Children's Television Worldwide:
Gender Representation

in

Belgium

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Children's Television Worldwide:
Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Children's Television in Belgium

Belgium has a complex federal structure with several communities and two regional governments. This complex structure is also reflected in Belgium broadcasting. In 1977 the French speaking and Dutch speaking broadcasters were separated and now we have a Wallon public broadcaster RTBF and Flemish public broadcaster VRT. Only recently in 1989 commercial television was introduced. At this moment the public broadcaster is very successful. Most TV-households watch TV on cable (96%) and receive more than 40 mostly European channels (in this context Nickelodeon shares a channel with MTV and broadcasts from 8am till 8pm. In the table below is an overview of the different main Flemish TV-channels (in this study most of the data were collected of Flemish broadcasting).

Main Flemish television channels

Channel	Group	Share (2006)
Een	VRT (public)	**28,7%**
Ketnet/Canvas	VRT (public)	9,6 %
VTM	VMMA (private)	21,3%
Kanaaltwee	VMMA (private)	6,7%
VT4	SBS (private)	7,0%§
Vijftv	SBS (private)	4,2 %
VITAYA	Media ad infinitum (private)	2,9%
Others	/	19,6%

The data in this study were collected from the public broadcasters Ketnet and LaDeux, VTM (commercial family channel), and VT4 (broad young audience). Most of the programmes were broadcasted by the public broadcaster VRT en RTBF (LaDeux). Especially the children's channel Ketnet (4-12 years old) offers domestic qualitative programmes, which are initiated by the policy of the public broadcaster. An example is the Diversity Charter where equal and diverse representation is emphasised in the production and the broadcasting of programmes.

Children's Television Worldwide:
Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Sample selection:

The sample is based on the following Belgian television networks, mostly Flemish television networks. One public Flemish network Ketnet LaDeux (public Wallon French speaking), commercial broadcasters VTM and VT4. For these channels the children's programme of the country was recorded in the agreed upon time frame and subsequently categorized and measured. Dates of recording: 02.05.2007 – 31.05.2007

The sample analysed here consists of 118 hours of explicit children's television, 87 hours of fictional shows, 586 programmes (445 fictional shows), 1798 characters (fiction) and 1042 human characters.
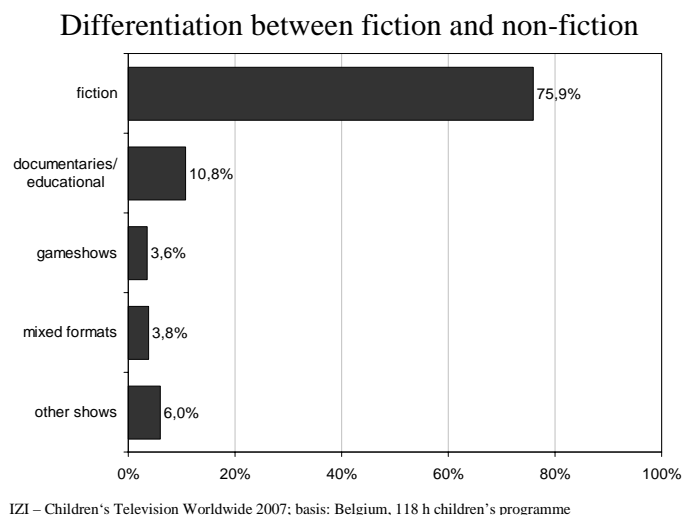
What is offered to children - Results at show level:

More fictional or a more non-fictional programs? *Almost half of the analysed program is fictional*

We coded every show/piece of programme of our sample. Advertisements and trailers are coded in block (e.g. when there are 6 different commercials between two shows they are coded as one block). A show begins with the opening and normally ends with the credits (it might be that one show consists of 2 episodes like in SpongeBob but they are still one show).

The sample comprises altogether 586 shows that can be categorised into different programme types. 445 shows or 75.9% can be referred to as fiction, 63 shows (10.8%) were documentaries, 21 were game shows (3.6%) and 22 mixed formats (3.8%).
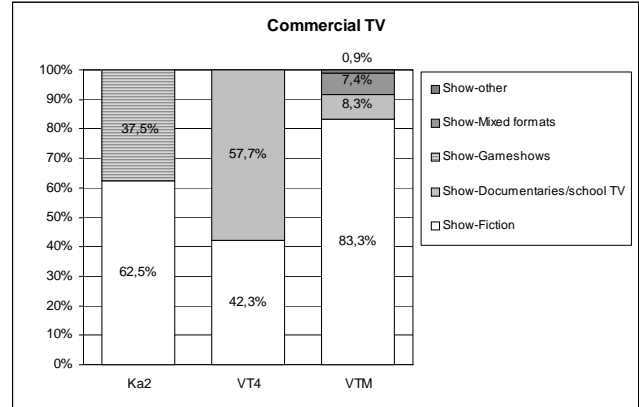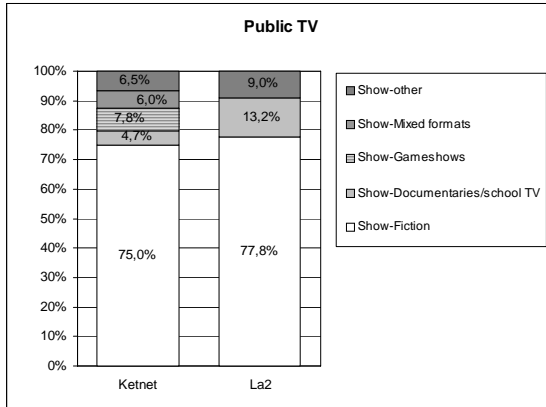
Of interest for the further analysis of the children's programmes are only the 445 fictional shows that were coded. Those are in 54.8% of the cases animation shows and in 18.7% of the cases shows with real people (n=83). Then there is a puppet show 4.3% and a mixed format 21.8%. (n=97)

Differentiation between fiction and non-fiction

fiction	75,9%
documentaries/educational	10,8%
gameshows	3,6%
mixed formats	3,8%
other shows	6,0%

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 118 h children's programme

Children's Television Worldwide:
Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

The public stations in Belgium show about 75% of fictional TV, while the commercial stations range from 42.3% (VT4) to 83.3% (VTM).

Public TV

	Ketnet	La2
Show-other	6,5%	9,0%
Show-Mixed formats	6,0%	13,2%
Show-Gameshows	7,8%	
Show-Documentaries/school TV	4,7%	
Show-Fiction	75,0%	77,8%

Commercial TV

	Ka2	VT4	VTM
Show-other			0,9% / 7,4%
Show-Mixed formats			8,3%
Show-Gameshows	37,5%		
Show-Documentaries/school TV		57,7%	
Show-Fiction	62,5%	42,3%	83,3%

What type of fictional programme could be found? Half of them are animation!

We coded the general type/genre of show. Is it an animation or a puppet show? Or mixed?

Among the recorded fiction shows were 244 (54.8%) animation shows; in 83 shows (18.7%) real people are the actors/actresses and 19 (4.3%) was a puppet show. 97 shows (21.8%) were a mix of several of these categories.

Differentiation between fictional shows
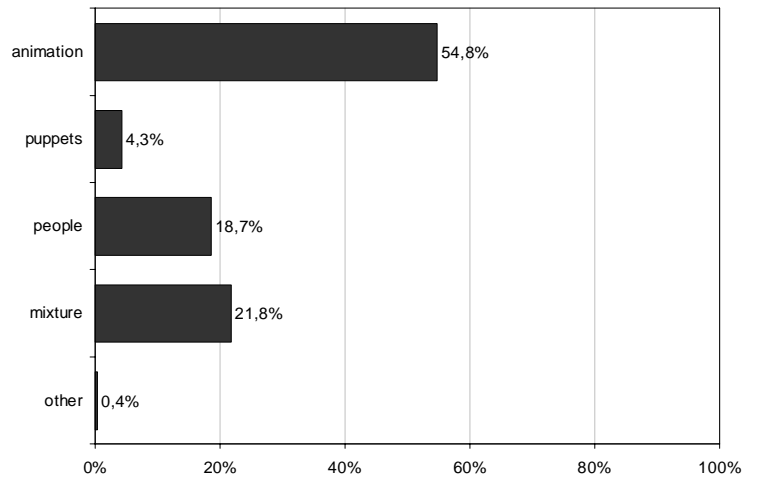
animation	54,8%
puppets	4,3%
people	18,7%
mixture	21,8%
other	0,4%

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme

Children's Television Worldwide:

Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

	Animation	Puppets	People	Mixture	other
Slovenia	96,5%	0,9%	1,9%	0,7%	0,0%
China	96,4%	0,7%	2,9%	0,0%	0,0%
Canada	95,9%	0,7%	0,7%	2,0%	0,7%
Egypt	95,3%	0,0%	2,6%	2,1%	0,0%
Cuba	94,5%	0,3%	2,8%	2,4%	0,0%
Syria	93,5%	0,0%	3,2%	0,0%	3,2%
Kenya	90,6%	0,7%	8,1%	0,7%	0,0%
Netherlands	90,0%	0,8%	9,2%	0,0%	0,0%
Germany	88,8%	1,8%	7,0%	2,4%	0,0%
Austria	88,3%	2,6%	6,4%	2,6%	0,0%
Hong Kong	85,8%	3,6%	8,9%	1,8%	0,0%
Hungary	85,8%	12,1%	0,7%	1,4%	0,0%
South Africa	85,3%	3,9%	8,3%	2,5%	0,0%
USA	84,8%	1,3%	8,5%	5,5%	0,0%
Norway	84,6%	2,6%	10,3%	2,6%	0,0%
Brazil	84,2%	1,1%	12,6%	2,1%	0,0%
India	81,0%	0,0%	19,0%	0,0%	0,0%
New Zealand	80,6%	0,0%	13,9%	5,5%	0,0%
Australia	80,4%	1,1%	11,0%	2,8%	4,6%
Israel	74,7%	0,8%	21,4%	3,1%	0,0%
Malaysia	72,4%	0,0%	13,8%	13,8%	0,0%
Argentina	58,8%	17,6%	17,6%	5,9%	0,0%
UK	55,0%	10,8%	12,3%	20,8%	1,2%
Belgium	54,8%	4,3%	18,7%	21,8%	0,4%
total	**83,9%**	**2,4%**	**8,9%**	**4,5%**	**0,3%**

On an international scale, Belgium is last when it comes to the percentage of animated programs (54.8%). That is a remarkable result which can be a sign of quality.
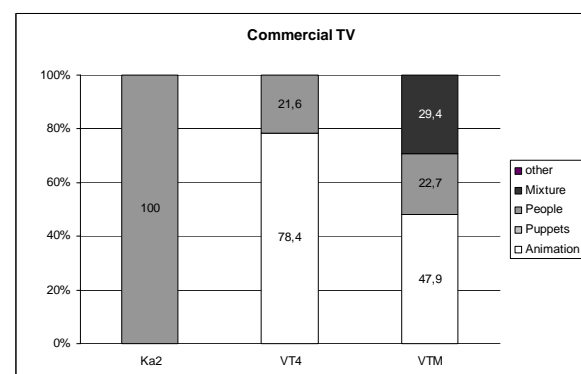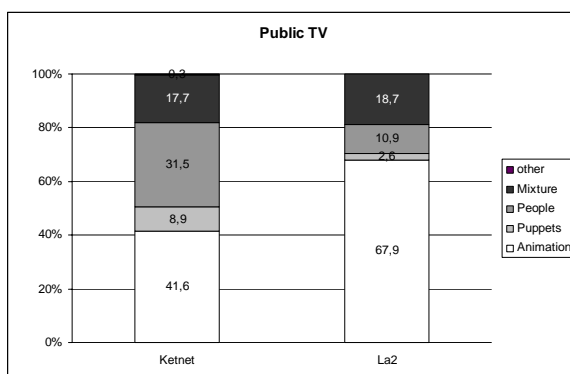
41.6% of Ketnet programs are animated programs, while even 67.9% of the La2 programs are animated. Ka2 shows – at least in this sample - exclusively puppet shows, while VT4 shows 78.4% and VTM 47.9% animated programs. That a commercial channel shows puppets for a 100% is quiet unusual and should be positively pointed out.
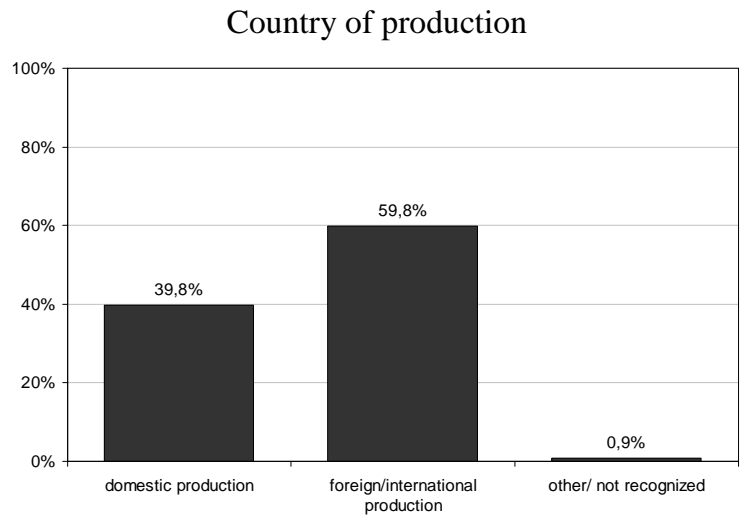
Children's Television Worldwide:
Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Where are the shows produced?

We coded where/by which company the show is produced (as far as can be seen from credits, programme magazine or other sources). Is it a company or broadcaster from one's own country or from a foreign country or an international co-production?

The fiction shows are in 59.8% of the cases productions of another country and in 39.8% produced domestically. 4 (n=0.9%) shows could not be classified into any category.

With its domestically produced shows, in the international scale Belgium is clearly above the average.

Country of production

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme

domestic prod.	
Malaysia	82,8%
USA	82,7%
UK	67,7%
China	53,4%
Canada	44,2%
Belgium	39,8%
Germany	17,3%
India	15,8%
Hungary	13,2%
Israel	13,1%
Australia	11,1%
Norway	9,0%
Egypt	8,9%
Netherlands	7,3%
South Africa	6,4%
Brazil	6,3%
Argentina	5,9%
Cuba	5,5%
Syria	3,2%
Slovenia	2,3%
Austria	0,8%
Hong Kong	0,6%
New Zealand	0,5%
Kenya	0,0%
total	**22,6%**

About 39.8% of the children's program in Belgium was domestically produced. 11% was made in France, 9% in the Netherlands, and 8% in the UK, the USA and in Canada.
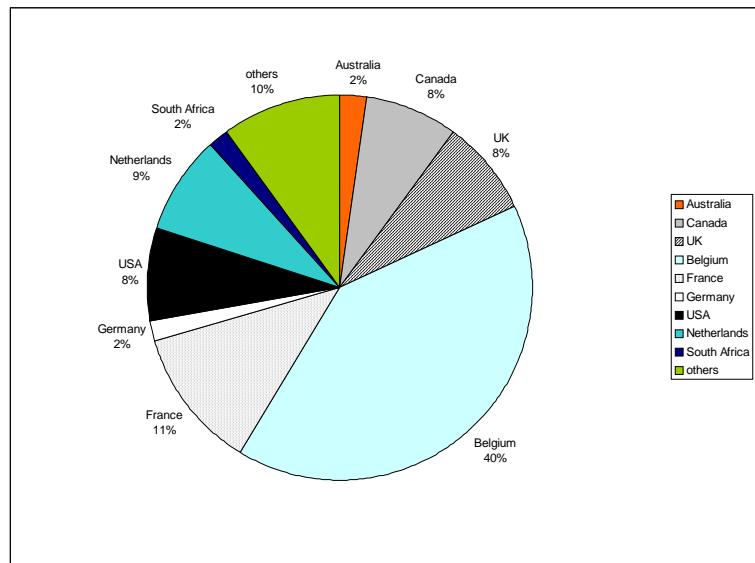
Children's Television Worldwide:

Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Public TV

■ other/ not recog.	
⊟ int./foreign prod.	
□ domestic prod.	

Ketnet: 60,9 / 37,9
La2: 56,4 / 43,6

Commercial TV

|	
■ other/ not recog.	
⊟ int./foreign prod.	
□ domestic prod.	

Ka2: 100,0
VT4: 100,0
VTM: 56,7 / 43,3
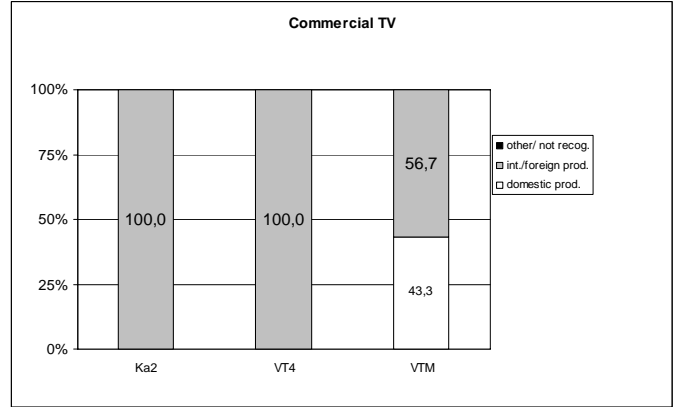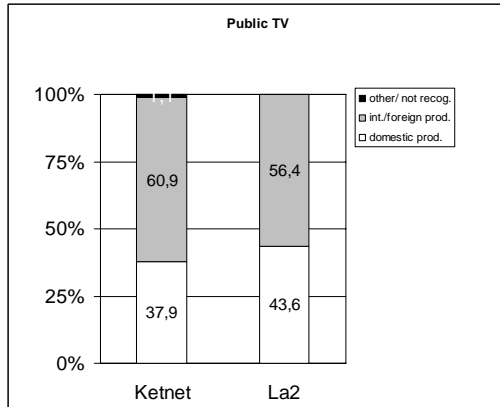
More than one third of the public TV programs are domestically produced. While the commercial TV stations Ka2 and VT5 show exclusively internationally produced program, 43.3% of VTM programs are domestically produced.

Who speaks? Male narrators / voice over

We coded if there is a narrator or voice over (which means you can hear a voice but do not necessarily see the person) - is it a male or a female voice?

