions and policies, and present a cross-sector framework.
Most projects are heavily multi stakeholder and engage very heterogeneous actors and entities, whose mission is not necessarily MIL or Gender education.
Media engagement is very mixed between mass and social media, regular authorities and content providers.

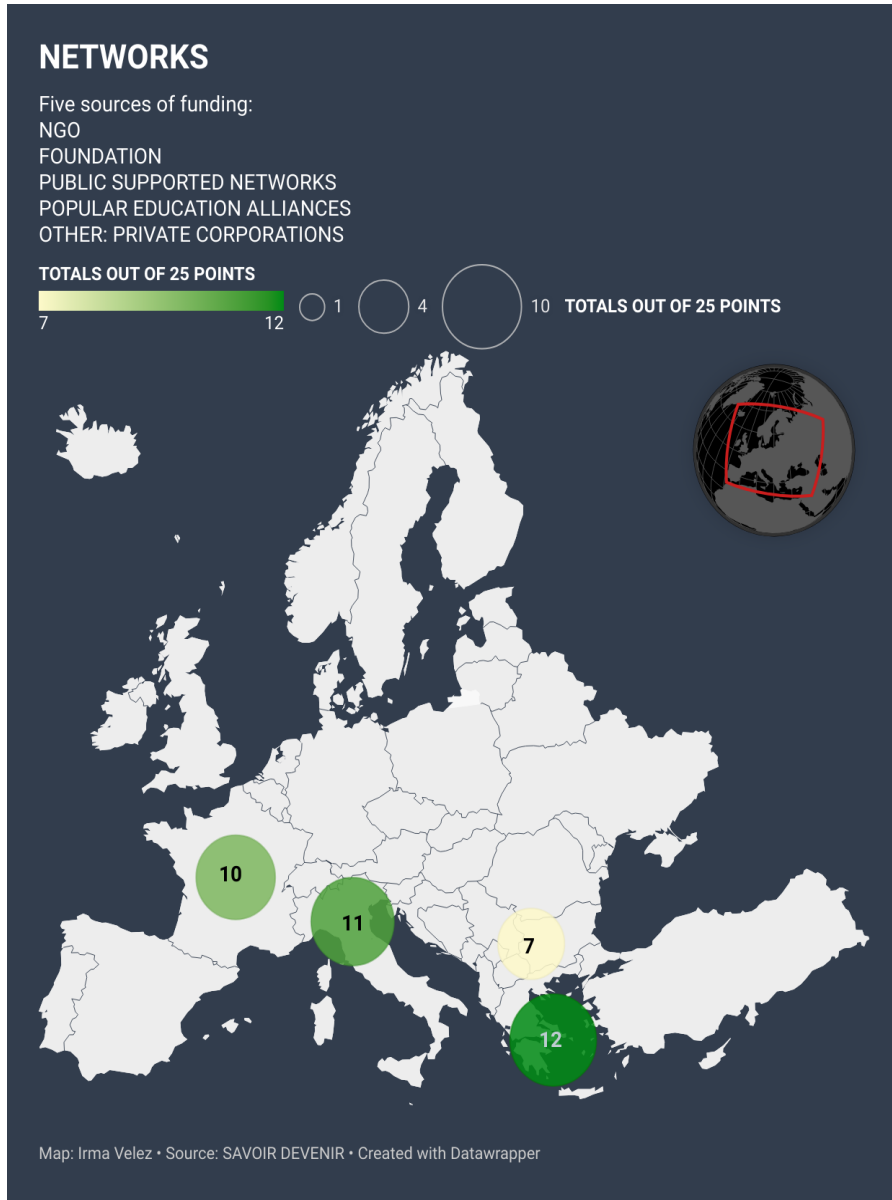
3.7 Project networks



- NGOs are present in more than two thirds of the projects (13 out of 20) and Public supported networks are present in almost two thirds of the projects (11 out of 20).
- Foundations are present in almost half of the projects (9 out of 20).
- Popular education alliances are present in more than a third of the projects (7 out of 20).
- Private corporations are apparently absent, yet their presence appears via foundations in some of the projects.



- 5 projects are related to 3-4 networks.
- 8 projects are related to 2 networks.
- 7 projects are related to only 1 network.



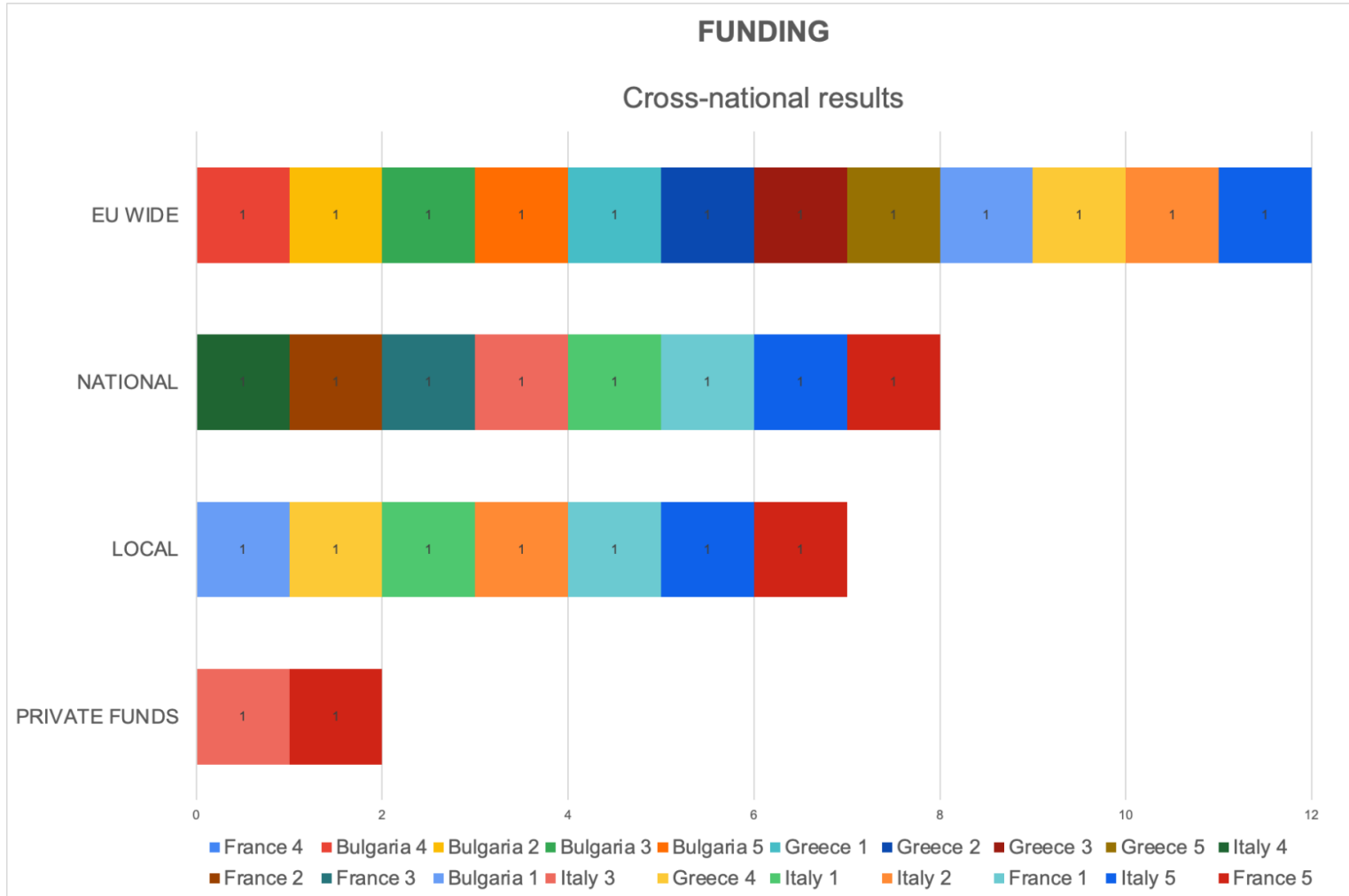
Mapping of Networks (<https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/JFrT7/3/>)

- Most countries (Greece, France, Italy) mobilise about half of the potential range of networks.
- One country (Bulgaria) mobilises a narrow range of networks.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Most projects (13/20) rely on more than 2 networks. The strong presence of NGOs hints at an international (EU) dimension of a lot of projects. The private sector does not appear much but could be acting via its contribution to Foundations and possibly some NGOs.

