

## **Perceptions and Beliefs of Secondary School Students about The Profession of Journalism in Greece**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The profession of journalism has a mission, which is to convey the news. The Journalist as a professional is called upon to demonstrate a multitude of skills, especially in the modern era of information overload. Especially nowadays when the geography of information has undergone dramatic changes due to technological progress. Traditional media have been challenged and shrunk. There are no longer cultural and geographical boundaries. The Internet has changed the flow of information but has also created a new journalist, a new age journalist, in whose work multimedia is an integral part.*

*But which is the aspect of the citizens about this mission and especially, which is the aspect of a critical age range against news, of an age range of secondary school students. This work concerns the development of a questionnaire through which an analysis of the views of secondary school students regarding the profession of journalism is attempted. The research being conducted is primary. The sample used in the research concerns 15 secondary school students. The findings that were extracted are of particular interest. Among them, it is stated that the profession of journalist is dangerous but dependent on interests in Greece.*

**Key words:** Journalism, journalists, communication, secondary school

### **Introduction**

The history of communication, as well as the profession of journalism and media, embraces a wide time span. Starting from 490 BC when, after the victory of the Greeks, a messenger ran 42,196 km to Athens, where, after announcing with one breath the success of his homeland, he died of exhaustion, communication and the journalism profession were to have several turning points.

The creation of post offices, the discovery of printing by Gutenberg in 1438, the appearance of the first printed magazines, the appearance of press agencies, the appearance of wireless telegraphy (T.S.F) and radio waves, the real start of radio (Bell - transistor) after World War I, the myth of the great reporter who makes readers experience world events more intensely, the advent of radio advertising are just a few examples up to the 1945.

Since then, there has been the decline of the press, the rise of magazines, the second youth of radio in 1963, the appearance of television (with the BBC leading the way in 1936, when the first reports were filmed) and today, with the advent of the internet, both journalism and the profession of journalist have changed dramatically (Jeanneney, 2005).

Journalism had not acquired the character of a profession until 1880. Until then, journalists were confused with writers and journalism with literary figures (Bakounakis & Papathanasopoulos, 2010). In 1843 in France, the word *journaliste* defined the professional of writing, the writer and the journalist, but it has a derogatory character (Jeanneney, 2005) (Bakounakis, 2014). The first steps in organizing journalists internationally took place in 1893, when a journalistic conference was held in London with the participation of representatives from Great Britain, France and Belgium (Bakounakis, 2014).

Regarding codes of ethics, one of the first national codes of journalistic ethics was that of the American Association of Editors in 1923 (McQuail, 2002). After the upheavals that journalism suffered through radio and television, we come to today, that is, to the history of the internet, which has seen four significant developments. The first is the speed of connection and the implementation of broadband networks, the second is the emergence of search engines, the third includes the spread of new media and the fourth is the emergence of applications that give the user the ability to produce content (Blogs, podcasting, etc.) (Rigou, 2014).

If the profession of journalism has a mission, then it is to convey the news. What is news and how many definitions it can accept is not part of the problematic of this study. There are many types of reporting, and it seems that scientific and technological specialization has increased them. Some examples are economic reporting, parliamentary reporting, sports reporting, arts reporting, medical reporting, ecology and environmental reporting, geostrategic reporting, and police reporting. Many journalists are called upon to cover a wide range of these, with the possible exception of sports reporters. Travel reporting is also a new branch of reporting. This is because tourism as a social and economic phenomenon has direct consequences for the economy, culture, society, the environment and the world at large. It is noteworthy that today, a great deal of research is emerging in police reporting that "marries" the sciences of journalism, psychology, law and criminology with the aim of utilizing previous cases for future higher-quality police reporting that respects the human personality (Kardara, 2019).

Journalism as a profession and its practices have always come into conflict with the science of journalism and communication. This conflict always concerns the accuracy of the transmission of news and the impartiality that journalists are called upon to have, values that are however difficult to maintain given the organizational and technological requirements (Reed, 2001).

The practice of journalism has not been an easy task at any time from its birth to the present. Beyond the limitations imposed by the interests of capital and the ruling class over time and the modern challenges brought about by technological development, is a profession that often puts the journalist under pressure and danger, especially when it comes to conflicting war zones.

Beyond the difficulties of the profession when one is called upon to practice it in war zones, beyond the hunt for everyday information, the profession of journalist presents challenges even when it comes to investigative journalism.

When practicing investigative journalism, the method of collecting data and information is not the only challenge. Writing, quality control of all the information collected, and publishing it are also challenges.

Relevant research shows that, for example, American and French journalists use different methods when practicing investigative journalism. It is also emphasized that investigative journalism presents many differences from traditional journalism. More specifically, in investigative journalism, the investigation may continue even after the first material is published, while official authorities do not readily provide information to the investigative journalist. These two parameters are enough to make the investigative journalist's work more time-consuming and potentially more dangerous (Hunter, 2011).

The discussion about the enormous relationship of journalism with democracy, pluralism, correct information and free communication has been, is and will always be timeless. Recent examples of unmediated information produced without the participation of journalists include Cambridge Analytica, and Donald Trump's recent election campaign through podcasts. In the first case, Meta was ordered to pay \$725 million for sharing data with the British consulting firm Cambridge Analytica, which had worked on Trump's 2015 election campaign, but also the research of Leave.EU, one of the organizations that had undertaken the campaign for Brexit. The digital leak provoked public reactions and brought back to the fore discussions about the security of personal data (Confessore, 2018). In the second example, in the recent US presidential election (2024), both Donald Trump and Kamala Harris supported their campaign with highly popular podcasters. Donald Trump appeared on 14 podcasts and streams, including "The Joe Rogan Experience.", while Harris on "Call her Daddy." While these podcasts have given candidates the opportunity to present a more human side of themselves, they can be a problem

when they completely replace traditional media outlets that have proven their credibility and commitment to journalistic ethics for years (Modell, 2024).

### **Journalist as a professional**

The Journalist as a professional is called upon to demonstrate a multitude of skills, especially in the modern era of information overload. According to Rich in her book "Journalism and Reportage", initially he is the person who will conceive the idea of an article, a report, a theme that he wishes to highlight through a set of issues that emerge in society and these ideas can arise even in the most unexpected moments. (Rich, 2006).

Every article and report must answer the basic questions of journalism, namely who, where, when, why, how. For the needs of writing an article, he must seek out and maintain contact with his own sources. Characteristic is the habit of Mark Potter of the ABC television network, who goes everywhere with his so-called bible of sources (Rich, 2006).

A journalist must be curious and observant. Miller, a reporter for The Orlando Sentinel in Florida, reporting on a woman who shot her boyfriend, who fled to the nearest store for help, counted bloodstains in an effort to give her readers a vivid story. I was curious about what would happen next to my way (Rich, 2006).

David Remmick was not prepared for what he saw when he visited the city of Spitak, Armenia, after the devastating earthquake of 1988. Most of his article was based on his observations (Rich, 2006)

Traditionally, the journalist must have an innate ability to listen and remember. Truman Capote, during his interviews for his book "In Cold Blood," used neither a tape recorder nor a notebook, because this would have intercepted his sources (Rich, 2006).