In 338 (76.0%) fiction shows there was no narrator, in 31 shows (7.0%) there was a female narrator, in 75 shows (16.9%) a male narrator, and one show used a mixed narrator (0.2%). There are twice as many male than female narrators.
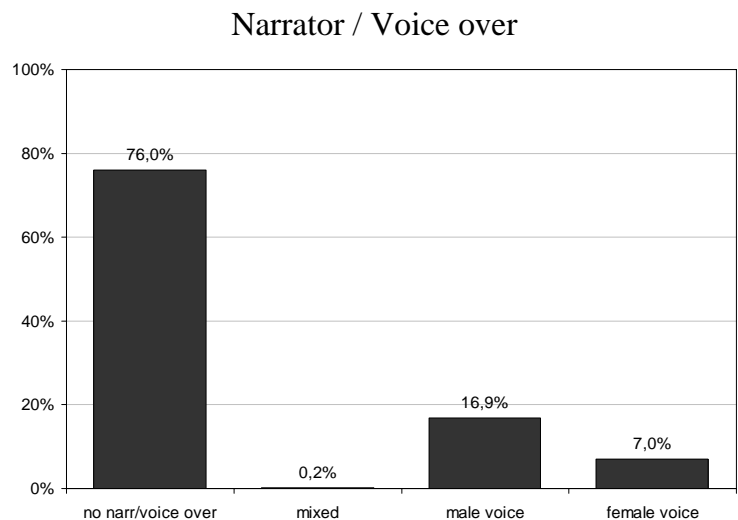
Narrator / Voice over

no narr/voice over: 76,0%
mixed: 0,2%
male voice: 16,9%
female voice: 7,0%

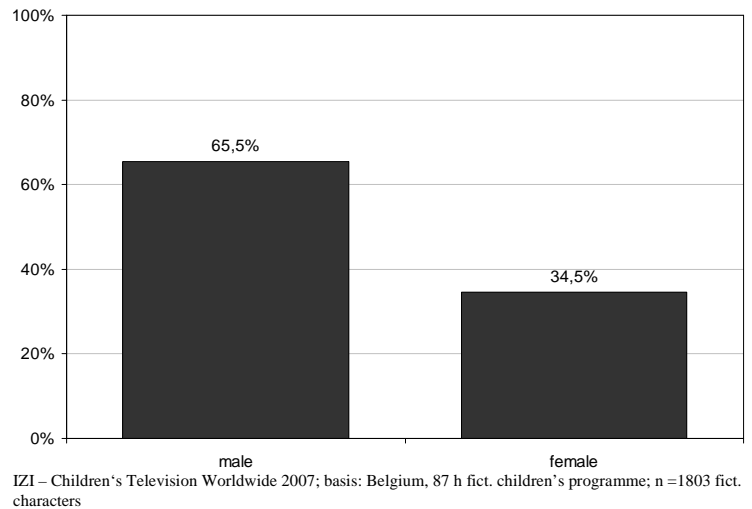IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme

Children's Television Worldwide:
Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

## Who are the main characters? Results at character level[1]

In this study we focused on the main characters of the show, which we defined as the characters that can be seen on screen at least 50% of the time of the duration of the episode. In the first step we analysed which sex it is, based on grammatical terms, name of character, voice, easily identifiable gender identifiers.

In terms of characters, in the 445 fiction shows in Belgium's Children's television 1798 were identified as main characters.

Sex of the Characters

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1803 fict. characters

In public stations about one third of the characters are female. Commercial stations range from 13% female characters (Ka2), over 38.3% (VTM) to 43.7% (VT4). Two of the commercial channels have a higher percentage of female characters than the public ones. It is remarkable, that VT4 and VTM as private broadcaster have a better gender representation than Ketnet and La2.

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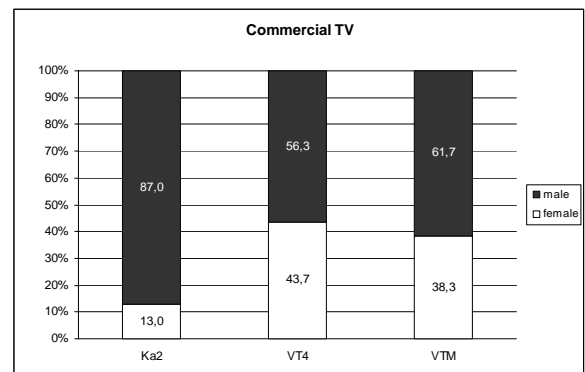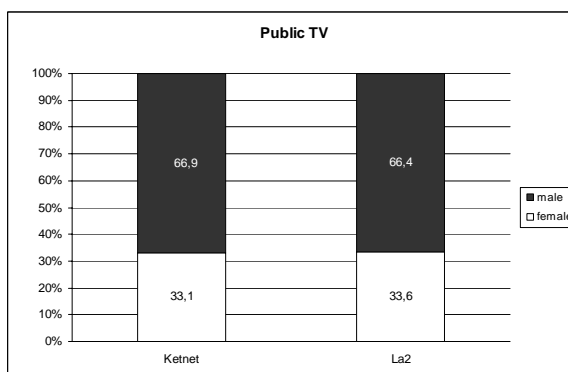
[1] Please note: The quantity of cases varies because of a different number of the missing. In the glossary the maximum number of cases is accounted.

Children's Television Worldwide:
Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Gender perspective: Men and boys are the heroes of the program

The characters of the fictional shows in Belgian children's television were in 34.5% of the cases female and in 65.5% male. In Belgium broadcasted children's television more than half of the characters are males, and one third is female.

| female		male	
Norway	41,6%	Argentina	81,5%
Syria	38,9%	Cuba	79,9%
Israel	37,4%	Malaysia	77,2%
UK	37,3%	Egypt	71,4%
India	36,1%	Slovenia	71,2%
New Zealand	35,2%	South Africa	70,3%
Canada	35,1%	Austria	69,4%
Hong Kong	34,9%	China	69,1%
Belgium	34,5%	Germany	69,0%
Kenya	33,2%	Australia	68,5%
USA	33,1%	Brazil	68,5%
Hungary	32,6%	Netherlands	68,4%
Netherlands	31,6%	Hungary	67,4%
Brazil	31,5%	USA	66,9%
Australia	31,5%	Kenya	66,8%
Germany	31,0%	Belgium	65,5%
China	30,9%	Hong Kong	65,1%
Austria	30,6%	Canada	64,9%
South Africa	29,7%	New Zealand	64,8%
Slovenia	28,8%	India	63,9%
Egypt	28,6%	UK	62,7%
Malaysia	22,8%	Israel	62,6%
Cuba	20,1%	Syria	61,1%
Argentina	18,5%	Norway	58,4%
total	**32,1%**	**total**	**67,9%**

With a proportion of 34.5% female characters, Belgium is slightly above the international average.

Is the main character a human - animal – monster – object – machine etc.?

We coded generally what the nature of the character is. Is it a human, an animal, an object, a machine etc.?

Most of the character types are human (57.8 %).

364 characters of the 1803 recorded were animals, which accords to a percentage of 20.2%. Part of this group is, for example, Snuffie of *Nijntje*. 1042 of the characters

Type of characters

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1803 fict. characters

(57.8%) are humans. The monsters and mythical creatures appear as the third largest group. 160
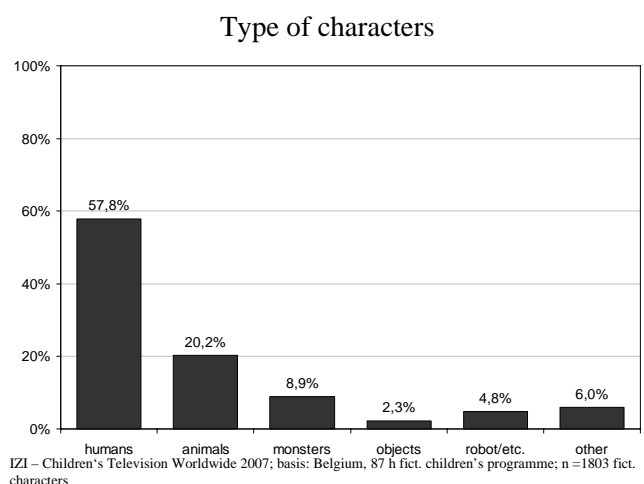
Belgium 9

characters (8.9%) can be assigned to this group, i.e. Dodo of *Wawa*. Furthermore, 42 plants (2.3%), 86 robots or machines (4.8%) and 109 other characters (6.0%) were recorded.

Of the animals 103 (28.3%) were female and 192 (52.7%) male. For 69 (19.0%) characters the gender was not identifiable. Of the humans 378 (36.3%) were female and 649 (62.3%) were male. 15 (1.4%) characters could not be identified. Among the plants, 7 were female (17.9%), 24 (61.5%) were male and 8 neutral (20.5%). Of the machines and robots which were counted, 36 (42.9%) were male, 5 (6.0%) were female, and 43 were not-identifiable (51.2%). Among the monsters and mythical creatures, 22 were female (13.8%), 61 (38.1%) were male and 76 neutral (47.5%). The gender of the other characters was in 38 cases (34.9%) neutral, 52 (47.7%) characters were male and 19 (17.4%) characters were female.