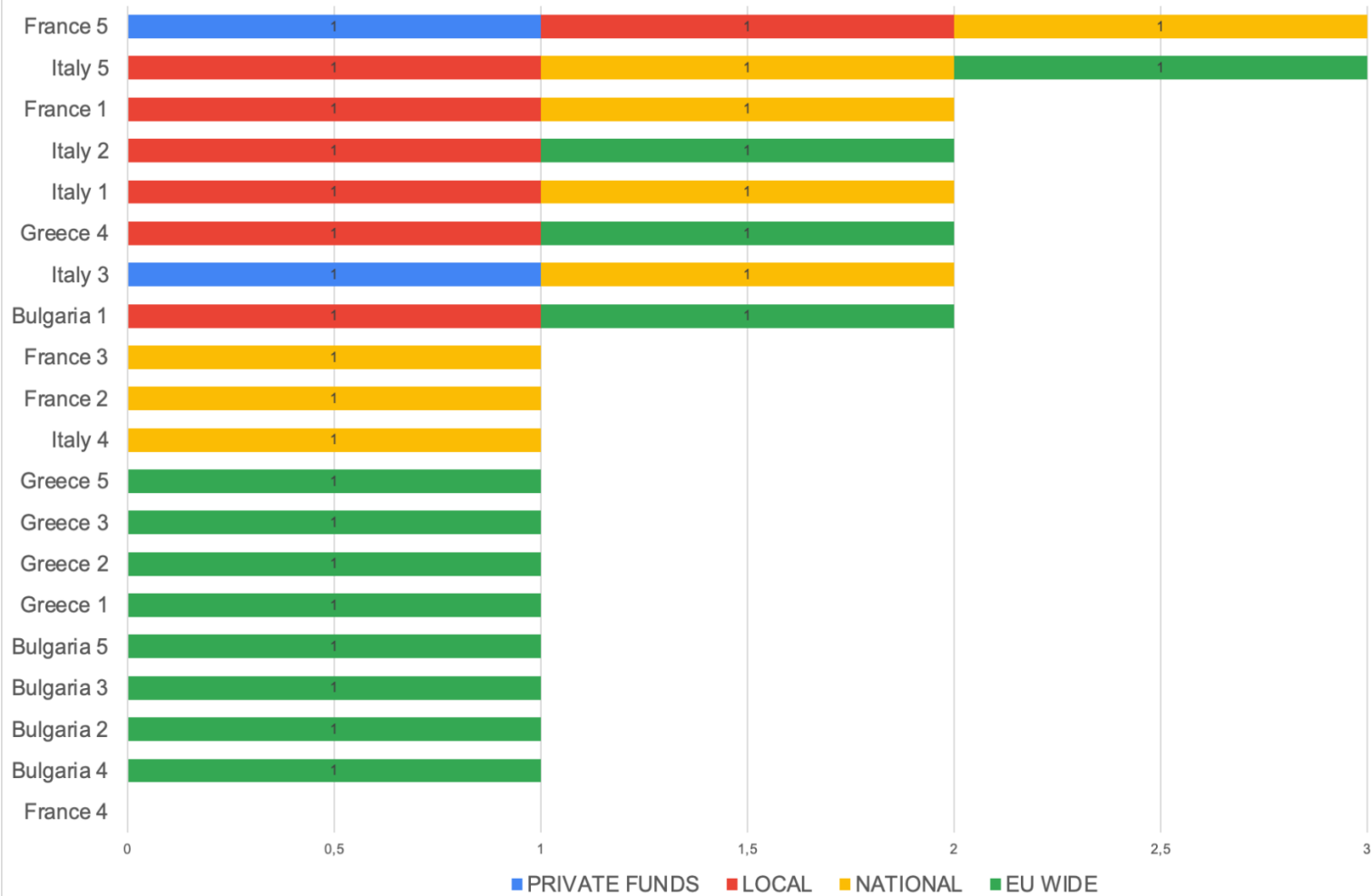
3.8 Project funding



- Two thirds of the projects (12 out of 20) are EU funded.
- Almost half of the projects receive national funding (8 out of 20).
- More than a third of the projects (7 out of 20) receive local funding.
- Private funding is the least present (2 out of 20).

PROJECTS BY FUNDING

Cross-national results

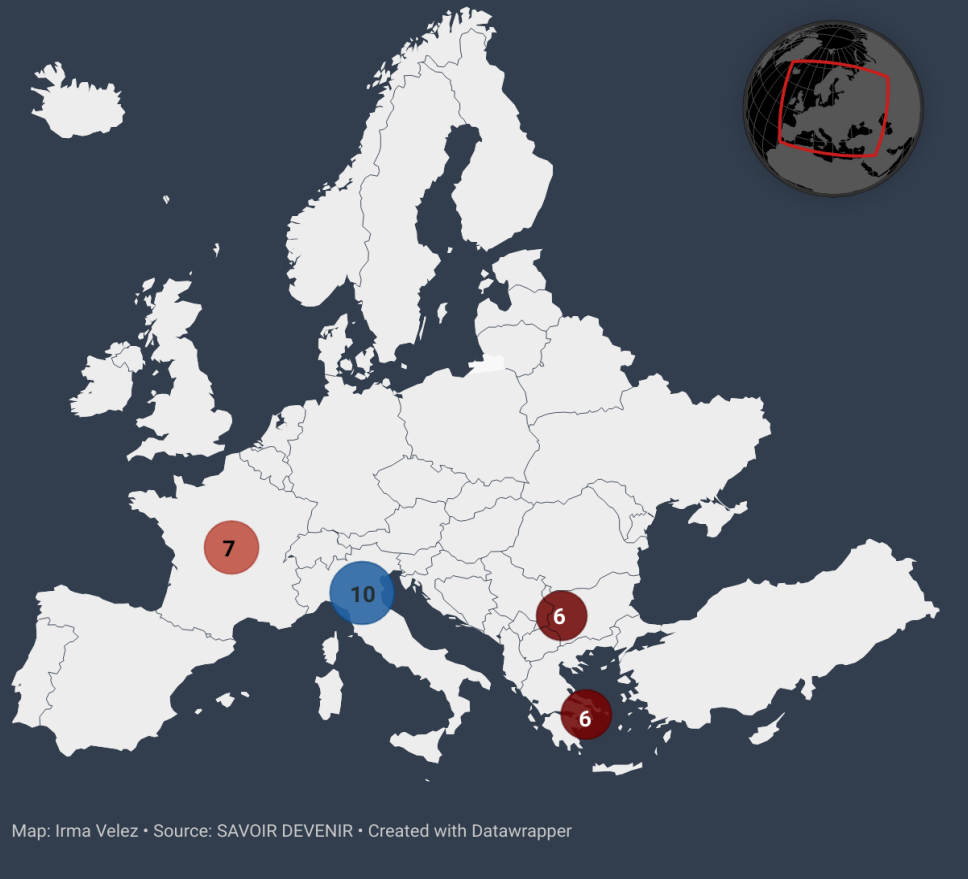


- No project is funded by the 4 possible funding sources: only 2 out of 20 projects receive three different sources of funding
- A third of the projects (6 out of 20) receive two different sources of funding.
- Almost two thirds of the projects (12 out of 20) receive one source of funding (11) or none (1).

FUNDING by COUNTRY

Four sources of funding assessed :
 PRIVATE FUNDS
 LOCAL FUNDS
 NATIONAL FUNDS
 EU WIDE FUNDS

Totals out of 20 points
 6 10 10 totals out of 20



Map: Irma Velez • Source: SAVOIR DEVENIR • Created with Datawrapper

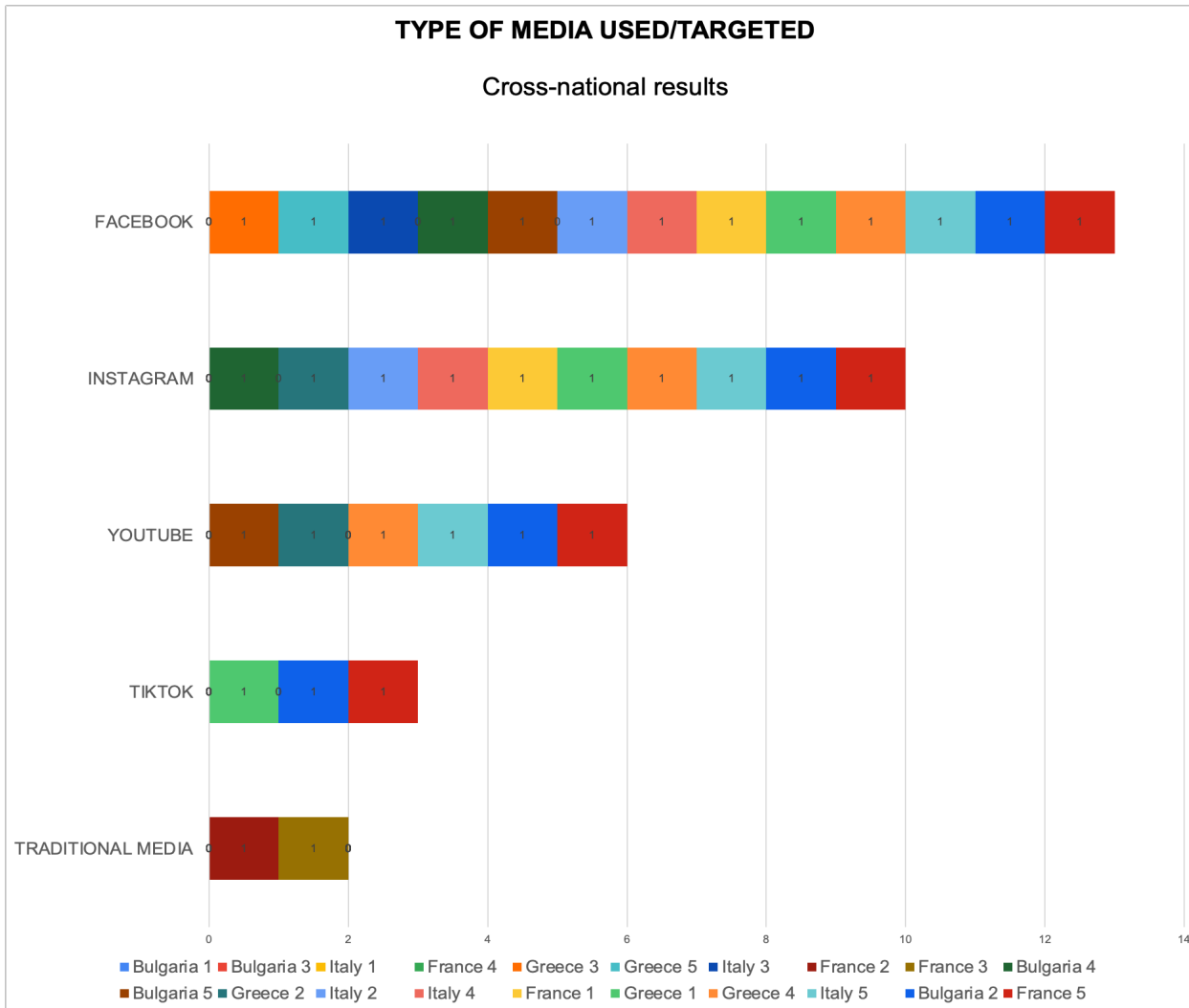
Mapping of Funding: (<https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/kjGwx/5/>)

- One country (Italy) uses at least two sources of funding out of four, in most projects.
- Three countries (Bulgaria, France, Greece) show one source of funding per project.
- All countries are less than average in using all sources of funding.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

EU directives and policies impact more than half of the projects' funding (12) and their transposition at national level (almost half of the projects-8). This points to a real dependency on external funding and a potential levelling impact on themes and competences. There is a lack of transparency as to the amount of funding and distribution of funds across the projects.