Finally, the journalist should master all interview techniques, be prepared for the subject to be covered and be courteous to the interviewee. Walsh, who was allowed to interview inmate Horton, who was serving his sentence in a Massachusetts prison, began her interview with the question: "How in the world did they give you permission to get out?" "It was the stupidest thing I've ever done," she later said (Rich, 2006)

Every journalist has pretty much his or her own techniques and writing style. In any case, however, the article should have structure and guide the reader as Jack Hart writing consultant for The Oregonian says (Rich, 2006)

With the advent of globalization, the movement of populations and the need for international reporting, the journalist should have multicultural sensitivity, but if he specializes in international

reporting of specific geographical areas (e.g. the Middle East) he should have special knowledge of the language and culture of the people for whom he is writing and reporting.

### **Journalism moral ethics**

Like any profession, journalism is governed by moral and ethical codes. Every journalist in the course of his or her career is faced with ethical dilemmas, either as to the ways in which he or she will obtain information, or to what extent he or she is given the authority to disclose information that he or she knows.

The idea of creating an internal order, i.e. a code of conduct, has been around for centuries, but began to take shape in the late 19th century. The first attempts were made in 1896 by Polish journalists in Galicia and in 1908 by the University of Missouri Journalism in the USA (McQuayle , 2002)

Journalistic practices should not be based on deception and should be characterised by sensitivity. A case in point is that of The Enterprise, which published the names of people involved in prostitution arrests in 1977. Shortly afterwards a 47-year-old man committed suicide. The invasion of people's privacy is still a controversial issue. Victims of rape, especially minors, should be protected.

Objectivity is always in conflict with honesty in the journalistic profession. Several institutes, journalistic organisations, states and international conventions have drawn up codes of ethical standards. Bob Steele director and head of ethical standards at the Poynter Institute, stresses that a journalist should ask himself the following questions before making any decision. Γιατί ανησυχώ γι' αυτό το άρθρο, τη φωτογραφία ή το σχεδιάγραμμα;

1. Why should I concern about this article or photo?
2. What is new and beneficial through this publication?
3. This source of info is complete and reliable?
4. I skip something crucial about the issue?
5. How I would feel being on the other side?
6. The consequences are going to be bad or good?
7. Have I misses an alternative option;
8. Should I get challenged can I give answers clarified and honest?

The code of The Society of Professional Journalists clearly states that journalists should not receive gifts, privileges and special treatment. There is also no excuse for inaccuracies or lack of accuracy. Finally, journalists and their employers should organise their personal lives in a way that protects them from conflict of interest. (Rich, 2006).

The Reuters journalism principles are in a similar vein.

The journalist is required to be accurate, to always correct mistakes openly, to strive for freedom and impartiality over bias and impartiality, to always inform their superiors when a conflict of interest arises, to respect the advantage of information, protect his sources from authority, resist expressing his own opinion when reporting a story, do not slant or fabricate news, do not change a static or moving picture beyond magnification, do not pay to obtain information, and do not take bribes. Finally, it should record the actual facts and not rumors (Reuters, 2008).

The Global Charter on Journalistic Ethics, among other things, stresses that the primary duty of a journalist is the truth and the public's right to know it. A journalist must rely on facts of which he or she is aware, use only legitimate methods, and the urgent delivery of information is not superior to its confirmation. Plagiarism, distortion of facts and unsubstantiated slander are offences<sup>1</sup>.

The Principles of Ethics of the Journalistic Profession approved in May 1998 by the General Assembly of the HESIEA in 80.4% of its eight articles state that a journalist must correct promptly and without delay in the event of the transmission of inaccurate facts, treat citizens equally, respect personality and personal life and respects the presumption of innocence and the protection of minors enshrined in international conventions. At the same time, journalists are entitled and obliged to defend the democratic constitution and, among other things, to denounce manifestations of state authoritarianism<sup>2</sup>. Given the ever-increasing use of AI technologies in newsrooms, it is worth stressing that the main conclusions of the PESY workshop held on 8/12/2023, is that technology should not harm humans and AI should play a key role in freedom of expression without manipulating elections and promoting prejudice. And the designers of software systems should be held accountable when codes of ethics are violated (Triantafyllou , 2024 ). In fact, this effort to create a code of ethics for the use of AI in the media is one of the first to be made in Europe.

### **Limitation and possible challenges**

In Antonio Gramsci's book "Journalism and the Press" and specifically in the introductory note, it is mentioned that in a letter he sent from prison in 1931 (!) he explained to his sister-in-law Tatiana Schucht that his journalistic writings could have constituted twenty volumes of four hundred pages each. From the Italian thinker's statement we understand that journalists are always threatened with imprisonment in the context of their activities. Gramsci was sentenced to

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<sup>1</sup> More info: <https://www.esiea.gr/kodikas-deontologias/pagkosmios-xartis-dimosiografikis-d/>

<sup>2</sup> More info: <https://www.esiea.gr/kodikas-deontologias/arxes-deontologias-dimosiografikoy/>

20 years in prison for his participation in 1920 in the great workers' strike in defence of the factory committees of Turin<sup>3</sup>.

Another case that deserves mention throughout time is that of Julian Assange. In the film "the fifth estate"<sup>4</sup> all the Calvary that Assange went through in his attempt to publish wiki Leaks documents that questioned the practices of the powerful of the world is depicted.

The exhaustive and abusive lawsuits (SLAPPs) to which journalists such as Yianna Papadakou are subjected for her research into the individuals who make up the Lagarde list are condemned by Posey and its board of directors. Abusive lawsuits were also discussed at the event-discussion "Media360 Democracy, Truth, Trust, Democracy" held at the Zappeion Hall in December 2023 and this creates optimism for the protection of journalists in the exercise of the journalistic profession (Triantafyllou, 2023)

The above three examples from the international and domestic journalism profession demonstrate that the safety and protection of journalists is not only threatened when they report in war zones. In the present research, the students of secondary education can effectively perceive the dangers at the profession of journalist.

### **Changed caused by technology in journalism field**

The geography of information has undergone dramatic changes due to technological progress. Traditional media have been challenged and shrunk. There are no longer cultural and geographical boundaries. The internet has changed the flow of information but has also created a new journalist, a new age journalist, in whose work multimedia is an integral part. With its advent, multimedia promised journalism on more transparent and honest terms. Where the medium and the message would be more closely identified than at any other time in the history of information. The emergence of data journalism and the entrepreneur, the new digital narratives that bring the news consumer inside the events, show that contrary to pessimistic narratives, journalism may have changed but it is still here and is guided by the same ethical values of democracy. (Kaimaki, 2018).

The present study investigates whether secondary school students are aware of all these ferment and changes that have taken place in the journalism profession and also whether they believe that given the changes, the journalism profession will continue to exist.