	Animal	**Human**	Monster/ etc.	Plant/ Object	Robot/ etc.	other
Kenya	12,8%	77,0%	9,2%	0,3%	0,6%	0,1%
South Africa	12,6%	74,3%	1,5%	0,1%	11,1%	0,5%
Malaysia	6,4%	72,8%	4,6%	16,2%	0,0%	0,0%
Slovenia	17,9%	70,9%	4,9%	0,5%	4,4%	1,4%
Egypt	21,7%	70,0%	3,2%	0,3%	4,3%	0,4%
Israel	26,8%	66,9%	3,1%	1,6%	1,5%	0,1%
Netherlands	19,7%	65,2%	10,4%	3,7%	1,0%	0,0%
New Zealand	23,5%	64,5%	4,1%	4,1%	2,8%	1,1%
Syria	23,1%	62,7%	11,9%	0,0%	0,0%	2,2%
Hong Kong	22,8%	62,0%	8,5%	0,4%	2,0%	4,3%
Canada	26,7%	60,5%	5,8%	0,8%	2,4%	3,8%
Norway	25,8%	60,1%	2,8%	5,5%	2,8%	3,0%
China	32,7%	59,2%	0,4%	1,6%	4,5%	1,6%
Brazil	22,8%	59,0%	6,2%	6,1%	1,0%	4,9%
Australia	26,0%	58,8%	4,1%	5,4%	5,7%	0,0%
Belgium	20,2%	57,8%	8,9%	2,3%	4,8%	6,0%
Hungary	35,2%	54,9%	3,8%	2,2%	2,7%	1,1%
Germany	30,7%	54,8%	4,2%	8,0%	1,2%	1,1%
UK	27,8%	54,3%	0,8%	0,0%	6,0%	11,2%
Austria	31,7%	53,6%	4,7%	7,7%	1,2%	1,1%
India	22,2%	50,6%	1,5%	8,9%	2,5%	14,3%
USA	34,2%	47,3%	6,0%	3,7%	2,2%	6,6%
Argentina	30,0%	45,5%	10,0%	13,6%	0,9%	0,0%
Cuba	55,5%	29,4%	7,3%	2,1%	2,3%	3,5%
total	**26,3%**	**59,1%**	**5,0%**	**3,5%**	**3,1%**	**3,1%**

With a proportion of 57.8% of humans in its children's programs, Belgium is a little bit below the international average.

Children's Television Worldwide:
Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Gender Perspective: Female characters are often humans, males more often monsters and robots

Of the female characters 378 (70.8%) were humans and 22 (4.1%) were monsters or mythical creatures, and 103 female characters (19.3%) are animals.

The male characters were represented in 649 cases (64.0%) as humans and in 192 (18.9%) cases as animals. Monsters and mythical creatures with male gender were found in 61 characters (6.0%), 36 (3.6%) were part of the plot as robots, and 24 male plants (2.4%) could be counted.

Type of characters

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1803 fict. characters
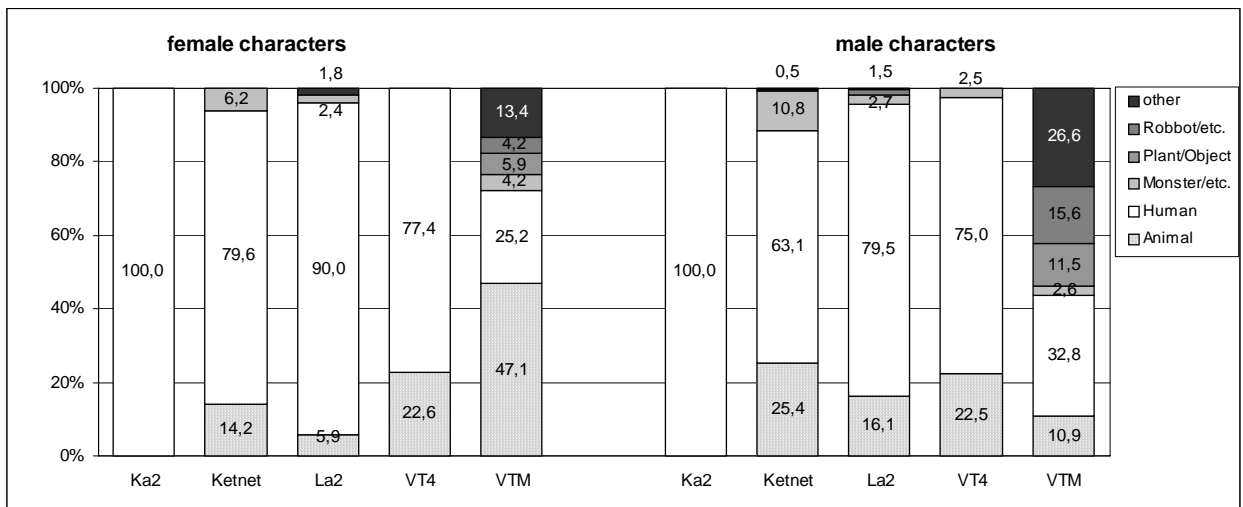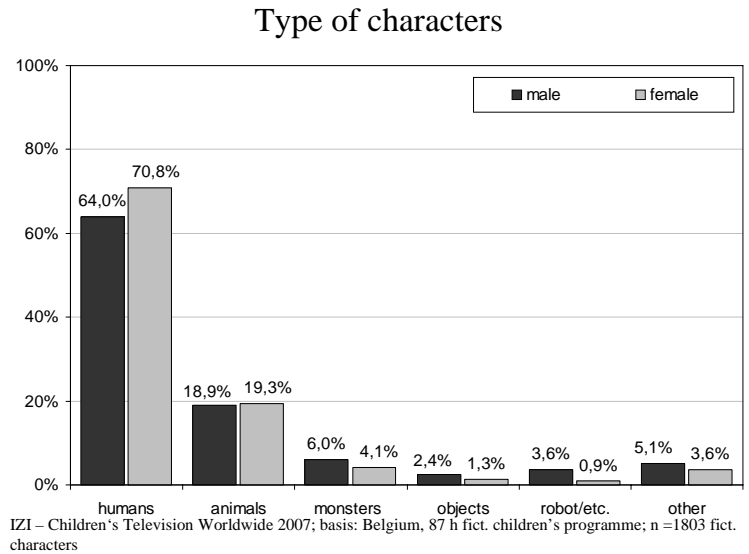
The highest percentage of female animals appears on VTM (47.1%), while the highest share of female humans was counted on Ka2 (100%). The highest percentage of female monsters is shown on Ketnet (6.2%), while the only female plants (5.9%) and robots (4.2%) appear on VTM. The highest percentage of male animals was counted on Ketnet (25.4%), while the highest share of male humans was counted on Ka2 (100%). The highest percentage of male monsters appears on Ketnet (10.8%), while the highest share of male plants (11.5%) as well as of robots (15.6%) was shown on VTM. So Ka2 is the only channel which shows human characters exclusively.
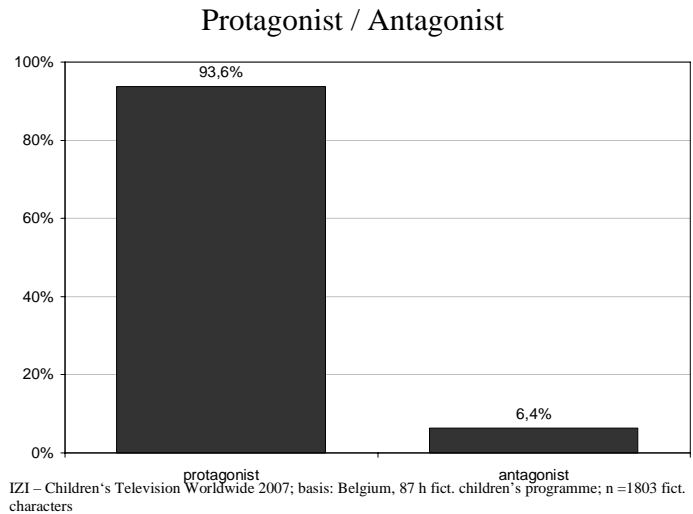
Children's Television Worldwide:
Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

What is the general role in the story: Protagonist or Antagonist?

We coded the "general part" of the character in the narration of the story – is it the good main character or the bad and evil guy/girl?

1687 of the characters in Belgian children's television were identified as protagonists. This corresponds to a relative part of 93.6%. On the other hand, there are 116 antagonists that constitute 6.4% of the characters.

Protagonist / Antagonist

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1803 fict. characters

Of the protagonists counted, 508 (30.2%) are female and 932 (55.4%) male. 242 characters (14.4%) could not be identified. Among the antagonists there are 26 (22.4%) female characters and 82 (70.7%) male characters. 8 characters (6.9%) are not identifiable.