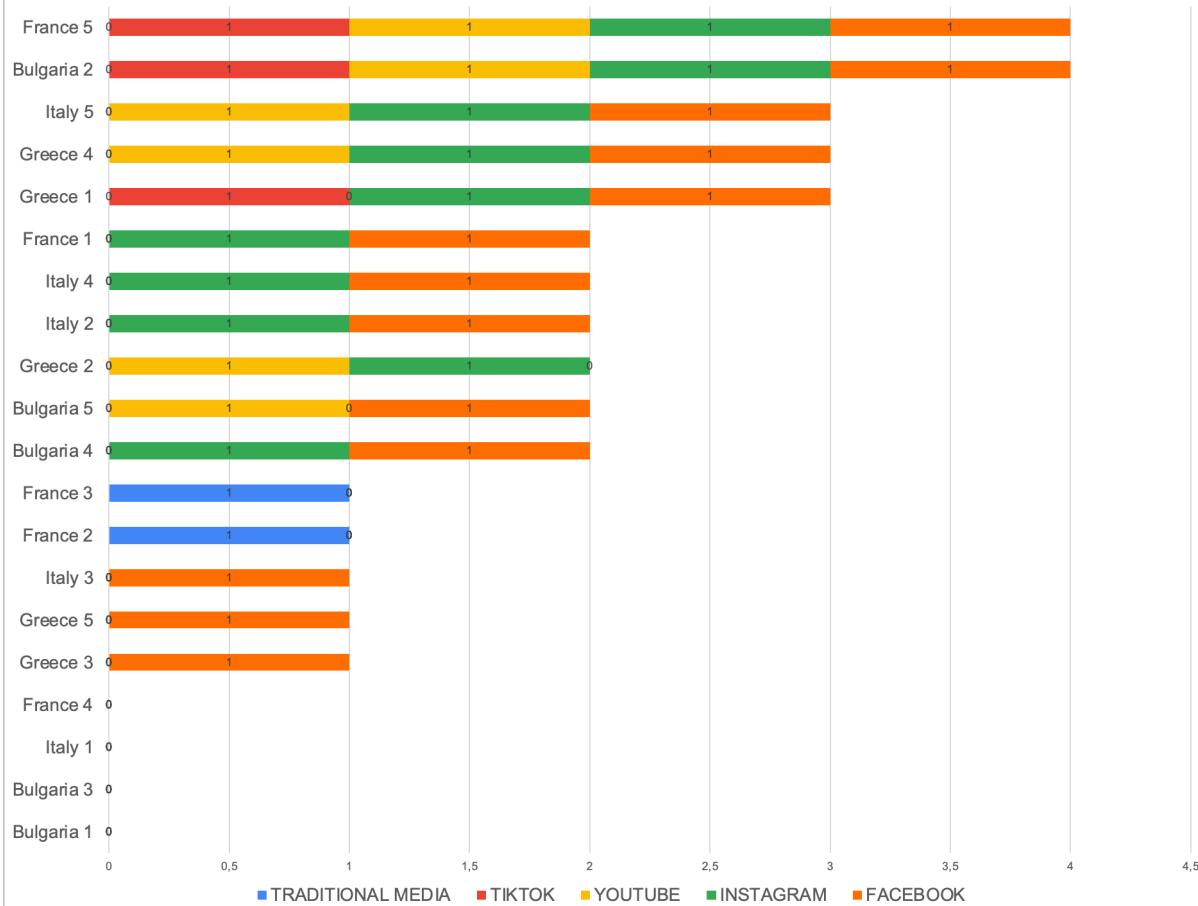
3.9 Type of media used/targeted



- Almost two thirds of the project (12 out of 20) are targeting or using Facebook.
- Half of the projects target or use Instagram (10 out of 2).
- Less than a third of the projects target or use Tiktok (3 out of 2) or Youtube (6 out of 20)
- Traditional media are the least targeted or used (2 out of 20)

PROJECTS BY TYPE OF MEDIA USED/TARGETED

Cross-national results



- A quarter of the projects (5 out of 20) use or target 3-4 types of social media.
- Almost a third of the projects (6 out of 20) use or target 2 types of social media.
- A quarter of the projects (5 out of 20) use or target 1 type of social media.
- 4 projects do not use nor target any type of media outside their website.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

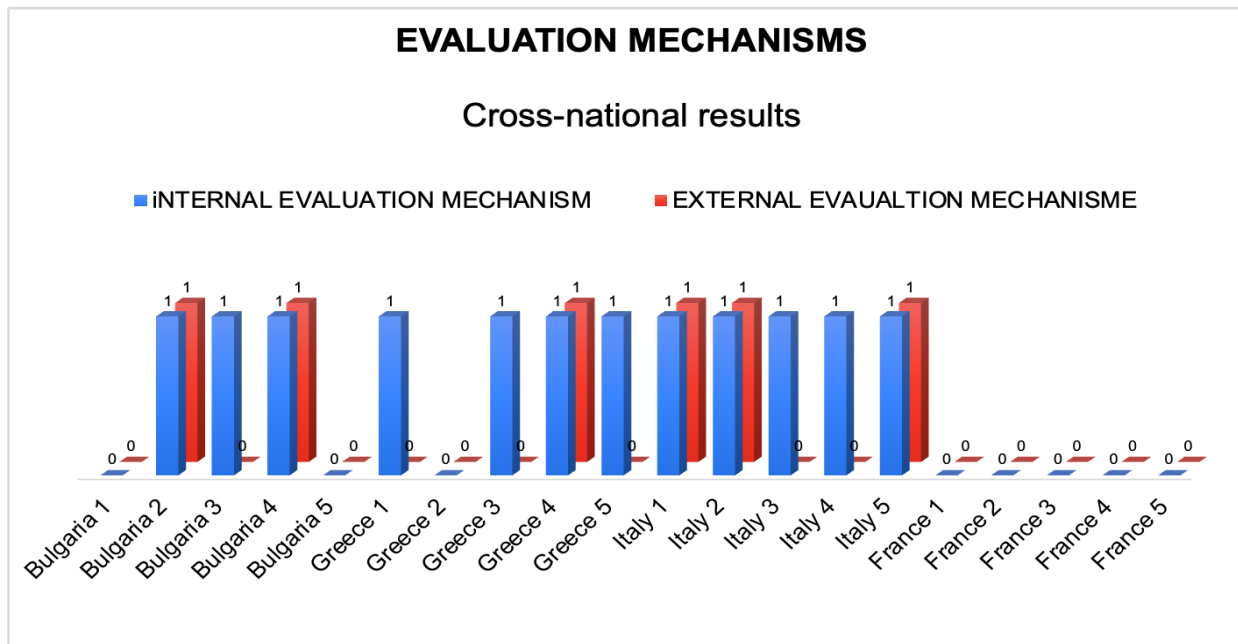
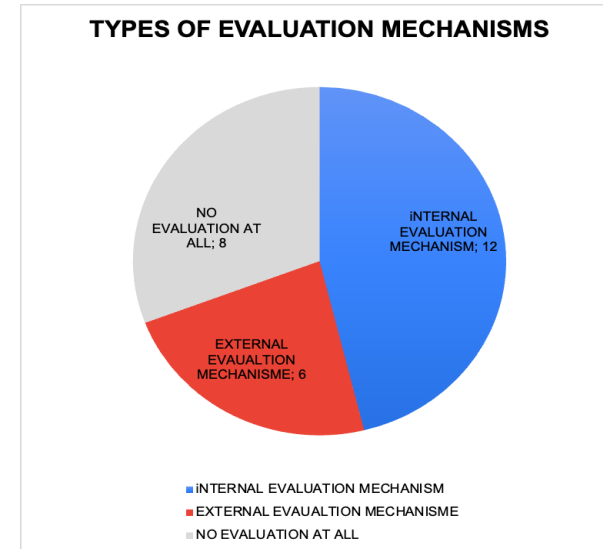
The type of social media use seems to correspond to the target public age, which explains the prominence of Facebook (for adults and seniors) followed by Instagram and Tiktok (teen oriented).

These results show that social media are integrated in the projects' webpage. Yet, this use does not imply them being targeted in a MIL/Gender perspective. The 4 projects scoring no use nor target of social media showed a traditional reliance on their website. They are able to be critical about social media without using or interacting with them.

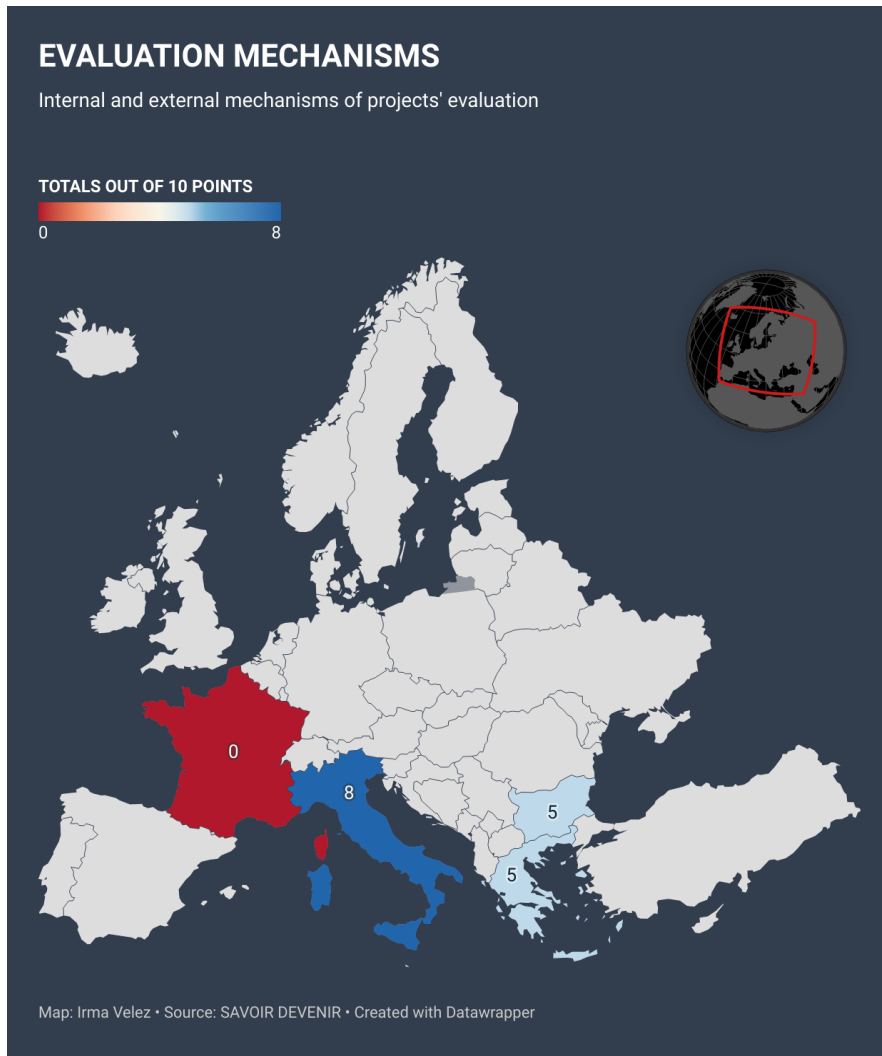
Social media networks seem mostly used to inform and disseminate rather than being targeted as a source of gender disinformation. This may reflect a MIL tendency to protect users (especially youth) by alerting to risks without exposing youth to social media (due to digital majority). This confirms the results that show the hiatus between participation and critical thinking in MIL and gender education projects.