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More

info:

[https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%91%CE%BD%CF%84%CF%8C%CE%BD%CE%B9%CE%BF\\_%CE%93%CE%BA%CF%81%CE%AC%CE%BC%CF%83%CE%B9](https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%91%CE%BD%CF%84%CF%8C%CE%BD%CE%B9%CE%BF_%CE%93%CE%BA%CF%81%CE%AC%CE%BC%CF%83%CE%B9)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1837703>

So as today the information ecosystem has changed and with it the journalism profession too many researchers consider the advent of the internet as one of the major events that led to the convergence of the media. The emergence of mobile devices and social media, new forms of television, audience participation in content production, robotic journalism, automated content and aggregators (intermediaries such as Yahoo and Apple News) are just a few parameters that have changed the landscape of the journalism profession (Triantafyllou, 2020).

Nowadays, the phenomenon of the production of journalistic content by artificial intelligence software is particularly intense. By artificial intelligence we mean the non-biological ability to achieve complex goals, including learning. The use of such technologies has risks such as the loss of jobs and the spread of false news. However, there is now a growing number of journalistic organizations using these technologies. A typical example is the Associated Press, which since 2014, in collaboration with Automated Insights, has been using the Wordsmith platform, whose algorithm can produce up to 4,400 reports per quarter (!) In a similar vein, the Washington Post covered two major events, the Rio Olympics in 2016 and the US presidential election in the same year, with its own algorithm, Heliograph (Triantafyllou, 2024 ).

The impact of the evolution of the media has not only affected the journalism profession but also the journalists themselves and the media worldwide. Leandros (2013) states that the media revolution is changing the lives, work and working conditions of journalists and the press workers, which is currently facing a deep and structural crisis. Pavlik (2000) points out that technology has influenced journalism in at least four ways, the way journalists do their jobs, the content of news, the structure of organization in newsrooms and the relationships between news organizations and their audiences. This is what Anderson et al (2014) call post-industrial journalism.

Today's journalist has to be flexible to work in different media even at the same time (multitasking). At the same time, in addition to research and reporting, he has to make decisions about what form or forms a particular story should take (multimedia) to consider what choices his audience would respond to (interactivity), to converse or even personalize some stories and finally to link his stories to other stories, archives and sources through hyperlinks (hypertextuality) (Deuze, 2011).

### **The journalists in Greece**

In the Greek media industry landscape, the main characteristics are job losses, high unemployment due to the closure of many SMEs, the entry of new technologies, the intensification of work. Chronologically, the period 2012-2015 is the worst period on record, as a consequence, among other things, of the first memorandum signed in 2010. The phenomenon of

recycling is intense, i.e. the replacement of old workers with extensive experience, increased salaries and regulated labour relations with new or new entrants to the sector with reduced labour and social rights and reduced salaries. Ultimately, unpaid work is an indication of the deregulation and flexibilisation of labour relations in the media. The foreign media were also unquestionably affected, but the phenomenon was more pronounced in Greece due to the three memoranda of understanding. The above phenomena sabotage the credibility of Greek media (Triantafyllou, 2020).

According to the Media Freedom Rapid Response, Greece ranks last in the European Union in terms of journalism freedom in the World Press Freedom Index for the period 2022-2023. The safety of Greek journalists is also at rock bottom according to the same survey<sup>5</sup>.

International organizations such as Reporters Without Borders in their survey entitled: "Stemming the tide of Greek Media Freedom decline", stress that press freedom in Greece, as well as the safety of Greek journalists is at a nadir. The same survey underlines that the personal communications of Greek journalists are being monitored and although the Greek authorities refuse to give the full data on this, unfortunately many violations of journalists' rights have already been recorded.<sup>6</sup>

### **Public and private schools in Greece**

Today's young people in Greece who wish to study journalism have a plethora of options in both public and private education.

Starting from public education, study programs are offered by the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki<sup>7</sup>, the Department of Communication and Media of the EKPA (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens)<sup>8</sup>, the Department of Digital Media and Communication of the Ionian University<sup>9</sup>, the Department of

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<sup>5</sup> More info: <https://ipi.media/report-stemming-the-tide-of-greek-media-freedom-decline/>

<sup>6</sup> More info: <https://rsf.org/en/pointing-greeces-failure-protect-press-freedom-new-joint-report-rsf-calls-european-union-take>

<sup>7</sup> More info: <https://www.jour.auth.gr/>

<sup>8</sup> More info: <https://www.media.uoa.gr/tmima/>

<sup>9</sup> More info: <https://dmc.ionio.gr/gr/studies/undergraduate/courses/1361/>

Communication, Media and Culture of the Panteion University<sup>10</sup> , finally the Department of Communication and Digital Media of the University of Western Macedonia<sup>11</sup>.

In the private sector there is a range of choices between the Public IEK, as well as the private IEK OMIROS, ALFA DELTA. ANT1 media Lab also offers both in-person and distance learning programmes. Especially for young people interested in sports journalism, study programmes are offered by City Unity College - Sports Journalism. Frederich University (Cyprus) - Degree in Journalism and New media studies also offer career opportunities in Journalism.

Finally, there are a number of schools for sports journalists, and probably others offering certificates of attendance and seminars (Gallus , 2024).

Corresponding public IEKs operate from time to time in various cities in Greece depending on the number of students (journalism, editing and reporting departments)<sup>12</sup>.

It is worth noting that journalism studies require at least two foreign languages (English, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Arabic), depending on the type of reporting in which each student wishes to specialize.

### **The survey. Materials and methods**

The present survey was carried out during the period 28 October - 3 November. The sample surveyed consisted of 15 secondary school students aged 15- 18 years old residing in the Municipality of Skydra, Pella, who participated in questionnaires of qualitative and quantitative questions of an estimated duration of 10 minutes. Written parental consent was required for the purposes of the surveys in order to comply with all legal assurances (see Appendix). The questionnaires were created using the GOOGLE FORMES application and distributed via the internet and social media. For the sake of reliability, the questionnaires were anonymous and were followed by statistical processing using the Excel program.

The purpose of this research is to answer the following questions through qualitative and quantitative questionnaires:

1. Do secondary school students, as potential future journalists, understand the historical background of the journalism profession?

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<sup>10</sup> More info <https://www.panteion.gr/anakalypste-to-panteio/scholes-kai-tmimata/scholi-diethnon-spoudon-epikoinonias-kai-politismou/tmima-epikoinonias-meson-kai-politismou>