	Protagonist	Antagonist
UK	38,6%	28,8%
Australia	61,5%	27,3%
South Africa	74,5%	23,5%
Cuba	77,8%	21,4%
China	81,1%	18,8%
Malaysia	82,1%	17,9%
Brazil	34,3%	15,9%
Norway	78,6%	15,7%
Argentina	83,6%	15,5%
Netherlands	83,1%	15,4%
India	80,6%	15,3%
Egypt	83,7%	15,0%
Kenya	82,5%	15,0%
Syria	85,1%	14,9%
Hungary	85,7%	13,6%
Slovenia	64,6%	12,8%
Canada	35,1%	11,9%
New Zealand	88,1%	11,7%
USA	78,6%	10,3%
Austria	87,1%	9,5%
Germany	87,9%	8,8%
Hong Kong	93,5%	6,5%
Belgium	93,6%	6,4%
Israel	95,5%	4,5%
total	**77,0%**	**13,7%**

In children's TV in Belgium 6.4% of the characters are antagonists, which is only half of the international average. It seems that Belgium does not tell its stories with many antagonists.
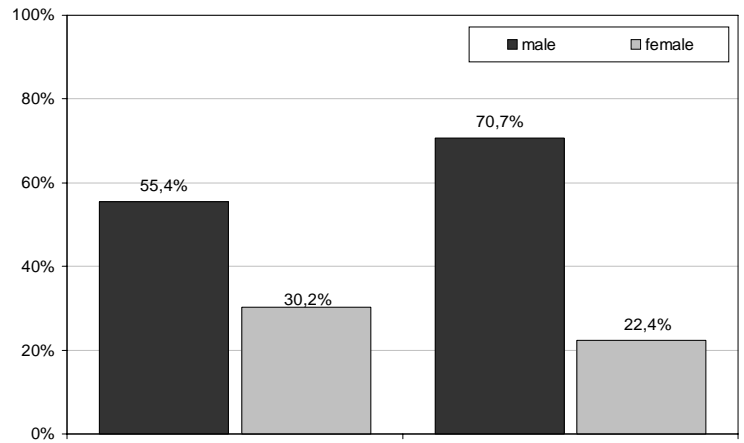
Children's Television Worldwide:
Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

**Gender Perspective: Antagonists are 3 times more often male**

Of the protagonists, 508 (30.2%) are female and 932 (55.4%) male. 242 characters (14.4%) could not be identified as either. Among the antagonists there are 26 (22.4%) female characters and 82 (70.7%) male characters.

Among the female characters, 508 (95.1%) appear as protagonists. 26 (4.9%) of the female characters are antagonists. With regard to boys' or men's characters, there are 932 (91.9%) protagonists. 82 (8.1%) men characters appear as antagonists. To summarize: Antagonists are 3 times more often male than female.

Protagonist / Antagonist

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1803 fict. characters
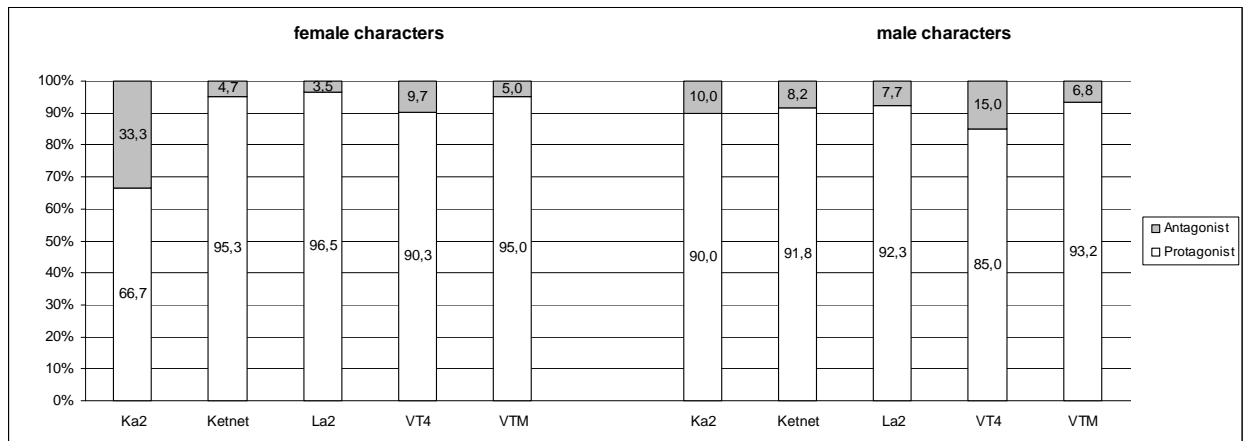
The channel showing the highest percentage of female antagonists is Ka2 (33.3%), while the fewest antagonists appear on La2 (3.5%). The channel presenting the highest percentage of male antagonists is VT4 (15%), and the fewest male antagonists were counted on VTM (6.8%).

In what kind of relation is the character?

We coded in what kind of constellation the main character is acting. Does he/she work alone, in a group or a duo?

137 of the characters (7.6%) are integrated into the plot as loners. 129 of the coded characters in this category are part of a duo (7.2%). 1309 (72.8%) and thus the majority of the characters are part of a group or a team, respectively. 12.3% could not be grouped into any of the categories.

Relation of the characters
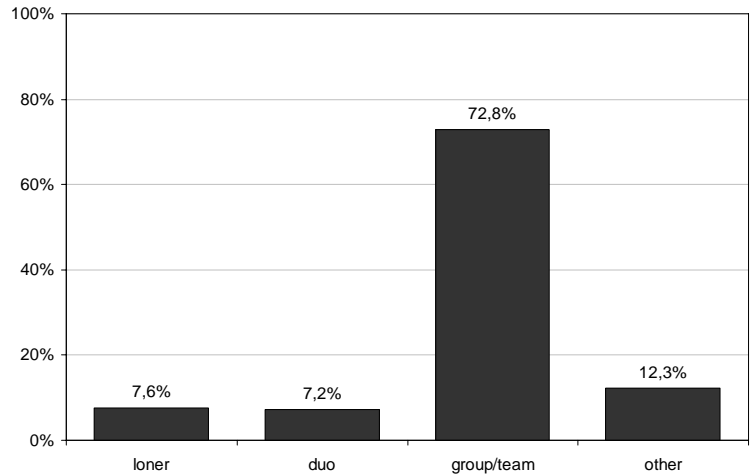
IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1803 fict. characters

	loner	duo	group/team
China	14,3%	10,1%	75,7%
USA	9,4%	14,1%	74,5%
Belgium	7,6%	7,2%	72,8%
Syria	15,7%	14,2%	70,1%
Canada	9,1%	24,8%	65,3%
Malaysia	9,2%	25,4%	64,7%
South Africa	17,5%	20,3%	59,5%
Australia	14,2%	25,6%	58,3%
Egypt	16,8%	24,6%	57,6%
New Zealand	19,0%	20,9%	56,5%
UK	17,9%	22,7%	56,4%
Slovenia	27,5%	16,2%	55,6%
India	31,3%	14,4%	54,2%
Germany	18,7%	26,4%	54,0%
Austria	19,3%	26,4%	53,3%
Kenya	20,8%	26,1%	51,9%
Norway	20,6%	24,2%	50,1%
Cuba	24,8%	26,7%	48,6%
Hong Kong	25,1%	27,1%	46,8%
Hungary	22,4%	32,3%	45,2%
Israel	23,9%	31,4%	44,0%
Argentina	30,0%	29,1%	40,9%
Netherlands	34,8%	27,2%	37,8%
Brazil	67,9%	6,5%	25,0%
total	**20,3%**	**21,1%**	**56,5%**

In Belgium 72.8% of the characters is part of a group, which puts Belgium on third place. It seems that Belgium likes to tell stories with main characters in groups.

Belgium 14

Children's Television Worldwide:

Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Gender Perspective: Males twice as often loners, but both mostly in groups

Of the female characters 23 (4.3%) are loners, 39 (7.3%) are duos and 392 (73.5%) are a part of a group.

The male characters are with 83 (8.2%) loners, 62 (6.1%) duos and with 747 (73.9%) a part of a group. Male and female main characters in Belgium are mostly in groups, but males are twice as often loners.

Relation of the characters

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's prog.; 445 fict. shows; 1807 human characters
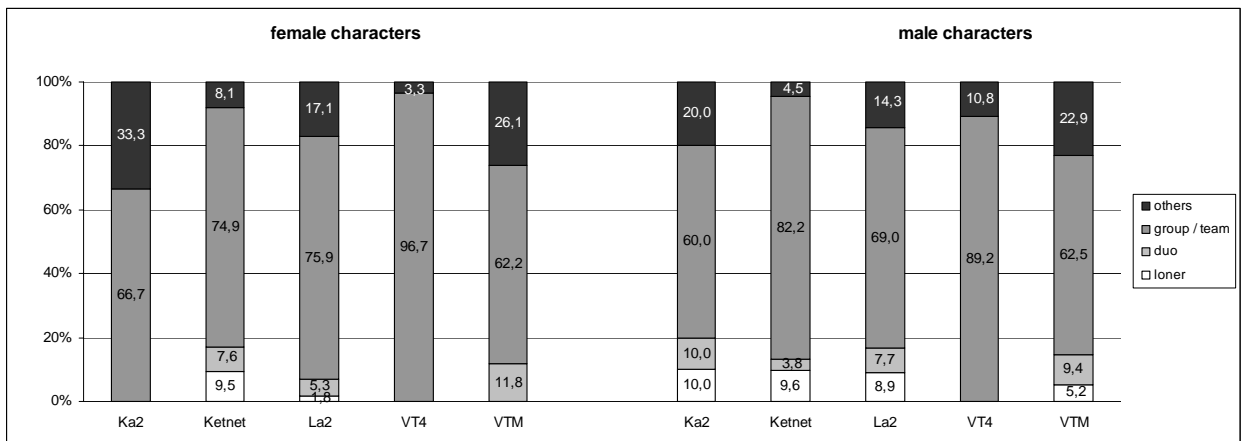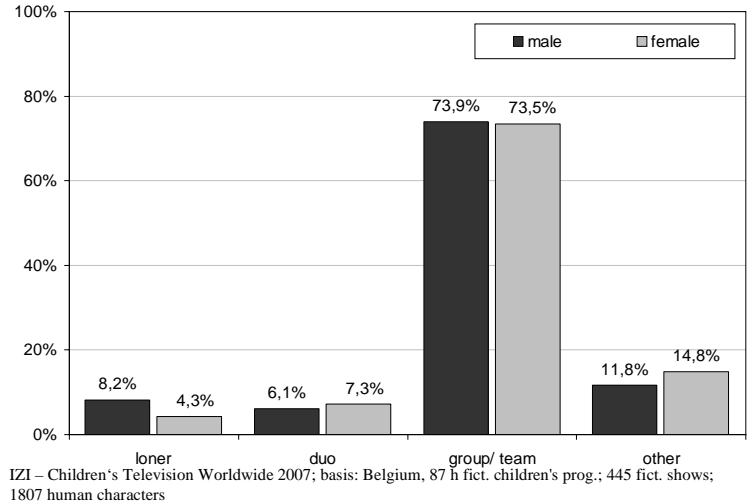
The highest share of females in groups appears on VT4 (96.7%), while the highest share of female duos was counted on VTM (11.8%), and of female loners on Ketnet (9.5%).