3.10 Evaluation mechanisms (inside and outside project)

- Two thirds of the project are internally evaluated (12 out of 20)
- Almost a third of the projects are externally evaluated (6 out of 20)
- Almost a third of the projects are not evaluated at all (8 out of 20)



- Almost a third of the projects are evaluated both internally and externally (6 out of 20)
- There is no external evaluation standing alone.



Mapping of Evaluation mechanisms:

(<https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/uUwuG/1/>)

- One country (Italy) implements both internal and external evaluations (in 3 out of 5 projects).
- Bulgaria and Greece show similar results in the attempt to at least implement internal mechanisms for more than half of the projects.
- France is not implementing or showing evaluation mechanisms in its projects.

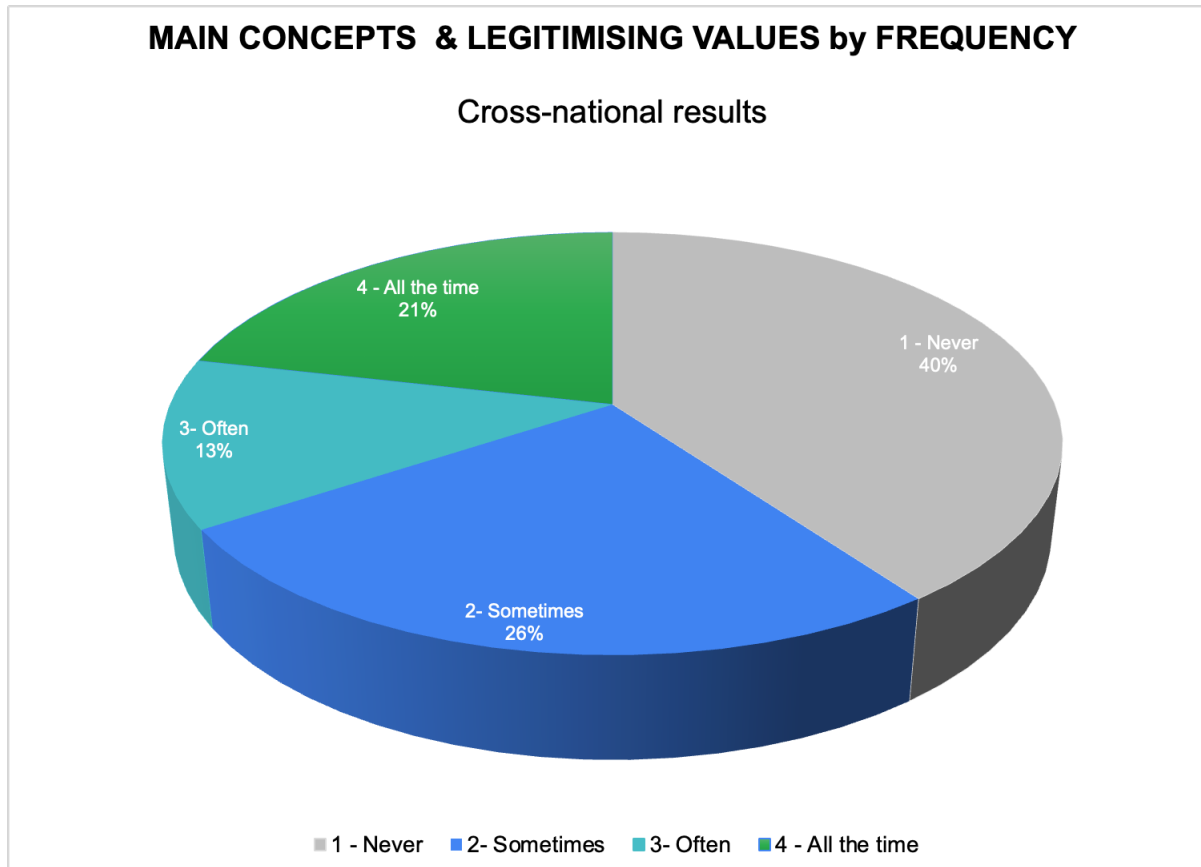
GENERAL COMMENTS:

Internal evaluation is the most common type of evaluation which can be seen as a weakness.

The overlap of external and internal evaluation attempts at strengthening evaluation and accountability required by the EU.

The lack of evaluation or complex evaluation mechanisms (both internal and external) shows a lack of communication of the results on the website to the general public. There is a lack of transparency at public level and across countries about evaluation and its effective impact.

3.11 Main concepts and legitimising values/concepts

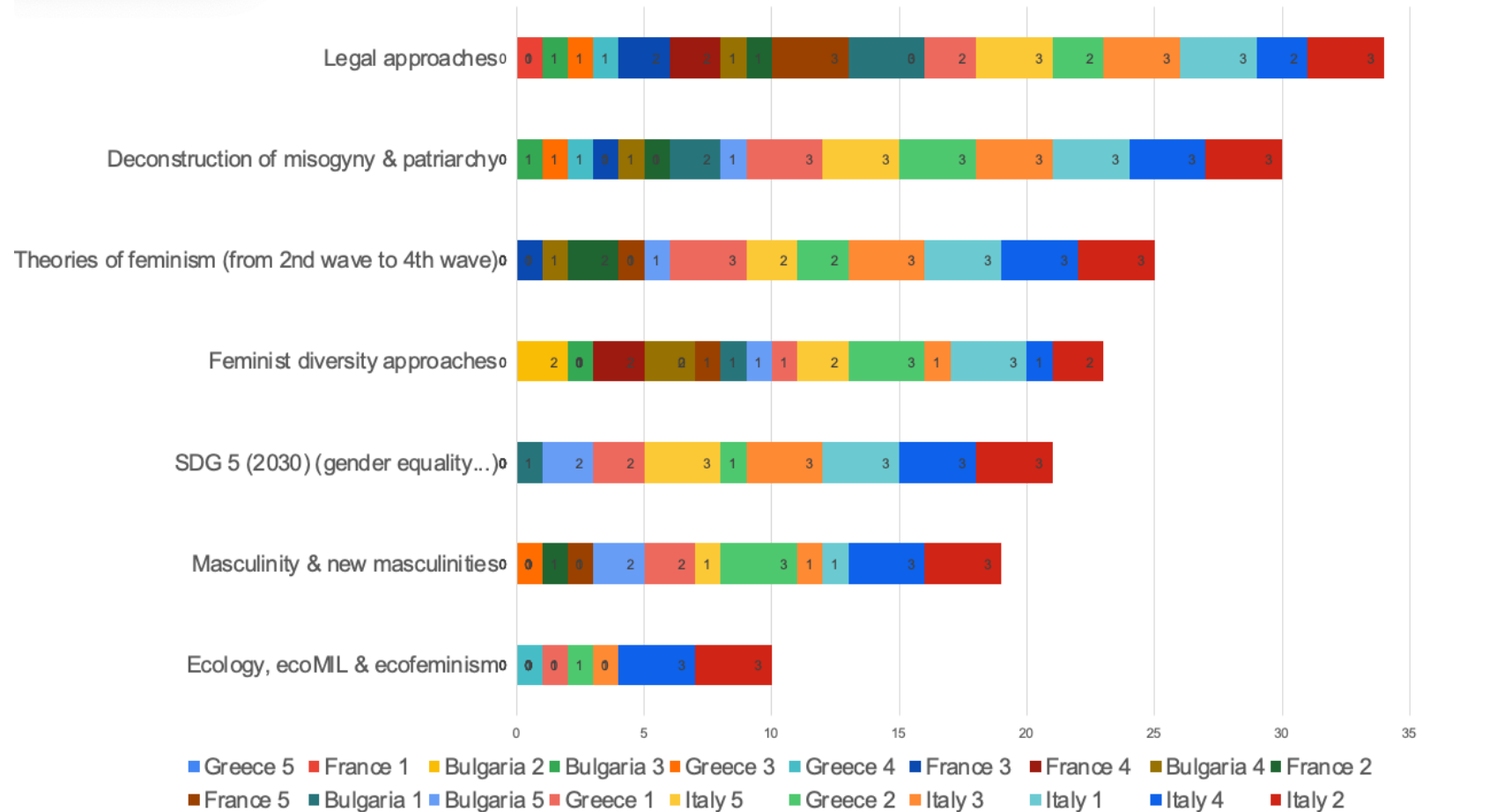


- All the projects assessed the frequency of 7 concepts on a Likert scale going from “never” to “all the time”.
- More than a third (40%) of these assessments showed no presence at all (“Never”).
- About one third (34%) showed “often” or “all the time”.
- More than a fourth (26%) showed “sometimes”.