<sup>11</sup> More info: <https://cdm.uowm.gr>

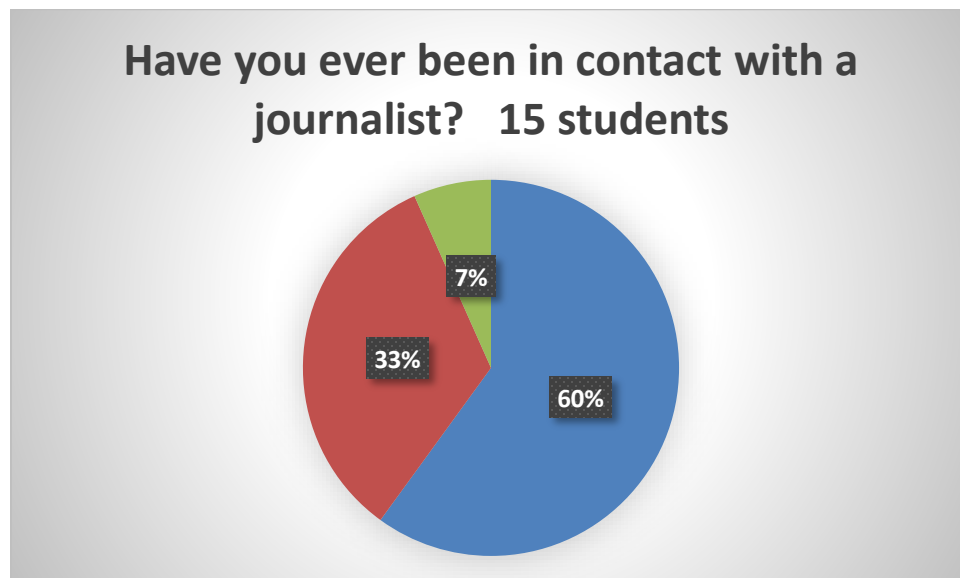
<sup>12</sup> More info: <https://education.gr/lista-dimosia-iek/>

2. Do they recognise the importance of the profession of journalism in defending democracy, maintaining social gains and balances and in the transmission and processing of news?
3. Understand the changes that the press and journalism have undergone over time and the impact of modern technologies on the profession.
4. How do they view the journalist as an icon (celebrity, person of influence, etc. ) and as a representative of the journalism profession?
5. Do they understand the complexity of the profession, the daily routines in performing their duties and the different types of reporting?
6. Do they know the level of erudition that a journalist must possess in order to practice the profession properly and with dignity to the public?
7. Do they believe that the journalist is free to exert pressure on social and political events or is he/she restricted? If so, where does this restriction come from (external forces or does it take the form of self-limitation - spiral of silence?)
8. Do young people notice gaps in the landscape of Greek media and journalism and if so what are they? Ποια Μέσα Ενημέρωσης θεωρούν οι νέοι σήμερα πιο αξιόπιστα (Τύπος, τηλεόραση, ραδιόφωνο, διαδίκτυο)
9. What kind of news they choose to follow from a geographical perspective (local, national, international). Do they think that journalists in Greece meet these criteria?
10. Do they consider that journalism as a profession fulfils educational purposes?
11. From which media do they choose to fulfill their educational needs?
12. Have they ever been in contact with a journalist either personally or for the needs of a reportage, or in the context of School Vocational Guidance?
13. 13. Do they follow journalists and news organizations on social media?
14. 14. Would they like to follow the journalism profession in the future?
15. What do they think is the future of the journalism profession (will it change, get lost, get better, get worse?)
16. Do they imagine that in the future machines will replace the journalist?

17. Do they believe that foreign media and foreign correspondents provide better quality information than domestic media?
18. Do they think that current journalists are adequately paid?
19. Are they aware of the risks involved in the journalistic profession (imprisonment, loss of life? )
20. Is there a favorite journalist for them and if so what are the values that make them beloved and enduring?
21. Do young people know which journalism colleges and private schools can offer them the possibility of a career in journalism?
22. Do today's young people know that studying journalism requires a parallel knowledge of foreign languages given the globalisation of information?

### **Results**

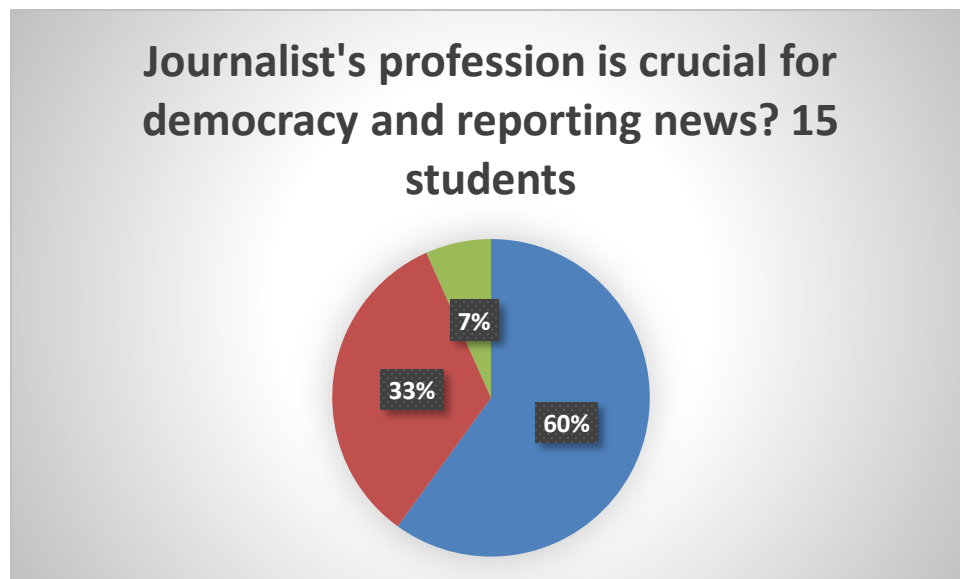
Of the total of 15 respondents, 93.3% belong to the high school level. Of these, 66.7 % were girls. When asked if they have been in contact with a journalist, 60% answered that they have not been in contact with a journalist in any way, 33.3% answered that they have participated in a school career guidance training workshop, while only 6.7% have granted an interview and information for the needs of a reportage.



1. 60% of the students answered that had been in contact with a journalist at least once

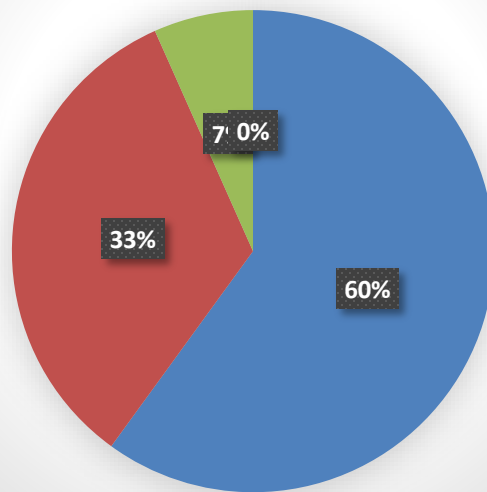
2. 33% of the students said that had participated for once at least at an educational workshop

93% of students believe that the profession of journalist is important for defending democracy, transporting and disseminating news. When asked whether the journalism profession is easy, 80% of the respondents said it is difficult. The remaining percentage felt that it is difficult for a journalist to remain credible to his or her audience or that the journalism profession can be practiced easily if the journalist has the right connections so that he or she can be rehabilitated professionally. In an attempt to further justify the difficulties of the profession, the respondents said that the profession needs effort and dedication, proper speech management, good physical fitness for the needs of reporting. They also felt that the journalist is required to deal with reactions and attitudes of the public and in many cases is constrained by business interests which manipulates him/her and affects his/her mental health to a large extent. There were views that described the journalist's profession as a profession without overlooking the difficulties that journalists face in trying to provide objective information while clashing with media interests. The responses recorded the competition and the pressure of current affairs that journalists have to overcome. Finally, one student expressed the view that journalists, who have the desire to be reputable for the public and their employers, and at the same time present the news without political/confessional colouring, tend to be fewer and fewer given the conditions shaped at the business level by media organisations.