The highest percentage of males in groups was counted on VT4 (89.2%), while the highest percentages of male duos (10%) as well as of loners (10%) appear on Ka2. So, VT4 presents the most characters in collectives, be it among the females or among the males.

Children's Television Worldwide:
Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Which hierarchical position does the character assume in the show?

We coded the role in the social context. Who is dominant in the relationship and solution of the problem? Is there a clear leading character?

1185 (65.9%) of the characters appear as equals regarding hierarchical positions. 204 (11.4%) are leaders. 154 (8.6%) are part of a following, and for 254 (14.1%) characters the position was not clearly identifiable.

Hierarchical position of the characters

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Austria, n = 111 h fict. children's programme; n = 2114 fict. characters
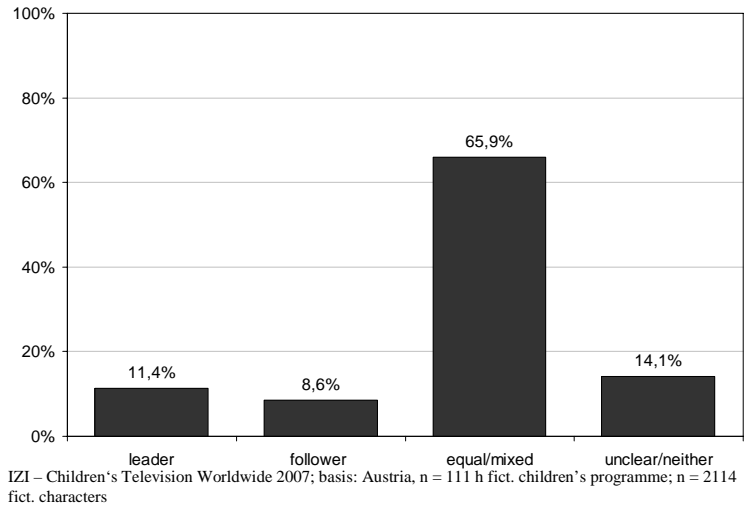
	Leader		Follower		equal or mixed
Argentina	47,3%	Australia	34,6%	Malaysia	67,1%
Cuba	42,1%	New Zealand	32,7%	Belgium	65,9%
India	40,2%	UK	30,1%	Brazil	62,9%
China	30,8%	India	26,9%	Hungary	61,4%
Norway	28,4%	Egypt	20,7%	USA	61,2%
Syria	28,2%	Norway	19,8%	Kenya	56,7%
South Africa	28,2%	South Africa	19,5%	Slovenia	54,8%
Slovenia	27,3%	Syria	16,8%	Hong Kong	53,5%
Australia	27,1%	Hungary	16,6%	Syria	53,4%
Kenya	26,7%	Canada	15,0%	Germany	47,9%
UK	26,1%	Malaysia	14,1%	Austria	47,7%
Germany	24,0%	Germany	14,0%	Cuba	46,1%
Austria	23,8%	Argentina	13,6%	Netherlands	45,9%
Egypt	23,3%	Austria	13,6%	Israel	45,5%
Hungary	18,5%	Kenya	12,1%	China	45,0%
Brazil	13,8%	Israel	10,3%	South Africa	42,9%
Israel	13,5%	Cuba	10,3%	Egypt	40,2%
USA	13,0%	USA	10,2%	Argentina	39,1%
Belgium	11,4%	Netherlands	10,1%	Norway	36,5%
New Zealand	11,0%	Slovenia	9,0%	New Zealand	33,5%
Canada	9,9%	Brazil	8,8%	India	30,7%
Malaysia	8,2%	China	8,6%	Australia	29,4%
Hong Kong	6,7%	Belgium	8,6%	UK	28,3%
Netherlands	6,4%	Hong Kong	6,9%	Canada	26,3%
total	**20,5%**	**total**	**15,5%**	**total**	**47,7%**

With the proportion of 11.4% of the characters in leading positions Belgium reaches only half the international average. Belgium is second to last when it comes to the number of followers, but it is way above average concerning equal or mixed teams. It seems hat Belgium likes to tell stories with main characters in groups in equal positions and not so much stories about leaders and followers.

Children's Television Worldwide:
Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Gender Perspective: Leaders are twice as often males

The female characters are in 374 (70.2%) of the cases equal or mixed. 28 female characters (5.3%) appear as leaders and 44 (8.3%) as followers. For 87 characters (16.3%) the constellation was not identifiable. Among the boy and man characters 677 (67.1%) are equal or mixed, and in 126 (12.5%) cases leader of a group. 72 (7.1%) are part of the following and for 134 characters (13.3%) the classification was not possible.

Hierarchical position of the characters

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1803 fict. characters
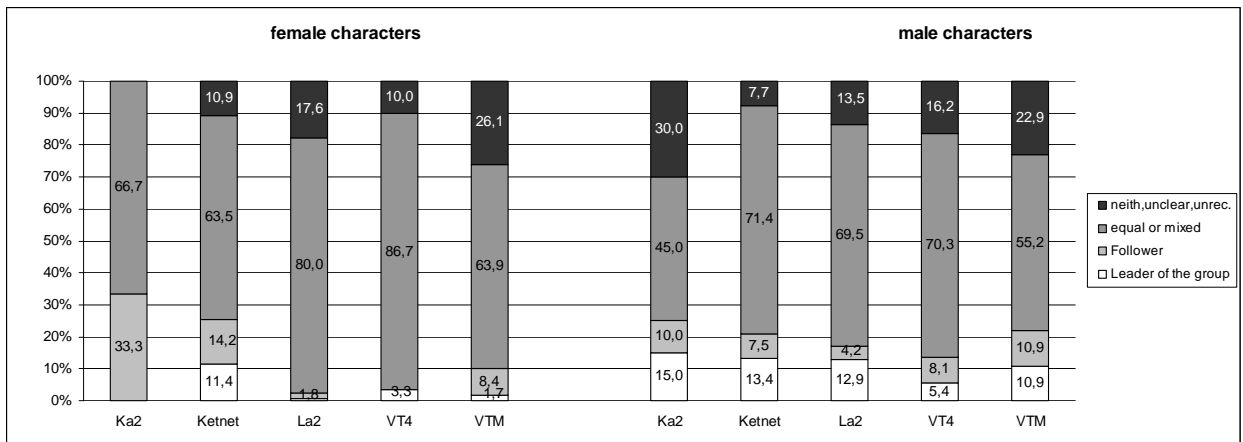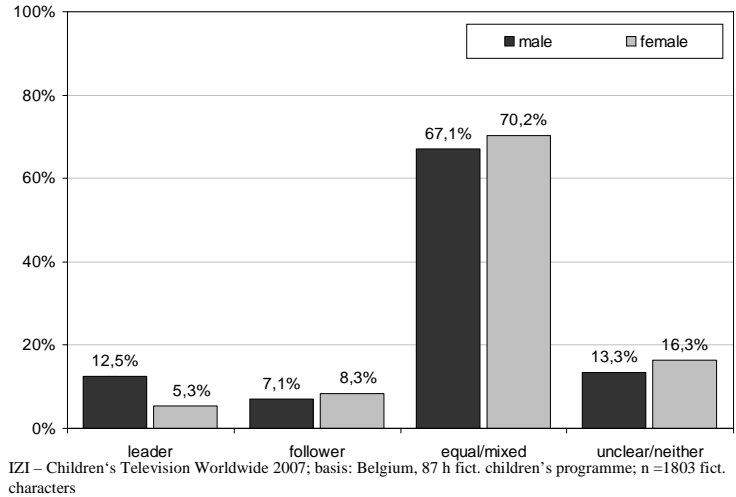
The highest percentage of females in leading positions appear on Ketnet (11.4%), while of female followers on Ka2 (33.3%). The highest share of females in equal positions had VT4 (86.7%). The highest percentage of males in leading positions was counted on Ka2 (15.0%), while of male followers on VTM (10.9%). The highest share of males in equal positions is shown on Ketnet (71.4%). So, channels have different gender proportions concerning hierarchy.