MAIN CONCEPTS & LEGITIMISING VALUES

Cross-national results

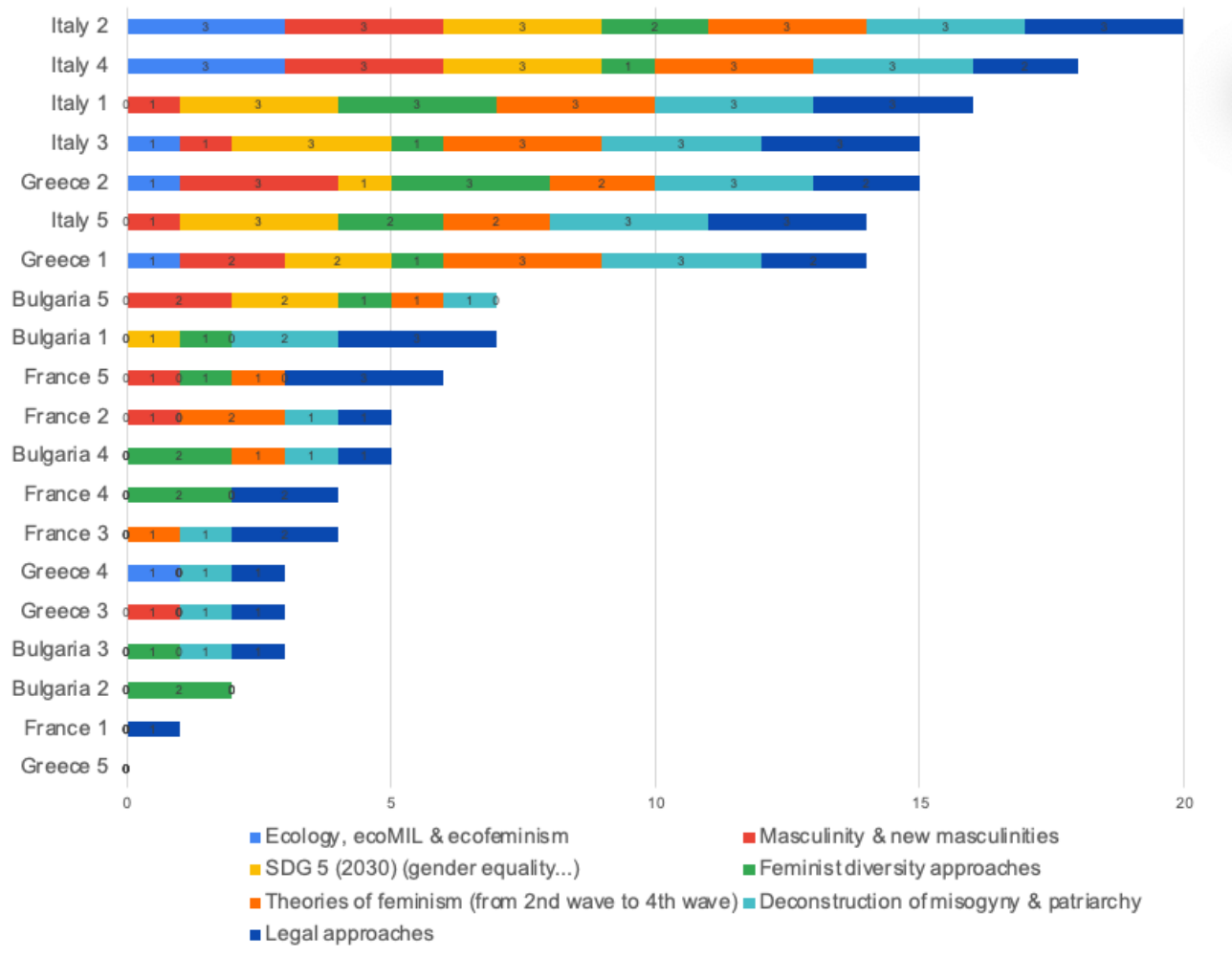
Zone de graphique



- The two leading categories are “Legal approaches” and “Deconstruction of misogyny and patriarchy”.
- The least mentioned categories are “Masculinity and new masculinities” and “Ecology & ecofeminism”.
- The categories moderately mentioned are “Theories of feminism, Feminist diversity approaches and SDGs”.

MAIN CONCEPTS & LEGITIMISING VALUES BY PROJECT

Cross-national results



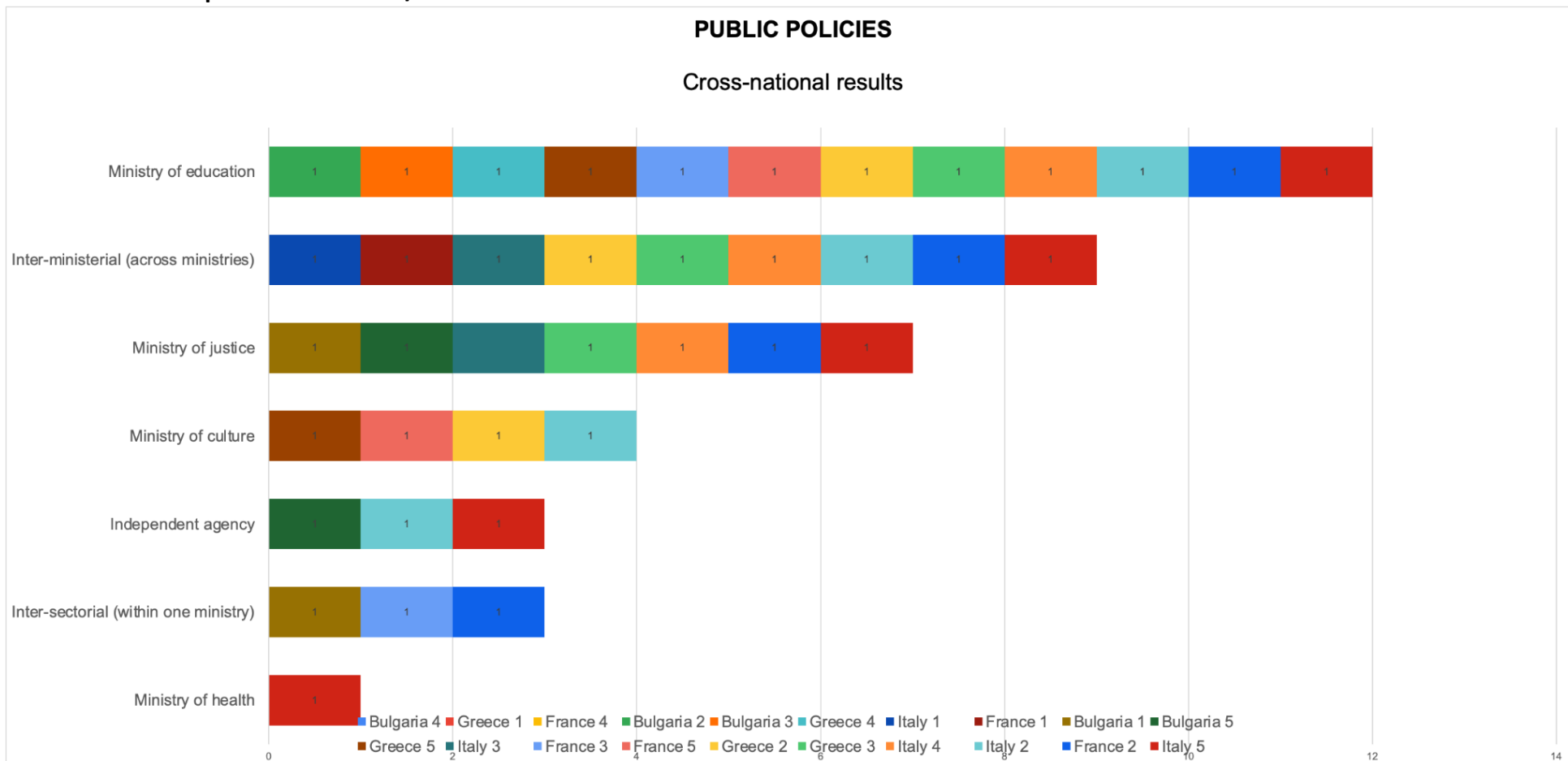
- More than a third of the projects (7 out of 20) cross all of the 7 concepts.
- A quarter of the projects (5 out of 20) cross 4-6 concepts.
- More than a third of the projects (8 out of 20) cross 2 or less concepts. Only one project is not concerned by any of the concepts and values assessed.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

The top legitimising values “Legal approaches” and “Deconstruction of misogyny and patriarchy” show discrepancy with dominant themes, and in particular “gender-role modelling”. The top legitimising values “Legal approaches” and “Deconstruction of misogyny and patriarchy” show even larger discrepancy with competences, in particular “creative thinking (countering patriarchal and anti-feminist views)”.

Both Gender Education and MIL are weak in terms of ideological and theoretical explanations and justifications; even if they are underlying, they are not made visible and are covered by “legal” terms. Feminism and the role of media seems a-historical, with no or little mention of feminist waves and the link to media use (and structural impact on each new wave). This also is reflected in the technology blind (no study of AI bias for instance).