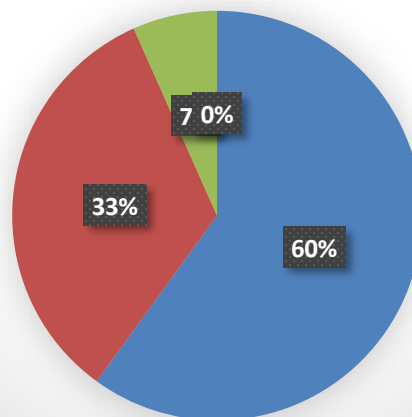
1. 14 to 15 said that is man's necessity to learn what is coming next
2. Only 1 to 15 said that journalist is not crucial for reporting news

**Becoming a journalist is easy or hard? 15 students**



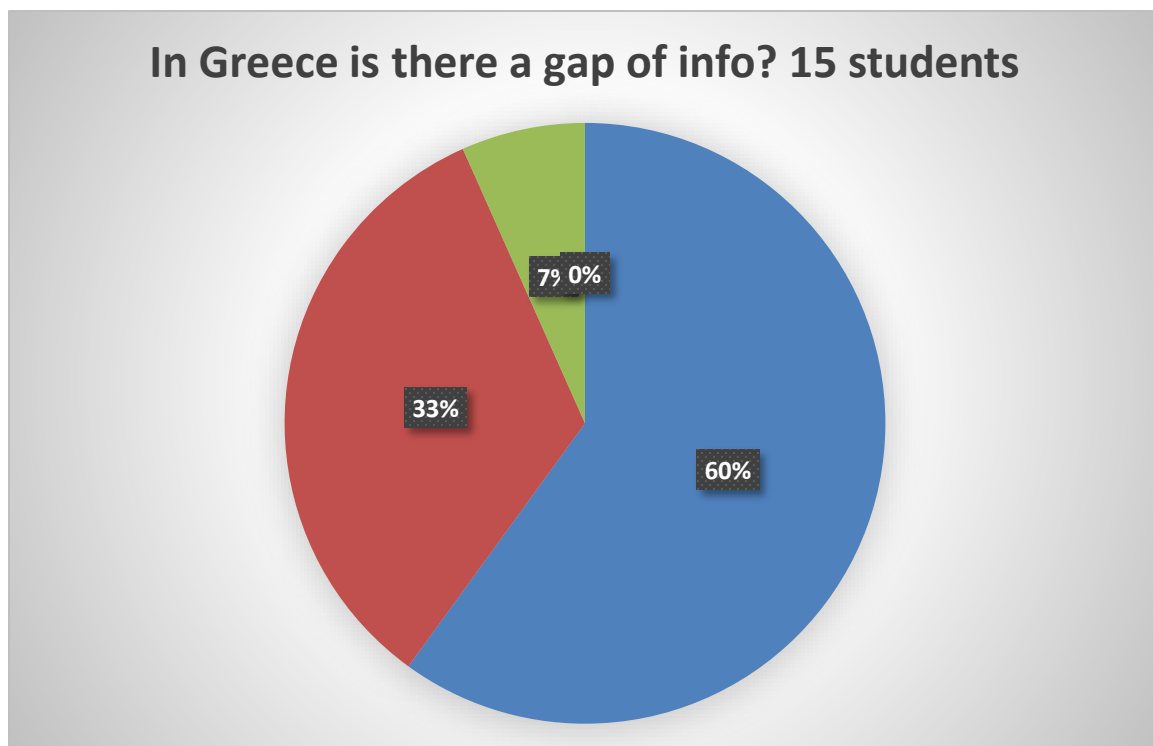
1. 80% believe that is quite hard to become a journalist
2. 7% said that is difficult to stay reliable
3. 1 to 15 said that is matter of connections at the industry
4. 1 to 15 said that it depends

**In Greece journalism is free of higher interests? 15 students**

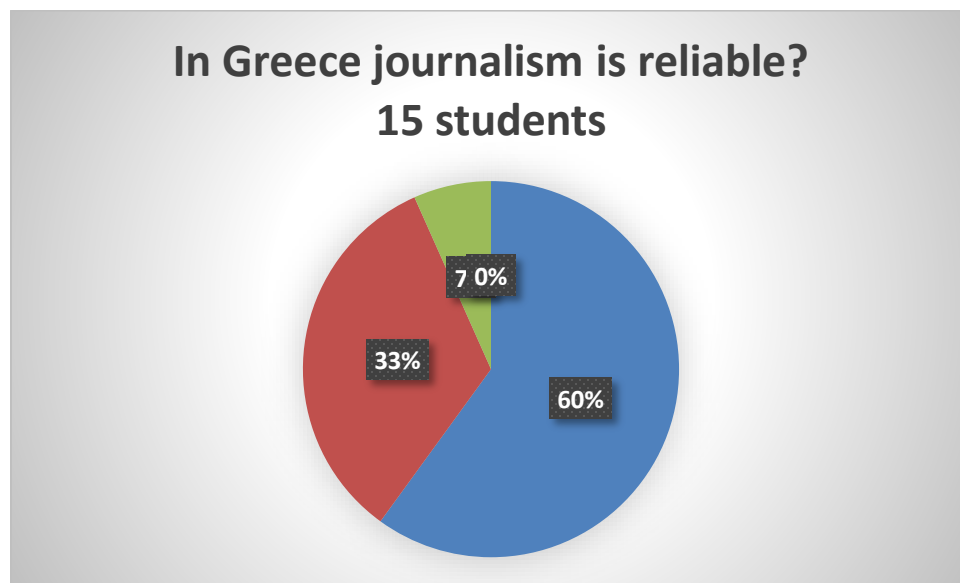


1. 14 to 15 93% strongly believe that journalism in Greece is not independent
2. Only 1 said that journalism is totally liberal

For 93% of respondents, journalists in Greece are not free to practice their profession, because they are forced to set the daily news agenda based on current affairs and interests. Only 7% (one answer out of 15) believe the opposite. There are gaps in the Greek media landscape for a total of 80% who believe that there are news items that, although important, are not highlighted by the Greek media. Only 20% believe that news that concerns journalists abroad also concerns Greek journalists. When asked whether journalism is practiced with credibility in Greece, the answer was a resounding "no". There are various reasons behind this figure. Some of them focus on the desire of Greek journalists to make a profit, others point to censorship by powerful figures in the Greek journalistic system. On the whole, the responses acknowledge that journalists are forced to withhold information in order to practice their profession and survive, while not overlooking the fact that today a small percentage of journalists are still reliable.