Children's Television Worldwide:
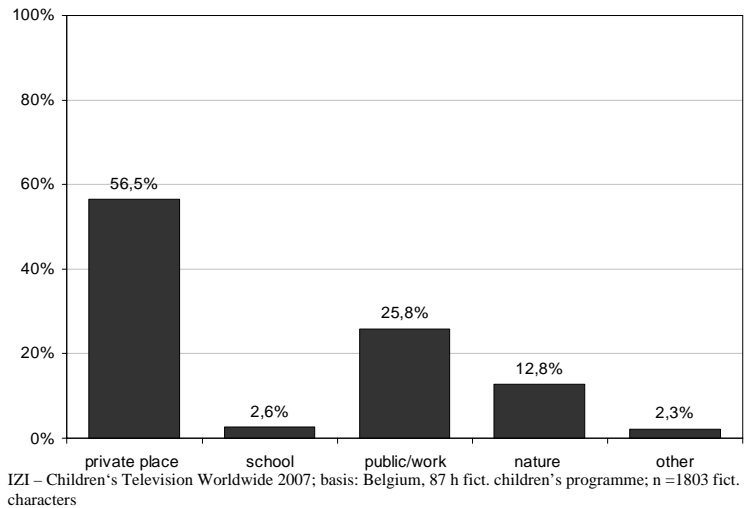## Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

<u>At which location is the character introduced into the plot? Most of the characters are represented in the private sphere.</u>

We coded where the character is located in its first appearance in the show (not the opening song).

The most common location at which the character is introduced into the plot is the private sphere. 1013 (56.5%) of the recorded characters of this category appear here for the first time. Public spaces or work, respectively, rank second. Here, 463 characters (25.8%) are introduced for the first time.

229 characters are in nature in their introduction scene (12.8%), 47 characters (2.6%) are in school, and 41 (2.3%) at other locations.

Introduction into the plot

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1803 fict. characters

Gender Perspective: Nearly gender equality in the introduction of the location

283 (53.1%) of the female characters in the sample are introduced into the plot in private settings. 142 (26.6%) of the characters are introduced in public spaces or at work. 75 (14.1%) characters appear for the first time in nature. 26 (4.9%) are introduced to the viewer in school and 1.3%, thus 7 characters, at locations other than these categories.

558 (55.4%) of the male characters are first introduced in private settings. 281 (27.9%) are presented in public or at work. At third position are nature locations with 127 characters (12.6%) and finally school where 21 characters (2.1%) are introduced. There is nearly gender equality in the introduction of the location which is not the case in many other countries.

Introduction into the plot
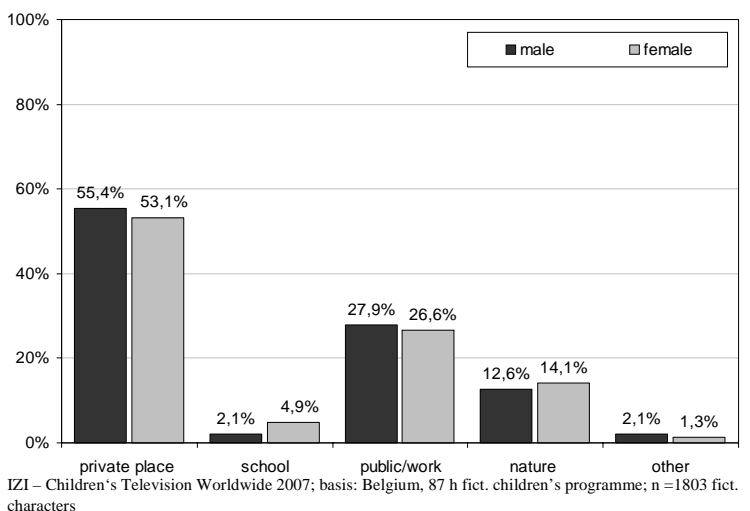
IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1803 fict. characters

The analysis of the Human Characters

The characters which were coded as humans were furthermore coded according to their skin colour, hair colour, their age and their physique as well as possibly existing disabilities.

What skin colour or general ethnic affiliation can we see? 86% of the human characters are Caucasian

We coded as far as possible the skin colour or ethnicity of the main human characters and distinguished by shape of eyes, by dark or tanned skin etc.

44 (4.3%) of the human characters have shown Asian physical traits. Black characters were found in 68 (6.6%) characters of the sample. 10 (1.0%) were classified as South (East) Asian, 9 (0.9%) as Latin-American and 4 (0.4%) as Arab. The majority, with 894 characters (86.7%), was Caucasian. All in all, 2 characters were classified as Other or were not identifiable.

Skin colour of the characters
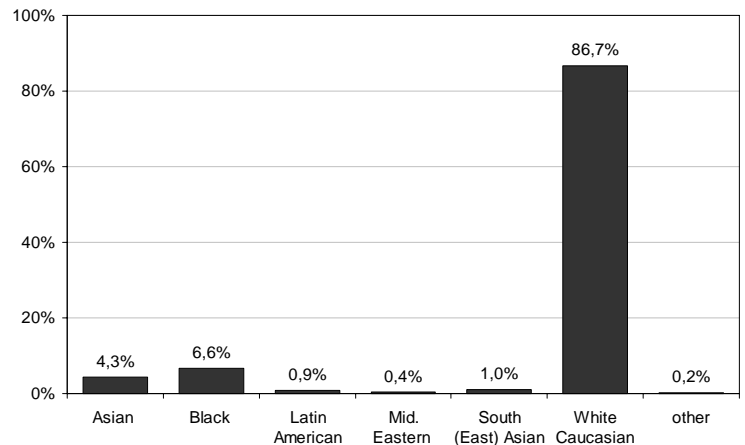
IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1042 fict. human characters

Children's Television Worldwide:

Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Asian		Black		Latin-American		White Caucasian	
Hong Kong	65,0%	UK	15,1%	Australia	10,6%	Cuba	91,5%
China	64,4%	USA	12,2%	USA	7,1%	Argentina	90,0%
Egypt	41,5%	New Zealand	10,6%	Israel	4,6%	Belgium	86,7%
Syria	26,2%	Germany	9,0%	Brazil	4,4%	Slovenia	86,5%
Hungary	18,6%	Austria	8,8%	Hong Kong	4,0%	South Africa	80,8%
Kenya	11,0%	South Africa	8,7%	Syria	3,6%	Canada	80,0%
USA	10,2%	Syria	8,3%	Kenya	3,5%	Netherlands	78,5%
Germany	9,2%	Brazil	7,9%	Canada	3,4%	Brazil	78,3%
Austria	9,0%	Kenya	7,0%	Netherlands	3,1%	Hungary	78,2%
Israel	7,5%	Belgium	6,6%	New Zealand	2,9%	Germany	77,5%
Netherlands	6,4%	Canada	6,6%	South Africa	2,7%	Austria	77,5%
New Zealand	6,3%	Argentina	6,0%	UK	1,9%	Norway	76,7%
India	6,3%	Israel	5,1%	Cuba	1,7%	Israel	76,4%
Brazil	5,9%	Australia	4,2%	Egypt	1,4%	Australia	74,9%
South Africa	5,7%	Netherlands	4,2%	Austria	1,4%	UK	72,8%
Canada	4,8%	Norway	3,7%	India	1,4%	New Zealand	72,6%
Belgium	4,3%	Slovenia	3,0%	Germany	1,4%	Kenya	68,9%
Slovenia	4,2%	Egypt	2,6%	Norway	0,9%	USA	67,8%
Norway	4,2%	China	2,0%	Belgium	0,9%	India	60,3%
Australia	3,2%	Cuba	1,7%	Hungary	0,9%	Syria	52,4%
UK	1,9%	India	1,6%	China	0,2%	Egypt	45,4%
Cuba	0,9%	Hungary	1,5%	Slovenia	0,1%	Hong Kong	30,3%
Argentina	0,0%	Hong Kong	0,4%	Argentina	0,0%	China	14,8%
Malaysia	0,0%	Malaysia	0,0%	Malaysia	0,0%	Malaysia	12,7%
total	**11,7%**	**total**	**6,4%**	**total**	**2,6%**	**total**	**72,2%**

With a proportion of 4.3% Asian characters in its children's programs, Belgium lies way below the international average. The number of blacks is about the same as the average, while the Latin-Americans are again below. Belgium television is one of the "whitest children's television". With a foreign born population of about 6.9%, Belgium in comparison to other EU-countries has no high share of people with migration background[2]. But there is more analysis needed if the diversity of population is supposed to be represented well.

[2] Migration Information source: www.migrationinformation.org

Children's Television Worldwide:
## Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Gender Perspective: Females are more often Asian, Black and South (East) Asian

Out of the female characters 298 (79.3%) are white Caucasians, 28 (7.4%) Asians, 8 (2.1%) South (East) Asians, 36 (9.6%) Blacks and 3 (0.8%) Latin-Americans, and 2 (0.5%) with typical traits of the Middle East are a part of a group. The male characters are with 581 (90.8%) white Caucasians, with 16 (2.5%) Asians, with 32 (5.0%) Blacks, with 6 (0.9%) Latin-Americans, with 2 (0.3%) from South (East) Asia and with 2 from (0.3%) the Middle East. Females, like in many other countries, too, are more often "the other non Caucasian characters" like Asian, Black and South (East) Asian.