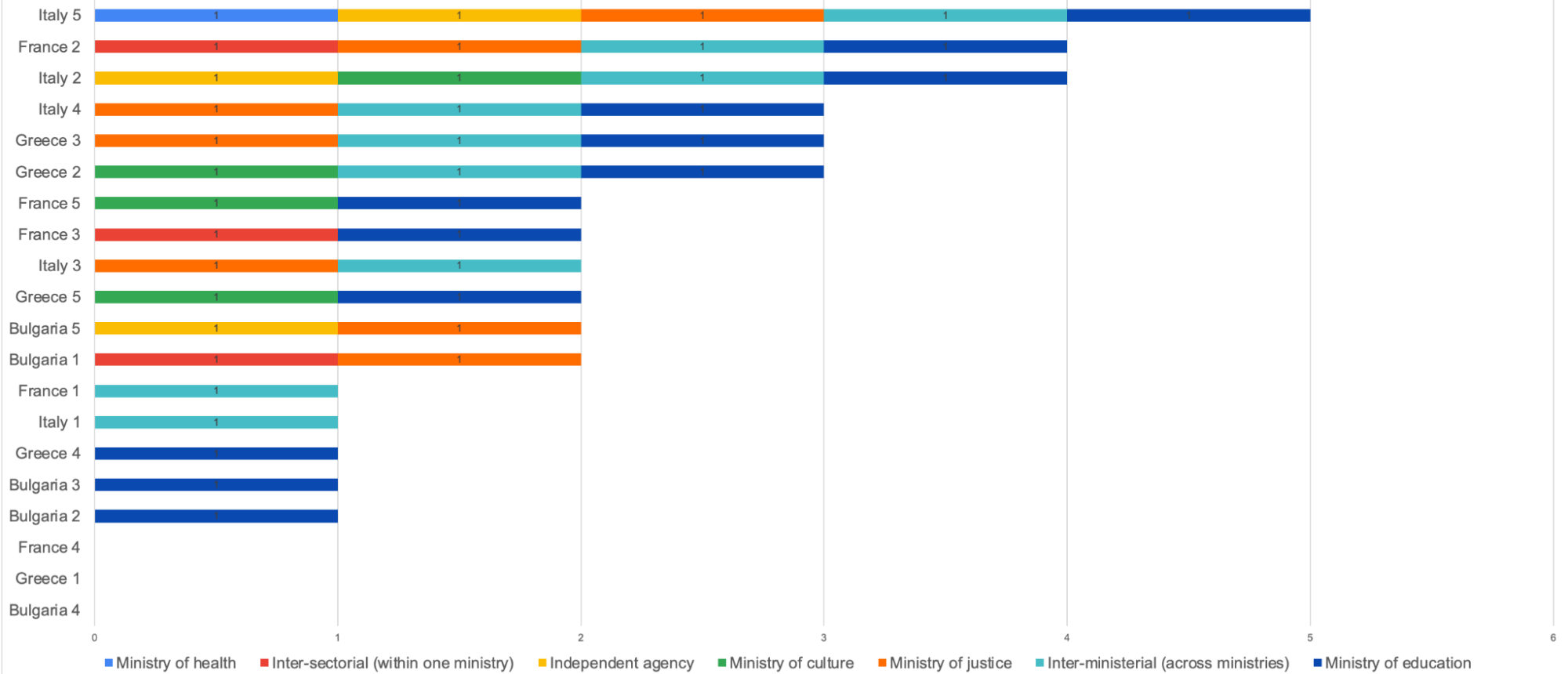
3.12 Public policies on Gender/Media



- Leading public policies apply mainly to education (12 out of 20 projects) and inter-ministerial entities (across several ministries, 9 out of 20 projects).
- The least present public policy relates to health (1 out of 20 projects).
- The other public policies moderately relate to justice (7 out of 20 projects), culture (4 out of 20 projects), independent agency (3 out of 20 projects) and inter-sectorial (within the same ministry, 3 out of 20 projects).

PROJECT BY PUBLIC POLICIES

Cross-national results

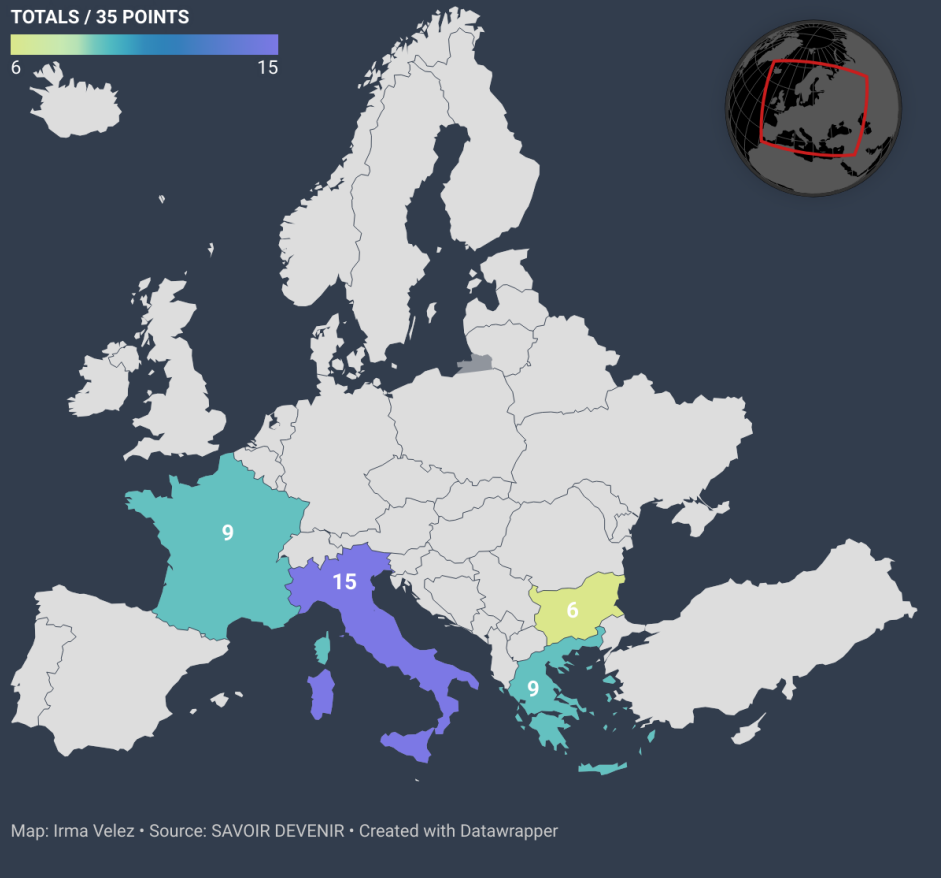


- Less than a seventh of the projects (3 out of 20) relate to more than 4 sectors of public policies.
- More than a third of the projects (8 out of 20) relate to less than 1 sector of public policies.
- Less than half (9 out of 20) relate to 2 or 3 sectors of public policies.

PUBLIC POLICIES

LINKS TO SEVEN INSTITUTIONS :
 Ministry of education
 Ministry of culture
 Ministry of justice
 Ministry of health
 Inter-sectorial (within one ministry)
 Inter-ministerial (across ministries)
 Independent agency

TOTALS / 35 POINTS



Map: Irma Velez • Source: SAVOIR DEVENIR • Created with Datawrapper

Mapping of Public policies: (<https://datawrapper.dwcdn.net/tm5rT/3/>)

- One country (Italy) shows a wide yet limited range of public policies in various entities (less than half).
- Two countries (France, Greece) show a very narrow range of public policies entities (less than a third).
- Bulgaria shows a very limited range of public policies entities (less than a fifth).
- All countries are below average in all public policies.

General Comment:

A majority of projects deal with more than 2 policy sectors (and inter-sectoral entities) which calls for complex project management and accountability. This is congruent with the multistakeholder results, that showed heterogeneous actors and entities.

The relative absence of the ministry of culture is not congruent with the role of media as engaged stakeholders and shows a lack of leadership, concern and shared vision between the public and private media sector.

Considering the importance of fighting gender-based violence, the relative presence of the ministry of justice shows a relative coherence with strong points of project competences that deal with participation (gender mainstreaming tools and uses) and critical thinking (gender equity, diversity and visibility). When justice is mobilised, the projects seem to be boosted by the legal frameworks.

However, the relative presence of justice shows a discrepancy as some main themes like “body positive”, SDGs, and human rights are weakly represented and are not embedded in the questions carried by justice and health.

4. Conclusions

In spite of the variety of projects and of national contexts, some strong trends emerge from the cross-country analysis, along the four dimensions considered, when applied to gendered disinformation.

1/ the types of projects (category, scale, target public)

Out of the 20 cases examined, the most common category of projects is “resources” (15) by far, followed by “end-user engagement” (9). These two together show the focus on providing front-line support to all kinds of citizens, including seniors. Most projects targeted youth, in spite of the lack of curricular base, with much less emphasis on younger children. The status of the main professionals involved is teachers, journalists and youth workers, with a surprising lagging behind of influencers. All projects (20) address women and a majority of them also target men (16 out 20). Less than a third (6 out 20) addresses non-binary public as well.

The projects correspond to significant good practices and show a variety of configurations across initiatives and across countries, that confirm the complexity of the issue of gendered disinformation and the diversity of correlated issues (health, education and social justice). A lot of projects showed a lot of overlapping categories which points to their complexity. The combination of categories is very heterogeneous across projects showing no consensus nor preferred way to lead projects. It may point to a dissipation of energy and a lack of clarity (about objectives, dissemination purposes, ...).

2/ the competences frameworks (standard setting tools, themes, legitimising values)

No specific reference to competence frameworks was mentioned in the 20 projects examined. They are not clearly visible neither in the descriptions of the projects nor in the training methods described. The specific competences targeted were mentioned without sustaining rationale, and some had to be inferred and left to the discretion of the experts. Accordingly, no existing curriculum either in MIL or in Gender education was mentioned in projects directed at schools.

“Participation” was the leading competence for MIL-based projects whereas “Critical thinking” was the leading competence for Gender education-based projects. The most significant projects also feature “Intercultural dialogue”, including competences around challenging hate speech and online disinformation.

The main disinformation related themes most likely to be treated in the projects were “Gendered role-modelling”, “Gendered stereotypes”, “Gendered hatred/Violence” and “Gendered disinformation”. The themes least likely to be treated in the projects were: “Pornography and the pornographic gaze”, “Reproductive rights” and “AI gender bias “. When crossing critical thinking and participation by themes there is a significant amount of overlap between MIL projects and Gender education projects,

which points to a potential blended development along the most outstanding competences.

As for legitimising values, the two leading categories are “Legal approaches” and “Deconstruction of misogyny and patriarchy”. The least mentioned categories are “Masculinity and new masculinities” and “Ecology & ecofeminism”. The legitimising values show some alignment with the dominant themes, in particular “gender-role modelling” and “misogyny and patriarchy”. The “legitimising values” show a measure of discrepancy with competences, in particular due to the weakness of “creative thinking (countering patriarchal and anti-feminist views)”.

Both Gender Education and MIL are weak in terms of ideological and theoretical explanations and justifications; even if they are underlying, they are not made visible and are covered by “legal” terms. The most important Gender competences to deal with media and disinformation (critical thinking in its three dimensions (5/ gender equity, diversity & visibility, 3/ gender bias & gender categories & 2/ roles & competences) seem to reflect a 1960s second wave feminism approach that can be seen as a successful appropriation of women’s rights in society and deconstruction of systemic misogyny. However, the absence of creative thinking (“countering patriarchy and anti-feminist views”) points to a weakness across all projects. It shows the mass and social media are not being used to disenfranchise women fully and their structurally biased production system and functioning are not fully deconstructed and criticised. Feminism and the role of media seems a-historical, with no or little mention of feminist waves and the link to media

use (and structural impact on each new wave). This also is reflected in the technology blind (no study of AI bias for instance).