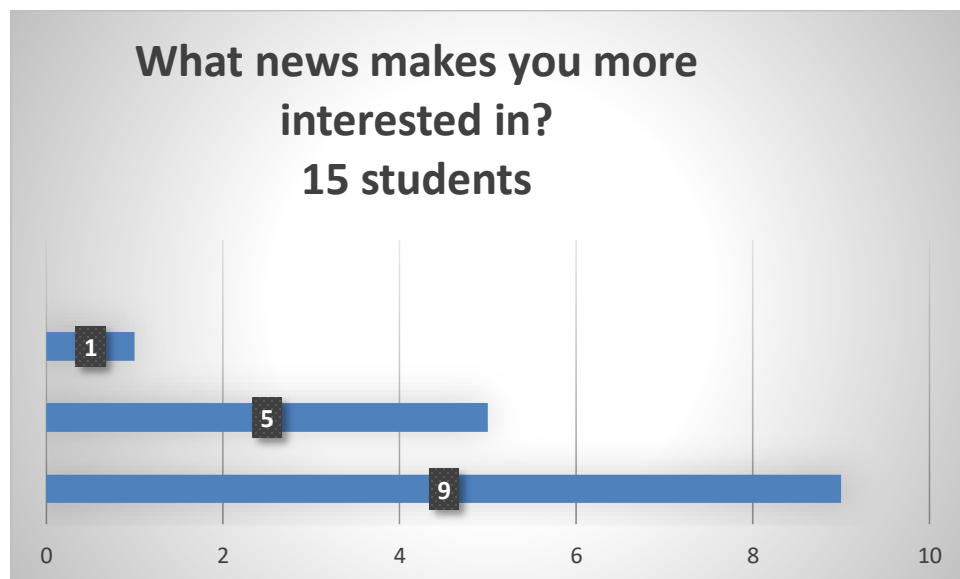


1. 12 to 15 said that the most important news are not presented
2. 3 to 15 said that everything important is presented
3. Only 1% believes that the important news are not presented not to terrify people



Everyone said that journalism is unreliable in Greece

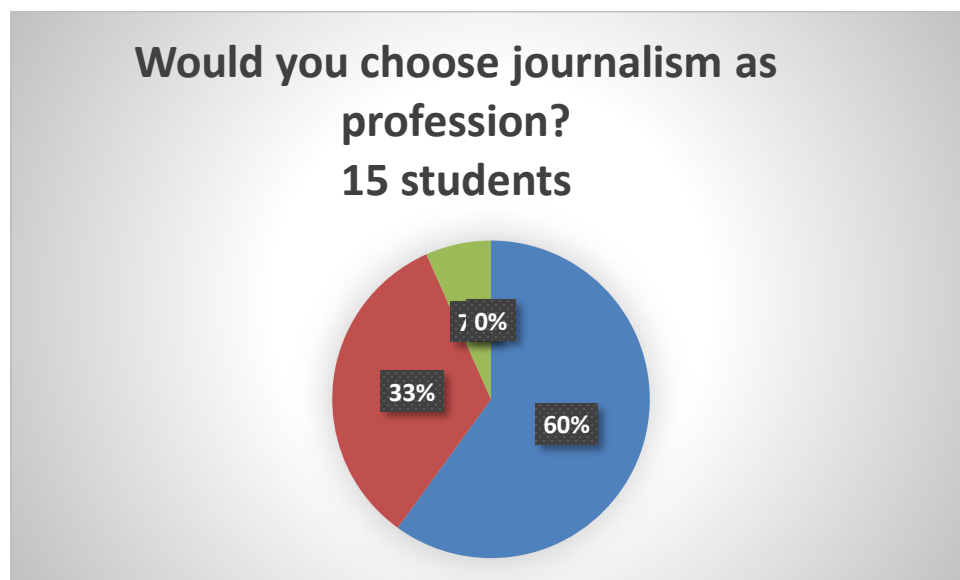
In the section of questions concerning the type of news that interests the student audience, 73% answered that they are mostly interested in international news, 33% are interested in national news, while only 20% are interested in local news.



1. 3 to 15 said that local news only concern them
2. 5 to 15 said that are interested in what is happening in ethnic scale
3. 11 expressed more global interest

Regarding the media in which students search for educational material, the new media are predominant. Only 13% use traditional learning methods and read articles, but this does not mean that they do not use the internet, social media or even TV programs. Fourteen out of 15 pupils use social media, while 9 out of 15 watch series, films and TV programs for learning purposes.

The survey participants do not wish to practice journalism either directly or indirectly to promote their future careers at 87% , while 2 out of 15 participants claimed that indirect journalism practices could have a positive impact on their profession.

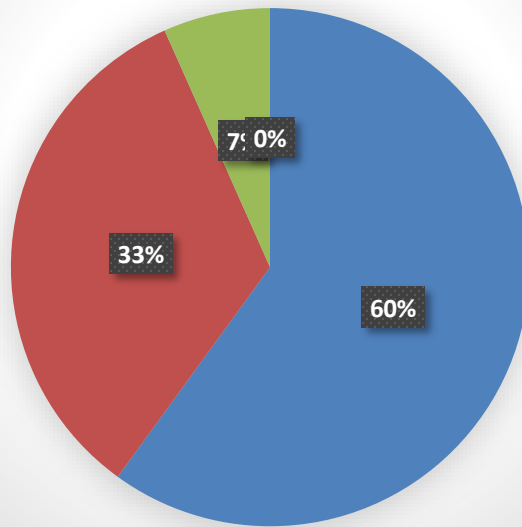


Asked whether the profession of journalism has a future, 60% of students believe that it does, because the human need for information is timeless and the role of journalists cannot be completely replaced by machines. 33.3 % believe that artificial intelligence could well replace journalists. Finally, one in 15 students believe that any assessment of future professions is risky.

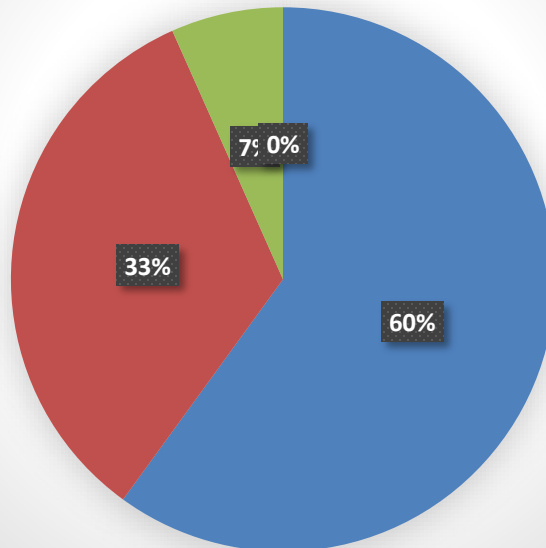
100% of students believe that the profession of journalist is dangerous as they always risk being prosecuted and imprisoned for their opinions , while at the same time they may lose their lives attempting to report in war zones.