3/ the capacity-building forces and instruments (public policies, funding, evaluation)

The capacity-building forces tend to rely on EU directives and policies. The public policies in presence tend to be dominated by the sector of education (12 out of 20 projects) and inter-ministerial entities (across several ministries, 9 out of 20 projects). The least present public policy relates to health (1 out of 20 projects) while justice (7) and culture (4) lag behind. A majority of projects deal with more than 2 policy sectors (and inter-sectoral entities) which calls for complex project management and accountability. This is congruent with the multistakeholder results, that show a mix of heterogeneous actors and entities.

The relative absence of the ministry of culture is not congruent with the role of media as engaged stakeholders and shows a lack of leadership, concern and shared vision between the public and private media sector. Considering the importance of fighting gender-based violence, the relative presence of the ministry of justice shows some coherence with the project competences that deal with participation (gender mainstreaming tools and uses) and critical thinking (gender equity, diversity and visibility). When justice is mobilised, the projects seem to be boosted by the legal frameworks. However, the relative presence of justice shows a discrepancy as some main themes like “body positive”, “SDGs and human rights “are weakly represented and are not embedded in the questions carried by justice and health.

EU policies also impact more than half of the projects' funding (12) and their transposition at national level (almost half of the projects-8). This points to the strength of the EU for structuring projects, especially in terms of equality between men/women, to the potential detriment of other issues, including fighting online gendered disinformation. But this also can create dependency and have a levelling impact on national and local projects.

Project evaluation reflects a similar trend. Two thirds of the projects are internally evaluated (12) vs. one third externally evaluated only. There is an overlap of external and internal evaluation, which points at attempts to strengthen evaluation and accountability (as required by the EU). About a third of the projects (8) are not evaluated at all, which is preoccupying in terms of lack of transparency at public level and lack of proven effective impact.

4/ the major stakeholders (sectors, networks, media)

Public authorities and educational institutions are the leading stakeholders, followed by civil society and academia. Media (via Online platforms, Audiovisual content provider, Media regulatory authorities) are moderately engaged (less than half of the projects, 8 and 9 out of 20). Most projects are driven by institutions and policies and present a cross-sector framework. Most projects are heavily multi stakeholder and engage very heterogeneous actors and entities, whose mission is not necessarily MIL or Gender education.

Media engagement is very mixed between mass and social media, regular authorities and content providers.

Among the networks, NGOs are present in more than two thirds of the projects (13) and public supported networks are present in almost two thirds of the projects (11). This reflects the dual significance of “good practices”, that can be both bottom-up (civil society) and top-down (public service entities). The private sector is absent but could be acting via foundations and NGOs for some specific projects. Additionally, most projects (13) rely on more than 2 networks and the strong presence of NGOs hints at an international (EU) dimension of a lot of projects, with potential transfer of practices and resources. These types of actors do not necessarily have a statutory responsibility or mission on MIL or Gender education but still have a motivation for the issue.

Concerning social media, about half of the projects (11) use or target 2 to -4 types of social media, whereas 4 projects do not use nor target any type of media, outside their website. The type of social media use seems to correspond to the target public age, with the prominence of Facebook (for adults and seniors) followed by Instagram and Tiktok (more teen oriented). Most projects show a strong reliance on their websites for disseminating information. There is clearly a huge gap between the subject matter of gender disinformation, the social media impacted by or fostering it and their use or target by most projects.

Social media networks seem mostly used to inform and disseminate rather than being targeted as a source of gender disinformation. This may reflect a MIL tendency to protect users (especially youth) by alerting to risks without exposing youth to social media (due to digital majority). This confirms the results that show the hiatus between participation and critical thinking in MIL and gender education projects.

5/ The patterns across countries

The comparison yields some insights in the European dynamics on the topic (though they cannot be generalised at this pilot stage). Early EU entrants (France and Italy) are faring better than countries that joined later (Greece and Bulgaria). Western continental countries have also bigger economies than Eastern/Southern continental countries, with attendant budgets, which may explain some of the lag and the fragilities that emerge, in terms of stakeholders and funding in particular, with a dependency on EU funding rather than a mix of EU and national funding.

Among Western countries, Italy is very active and bent on producing resources and mobilising stakeholders and networks. France is less able to mobilise networks and less cross-sectoral, relying on ministerial silos and requiring less evaluation. Among the Eastern/Southern countries, Bulgaria is still weak in public policies as well as Greece, but shows interest in evaluation and accountability. Across countries, the majority of the projects tend to be bottom-up or grassroots initiatives, led by NGOs/CSOs. However, France and

Italy seem to have less problems with funding (local, national and EU) and coordination (cross-sector) than Greece and Bulgaria. In the latter two countries, initiatives may be impeded by poor resource allocation, lack of public policies and lack of coordination across sectors and actors. In all countries, evaluation lags behind, though it is increasingly attached to funding, as authorities tend to require evidence-based results in terms of effectiveness and accountability.

These results point to some strengths and weaknesses of the current situation and possible solutions. While notable progress has been made in addressing gender biases and stereotypes through MIL initiatives across the four partner countries, there remain critical areas that require further attention. The issue of online “gendered disinformation” is not currently the focus of project managers or policymakers. When it is mentioned, it is mostly from within the perspective of other themes and values (such as gender stereotyping, gender-based violence, gender equality). Gendered disinformation is not addressed as a standalone topic, which dilutes any attempt at building a case for it. Besides, the actors and networks that support the projects analysed do not have gendered disinformation as their major mission and seem to tackle it within their larger societal agenda. As such, “deplatforming misogyny” (Khoo, 2021) is still a far cry away, all the more so as social media platforms are very lukewarm in their engagement. They thus augment and amplify the “media pedagogy of cruelty” (Segato, 2018), that normalises sexism and patriarchy while perpetuating gendered disinformation.

These results are all the more preoccupying as they only partly help build resilience among the citizens in the countries analysed. They confirm political, legal and educational gaps to address the potential damages of online gendered disinformation. They are congruent with the results produced by the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) of the European Parliament in 2023. This study underlines the potential damages for women “in terms of algorithmic targeting, negative body images, misogyny, technology-facilitated coercive control, degradation of women in misogynistic pornography, etc.” (Park et al 2023). Both this report and the FEMM study point to the risk of lack of confidence in public policies and tools put in place, if no training of decision makers and policy officers is developed in sectors such as justice, police and health.

These results are not totally congruent with the ranking provided by the two indices on ML (by OSIS) and on Gender (by EIGE). This was to be expected, considering the dimensions used and the project objective of crossing the two areas of MIL and Gender. France is not always “performing above average”, though it is strong in public policy with lack of evaluation and funding hinders performance. Italy and Greece are not systematically performing below average but show different speeds, with Italy quite active on most dimensions. Bulgaria may be “performing poorly” but shows promise and potential in its deployment of possibilities via EU funding that compensate the national fragilities in public policies.

These results point to possible solutions. The integration of MIL and Gender literacy in educational curricula of EU member states is crucial. This should

afford young people and adults with critical thinking processes to build resilience to the social media messages, image-based sexual abuse, online gender-based violence and gender stereotyping. Developing, streamlining and implementing a gendered disinformation competence framework that combines MIL and gender education characteristics should become a policy priority. Besides this comprehensive framework, enhanced policy implementation, improved transparency in evaluation, and stronger intersectoral partnerships are essential to measure the projects’ impact and advancing these efforts and achieving lasting gender equality. Without concerted efforts of both public and private actors to make such training programs readily available, society at large will be an easy target for disinformation, propaganda, and “fake news”.

The projects provide a reality check on the difficulties remaining yet to reach gender mainstreaming in the media as “a strategy towards realising gender equality. It involves the integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes, with a view to promoting equality between women and men, and combating discrimination” (EIGE). In this context, with a view to encourage further comparison across Europe and extended transfers and collaborations in the future. The analysis of the projects confirms the stepped approach of project Gender-ED coalition, that aims at proposing a competence framework, training (via a MOOC), awareness raising (via online influencers) and, finally, building a networked coalition, with a view for further transfer and cooperation across EU countries.

5. Public policy recommendations

REC#1 – Establish a much-needed baseline for evaluating projects and competence frameworks, to be used by all EU member states, in a coordinated and effective way. This would ensure monitoring and enhance transparency and accountability.

REC#2 – Develop and implement a comprehensive MIL and gender competence framework, as the basis of specialised qualification programs for professionals (educators, journalists, social media activists). This could improve their digital skills and develop and periodically measure their media and information literacy skills.

REC#3 – Produce a Combinatorial Guide for Gender and MIL education as a means of promoting gender equality and democracy trans-sectionally, in particular for public officials in gender equality and anti-discrimination bodies. This implies the inclusion of more information and actions regarding gender related issues that are manifest in the digital world, as per example online GBV, gendered disinformation and so forth. It also implies the education of not just women and girls, but all genders and ages.

REC#4 – Increase awareness and training in online gender disinformation, clearly detailing descriptors and expected outcomes, in particular via MIL and/or gender education workshops and creative courses and classes in secondary education. There is a real need to take into account the results of this report, to integrate social media uses and participation, to update projects on current research and themes (ecofeminism) and international frameworks (SDG) and to boost emerging issues in gender disinformation (pornography, IA biases, mental health...).

REC#5 – Implement evaluation by connecting academia and independent research with project management in the early design of the initiatives. This

would make it possible to deal with gendered disinformation as a fully recognized issue, not diluted in other issues.

REC#6 – Provide funding, training, access to data and tools and knowledge sharing aimed at improving research and fact-checking capacities.

REC#7 – Enhance Policy Implementation, so as to bridge the gap between civil society's proactive efforts and the delayed and inadequate responses from public authorities, emphasising the importance of structural measures and effective policy implementation. This could be supported by increasing the number of projects dedicated to policy implementation and case studies to address the identified gaps and promote more effective gender equality measures.

REC#8 – Support trans-national research to collect data and information through appropriate monitoring systems and tools (like the Gender-Ed Coalition mapping tool) to inform and inspire other policy makers and key stakeholders. The standardisation and systematic collection of gender-disaggregated data have a direct positive impact on awareness-raising initiatives by providing clear and detailed insights into gender-specific issues. These practices also enhance the ability to counteract phenomena of gender disinformation and violence by offering accurate data that inform and support targeted interventions and policies.