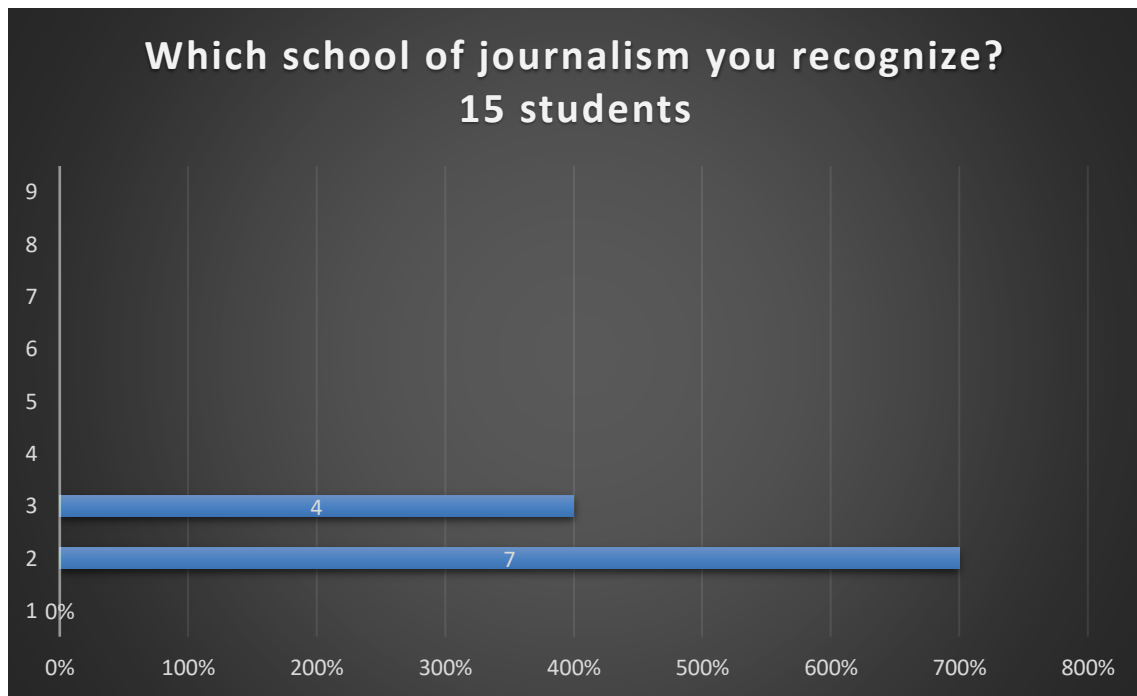
In the multiple-choice question about the universities and schools in Greece that offer journalism courses, students identified the Department of Journalism and Media of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki at 80%, private and public IEKs at 60%, private schools of journalism and sports journalism at 33.3%, the Communication and Media of the National Academy of Sciences at 20%, while regional departments register lower percentages.

**Being a journalist is dangerous?  
15 students**



**Journalism is future job?  
15 students**

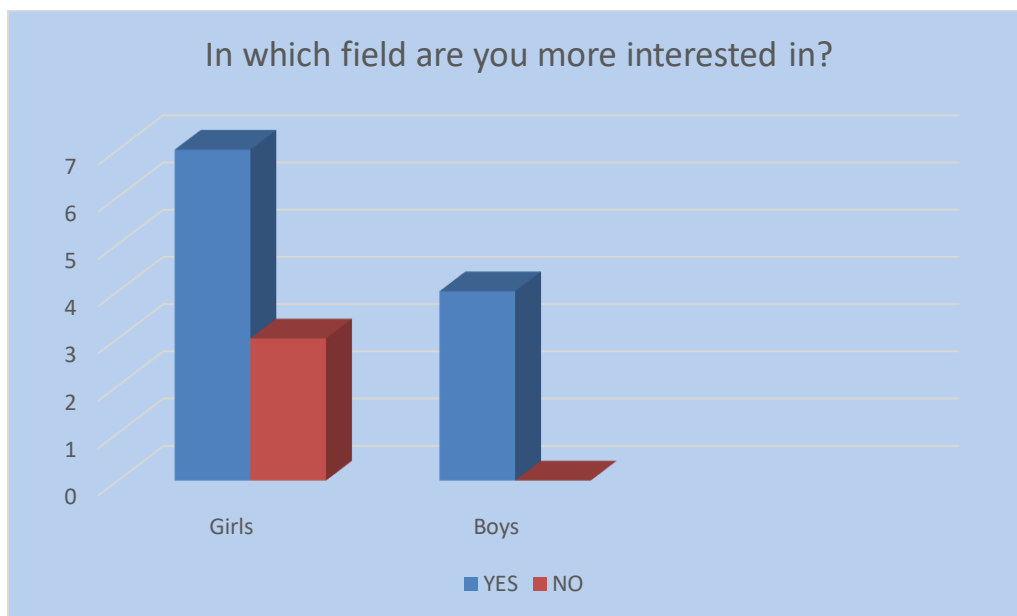




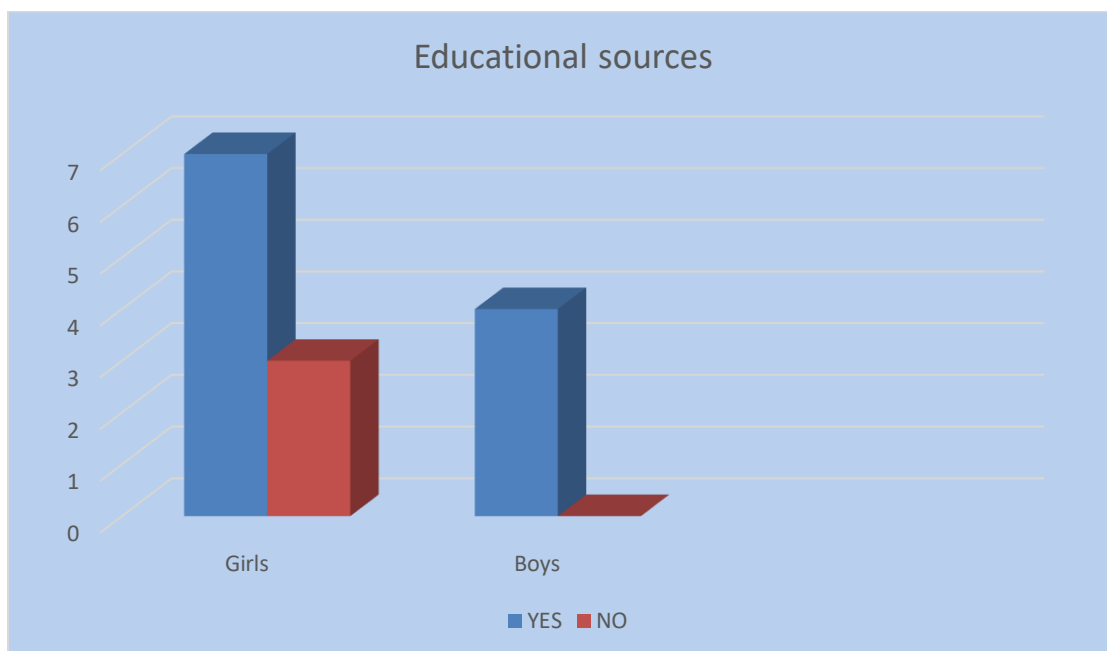
At the plus variance level, boys have come into contact with a journalist 25% more than girls.