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7. Annexes

1. Annex 1: Template for questionnaire: grid for project analysis

1. Dimension	Project category
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resource creation 2. Case study 3. End-user focus 4. Network building 5. Awareness Campaign 6. Policy implementation 7. Media platform initiative 8. Other... 	

Your own appreciation and comments:

2. Dimension	Project MIL competences SPECIFY IF A SPECIFIC MIL COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK WAS USED
---------------------	--

1. **Media use: the ability to search, find and navigate and use media content and services.**
2. **Critical thinking: understanding how the media industry works and how media messages are constructed.**
3. **Critical thinking: questioning the motivations of content producers in order to make informed choices about content selection and use.**
4. **Critical thinking: recognising different types of media content and evaluating content for truthfulness, reliability and value for money.**
5. **Critical thinking: recognising and managing online security and safety risks.**
6. **Creative skills: creating, building and generating media content.**

- 7. **Participation and engagement: interaction, engagement and participation in the economic, social and cultural aspects of society through the media.**
- 8. **Participation and engagement: promoting democratic participation and fundamental rights.**
- 9. **Intercultural dialogue: including challenging radicalisation and hate speech online., cross-cultural attention to others (difference, empathy,...)**
- 10. **Other**

your own appreciation and comments:

3. Dimension	<p>Project gender competences</p> <p>SPECIFY IF SPECIFIC GENDER COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK WAS USED</p>
---------------------	---

- 1. **Media use: the ability to identify stereotypes and gendered representations in social media and mass media**
- 2. **Critical thinking: Identifying women’s roles and competences (in the workplace, via the media)**
- 3. **Critical thinking: questioning gender bias and gender categories**
- 4. **Critical thinking: understanding gender sensitive language use (in media)**
- 5. **Critical thinking: recognizing Gender equity, diversity and visibility (in media)**
- 6. **Creative thinking: creating media content that counters patriarchal and anti-feminist views**
- 7. **Participation and engagement: knowing about gender policies and gender-political strategies**
- 8. **Participation and engagement: knowing the tools and uses of gender mainstreaming**
- 9. **Intercultural dialogue: raising attention to gendered problems and conflicts (violence, hate speech, death threats,...) by talking about one's own feelings, changing gender perspectives**
- 10. **Other**

Your own appreciation and comments:

4. Dimension	Project gendered disinformation themes
---------------------	---

Critical thinking, participation and engagement on:

1. Gendered stereotypes (devaluing of women; stigmatisation; representation of masculinity)
2. gendered role-modelling (valorisation of feminist heritage, women’s societal contributions...)
3. Gendered hatred/violence (hate speech, showcasing of cruelty, banalisation of evil; showcasing male impunity in the face of gendered harms...)
4. Pornography and the pornographic gaze
5. IA gender bias
6. Gender disinformation (fake news about female body; female work; ...)
7. Gender biased scientific results
8. Mental health
9. Reproductive rights (abortion,...)
10. “Body positive” (self care; self image; issues of weight, fashion, make up...)
11. Women support groups (sorority, empathy, tolerance...)
12. Parenting
13. Other...

Your own appreciation and comments:

5. Dimension	Project target public
---------------------	------------------------------

1. Teens /older students
2. Children
3. Parents
4. Older people
5. Girls/women
6. Boys/men
7. Other

Your own appreciation and comments

6. Dimension	Project stakeholders
---------------------	-----------------------------

1. Academia
2. Audiovisual content provider
3. Public authorities
4. Media regulatory authorities
5. Online platforms
6. Civil society
7. Cross-sector
8. Other

Your own appreciation and comments:

7. Dimension	Project networks
---------------------	-------------------------

1. NGO
2. Foundation
3. Public supported networks
4. Popular education alliances
5. Other

Your own appreciation and comments:

8. Dimension	Project funding
---------------------	------------------------

1. local
2. national
3. EU wide

4. other

Your own appreciation and comments:

9. Dimension	Type of media used/targeted
---------------------	------------------------------------

1. Facebook
2. Instagram
3. Tiktok
4. YouTube
5. other

Your own appreciation and comments:

10. Dimension	Evaluation mechanisms (inside and outside project)
----------------------	---

1. internal
2. external (independent)

Your own appreciation and comments:

11. Dimension	Main concepts and legitimising values (if some values are absent, please note by 0)
----------------------	--

1. Theories of feminism (from 2nd wave to nth wave, queer...)
2. Deconstruction of misogyny and patriarchy
3. Masculinity and new masculinities
4. Feminist diversity approaches
5. Legal approaches

- 6. Ecology, relation to nature, ecofeminism : ecoMIL and eco-feminism
- 7. SDG 5 (2030) = gender equality; women’s empowerment; end discrimination, eliminate violence, eliminate harmful practices, value unpaid care and domestic work, effective participation, equal opportunity in leadership and decision making, universal access to sexual and reproductive rights... equal rights to enabling technology, enforceable legislation ...
- 8. other:

Your own appreciation and comments:

12. Dimension	Public policies (per country) SPECIFY IF PROJECT MENTIONS A SPECIFIC POLICY
----------------------	--

- 1. Ministry of education
- 2. Ministry of culture
- 3. Ministry of justice
- 4. Ministry of health
- 5. Inter-sectorial (within one ministry)
- 6. Inter-ministerial (across ministries)
- 7. Independent agency
- 8. Other....

your own appreciation and comments

2. Annex 2: National Reports

National Reports Page: <https://www.genderedcoalition.net/countryreports>



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Country reports

You will find here the country reports from the EU Coalition participating in the GenderED Coalition project

Bulgaria

Gendered disinformation
Report -2024 V1

[Gender Ed National Report Bulgaria V1](#)



France

Gendered disinformation
Report -2024 V1

[Gender Ed National Report France 2024](#)



Greece

Gendered disinformation
Report -2024 V1

[Gender Ed National Report Greece 2024_V1](#)



Italy

Gendered disinformation
Report -2024 V1

[Gender Ed National Report Italy 2024_V1](#)



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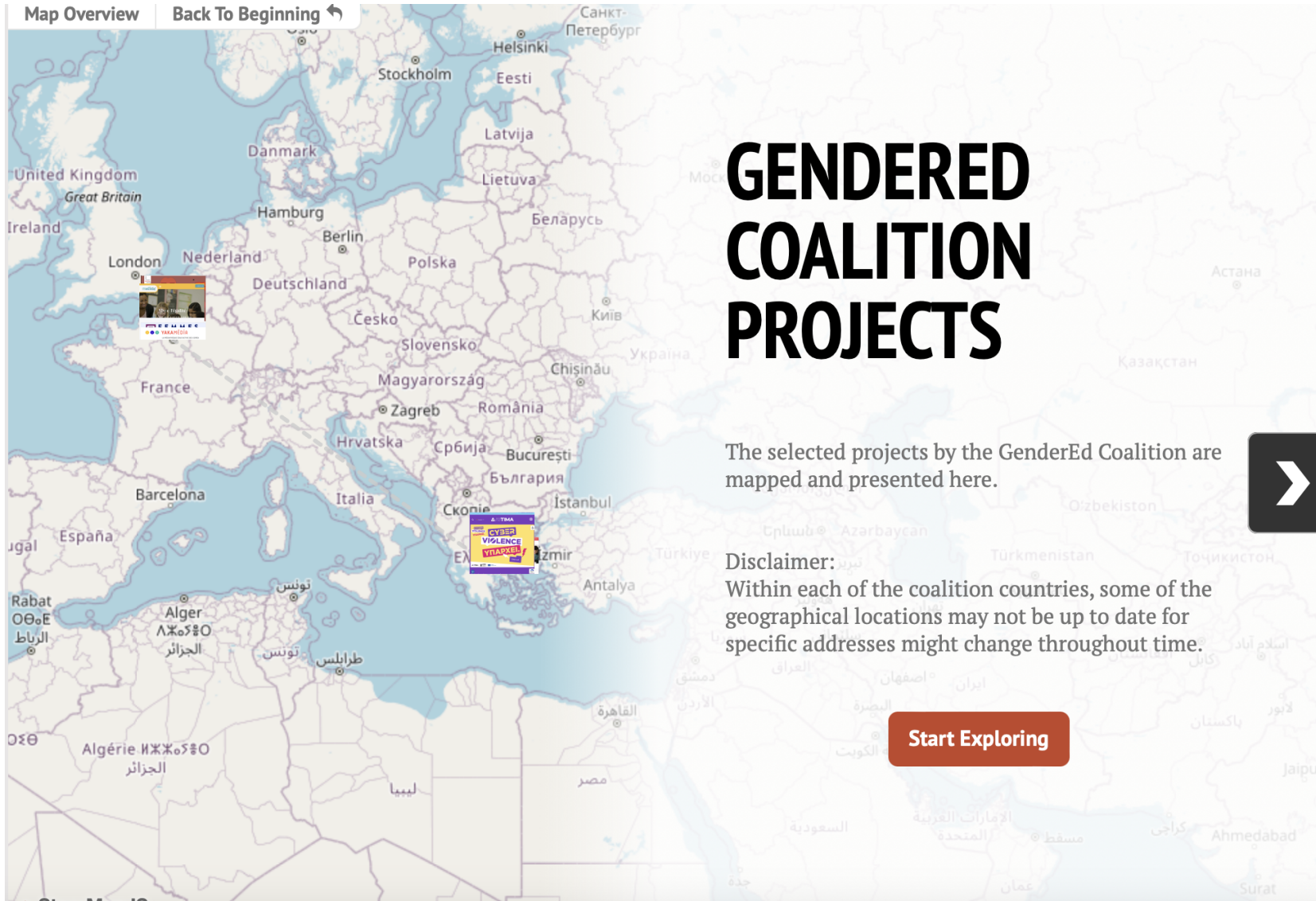
On Website page: <https://www.genderedcoalition.net/public-policies>

Public Policies



3. Annex 3: Online Mapping of Gender-Ed Coalition Projects (work in progress)

URL of embedded mapping tool: <https://www.genderedcoalition.net/goodpracticesmapping>



GENDERED COALITION PROJECTS

The selected projects by the GenderEd Coalition are mapped and presented here.

Disclaimer: Within each of the coalition countries, some of the geographical locations may not be up to date for specific addresses might change throughout time.

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