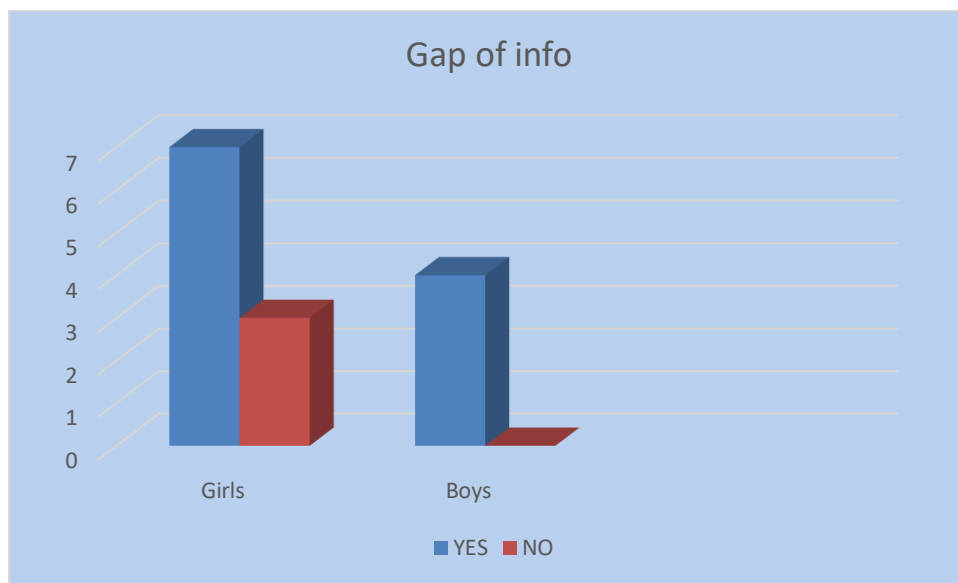
It also appears that girls are 75% more interested in international news compared to boys who are 25%.



Regarding educational sources, while all young people stated that they use social media and the internet, boys seem to outperform in television programs, since the entire population also uses these as educational sources.



100% of boys believe that there are gaps in the Greek information landscape, while 30% of girls do not share this view.



Neither gender wishes to practice journalism directly, however, boys seem willing to apply journalistic practices for the needs of promoting their work at a rate of 20% compared to 10% of girls.

80% of girls are aware of private schools that offer journalism programs, compared to the corresponding 60% of boys.

One in five boys knew of a public regional journalism department, while in the group of girls only one in ten recognized corresponding schools.

Finally, both genders are equally optimistic about the future of the journalism profession, since 60% believe that journalists cannot be sidelined by technological developments and that the need for information is timeless.

### **Conclusions**

From the above results, it is clear that the student population recognizes the importance of the journalism profession in defending a democratic system where all voices can be heard and citizens have access to information and news. This need is timeless in the eyes of children, even if as a generation they turn to more modern forms of information (internet, social media, etc.). Although they may not realize that more traditional forms of practicing journalism (newspapers and investigative reporting) ensure, according to several articles, higher quality journalism and information free from the pursuit of quick, digestible, and brief information, given the low percentage that stated they turn to articles, it seems they still refer to journalistic sources to better understand the world around them. This acknowledgment gains more value since the entire

sample that participated in the research does not wish to practice journalism directly, yet still seeks its products. A paradox of the research is that despite their young age, they predominantly do not seem to share the view that machines and new software will be able to replace the human factor. These two parameters invalidate the opinion that journalism is a profession that has died or is heading towards extinction. In their minds, journalism may change, but it will continue to exist.

A second paradox that arises from the research is that despite their young age, they prioritize international news more than local news. At the same time, girls seem to be more interested in international news than boys, which may be contrary to what would be expected given that the entire sample lives and operates in a local community whose social ties are strengthened through local news (Park, Lee, Curll, & Fisher, 2023), or perhaps due to the tendency of young people to explore the world more than other age groups. This phenomenon can also be interpreted through the lens of globalized information and its dissemination through social media, which young people prefer.

Generally, this age group does not seem to have come into contact with journalists and the practices/routines they apply during news production, apart from isolated incidents of professional orientation. This is not difficult to interpret given that journalists rarely approach children for their reporting needs due to the strict legislation governing the exposure of a child, both in older and more modern media. As explicitly stated in the UNICEF code of journalistic ethics and elsewhere, no reporting should put a child's life at any risk, and children's rights should be equally respected as those of adults. In any case, when a child is a source for a report, their age should be taken into consideration, and it is often deemed beneficial for the journalist to simultaneously address the child's adult guardians.

The level of reliability with which journalism is practiced in Greece is very low even for children, as the totality of respondents concluded that journalists are forced to negotiate the information to be published mainly due to economic and political interests. This may represent a form of mimetic behavior, that is, an opinion that is repeated after having heard related references from significant figures in their lives (parents, educators, relatives, etc.), without implying that part of these opinions is the product of personal processing by the children. Research highlights this low percentage of reliability. In a 2019 study by the Reuters Institute, only 27% of Greeks trust the media in their country. A corresponding study by the Pew Research Institute found that only 22% of the population believes that news in Greece is reported accurately. These percentages are among the lowest compared to European countries such as Germany, the United Kingdom, the USA, and Spain (Kalogeropoulos, Rori, & Dimitrakopoulou, 2021). The distrust of the student population is recorded not only in the way news is conveyed but also in the type of news that is suppressed.

No participant considers journalism to be a safe profession. The risks are not only found in the difficulties faced by correspondents in war zones but also in the criminal penalties imposed on them for their opinions. These risks are also reflected in reports from UNESCO, according to which over 1,600 journalists have been killed or murdered in the last 30 years from 1996 to the present. Several reports confirm that female journalists and journalists representing minorities are more frequently victims of violence. This fact is also attributed to cinema, with the notable example of Irish journalist Veronica Guerin, who was executed in cold blood for her investigations related to drug trafficking rings. This research does not yield conclusions related to female journalists, as it was not the subject of the study.

Finally, the tendency of the participants in the research to recognize more central public educational institutions (in the capital and the second city) as well as private schools can have four interpretations. The first may relate to the more targeted marketing that private educational institutions engage in. Advertisements for them appear on both private channels and social media, in contrast to public universities. A second interpretation is the tendency of young people to prefer large urban centers for their studies because they believe these offer more educational and cultural options. A third theory could be related to the availability of distance learning programs that are more frequently offered by central departments. The possibility of failure in the national exams often leads students to pursue educational paths in the private sector, and this could be a fourth factor. None of the four interpretations can be confirmed as the participants were not asked about the reasons for recognizing certain departments more than others, or how often they are exposed to promotional material for them.

This research could serve as a catalyst for greater extroversion of the relevant regional departments, whose curricula are on par with the central ones. Additionally, it highlights the need for the Ministry of Education to include more career orientation activities related to the journalism profession in collaboration with relevant Greek university departments. This is emphasized as similar programs, activities, and initiatives for the sciences are anticipated. This "injustice" against journalism studies, even when combined with other subjects, is evident from the fact that students do not recognize the importance of digital literacy in modern life, which pertains not only to the use of new technologies but also to user protection when interacting online. School curricula seem to have failed to demonstrate how practicing the journalism profession can help a young person promote their work, their research, or even provide new perspectives on it.

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