Skin colour of the characters
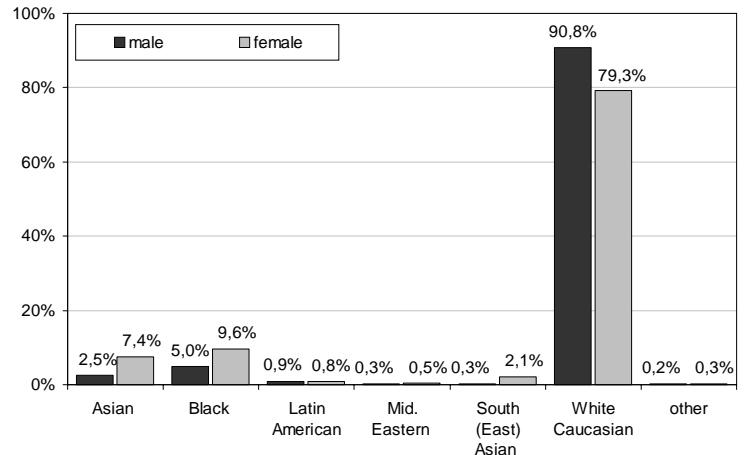
IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1042 fict. human characters
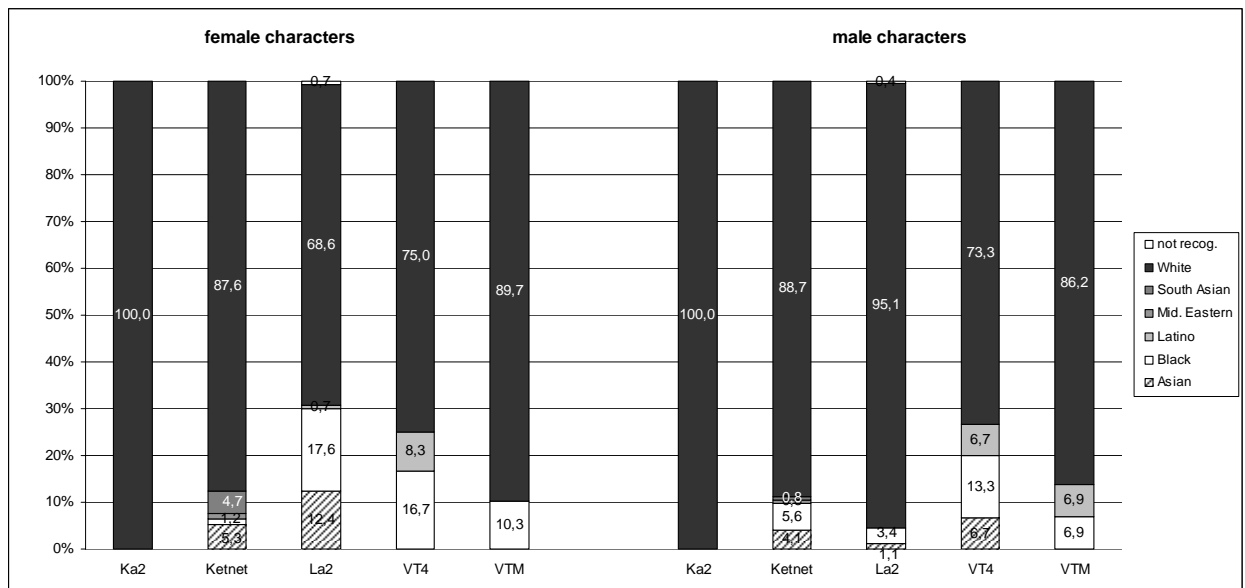
Ka2 tells its stories exclusively with Caucasian characters. The highest share of Asian females appears on La2 (12.4%), where also the highest share of black females (17.6%) could be found. The highest percentage of female Latin-Americans was counted on VT4 (8.3%), while Ka2 showed Caucasian female characters exclusively. The highest percentage of Asian (6.7%) as well as of Black (13.3%) males appeared on VT4. The highest share of male Latin-Americans

was counted on VTM (6.9%), while Ka2 also shows Caucasian males characters exclusively. So, among both sexes Ka2 shows white Caucasians for a 100%.

Hair colour of protagonists

We coded what the hair mostly look like.

29 (2.8%) characters did not have any hair, 285 (27.6%) characters had black hair and 276 (26.7%) characters had brown hair. 202 characters were blonde (19.6%), the hair of 87 people was grey or white (8.4%) and that of 112 red (10.9%). 41 people were categorized in the category Other (4.0%).

Hair colour of the characters

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1042 fict. human characters
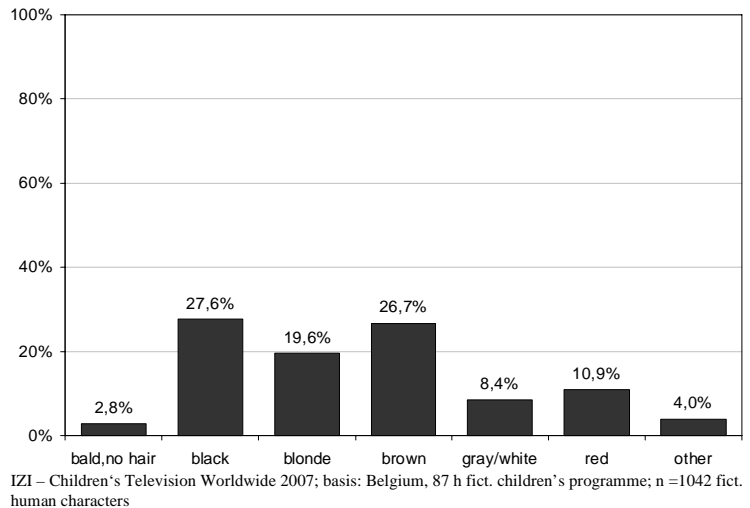
Gender Perspective: Males are more often brown-haired, bold and gray-haired, females more often black-haired and blonde

Out of the female characters 3 (0.8%) have no hair, 113 (30.1%) have black hair, 95 (25.3%) blonde hair, 97 (25.8%) have brown hair, 12 (3.2%) have gray or white hair and 44 (11.7%) have red hair.

The male characters are with 26 (4.1%) without hair, with 172 (26.8%) black-haired, 105 have (16.4%) blonde hair, 179 (27.9%) have brown hair, 75 (11.7%) have gray or white hair and 55 (8.6%) have red hair.

Hair colour of the characters
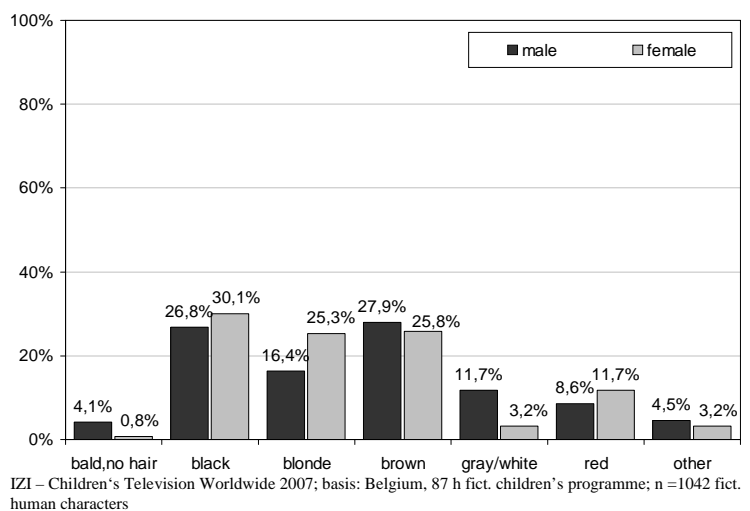
IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1042 fict. human characters

Children's Television Worldwide:

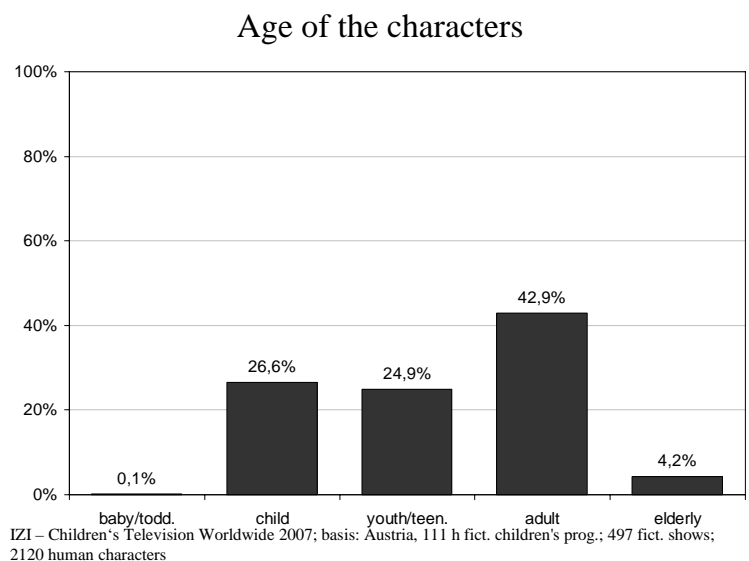## Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television
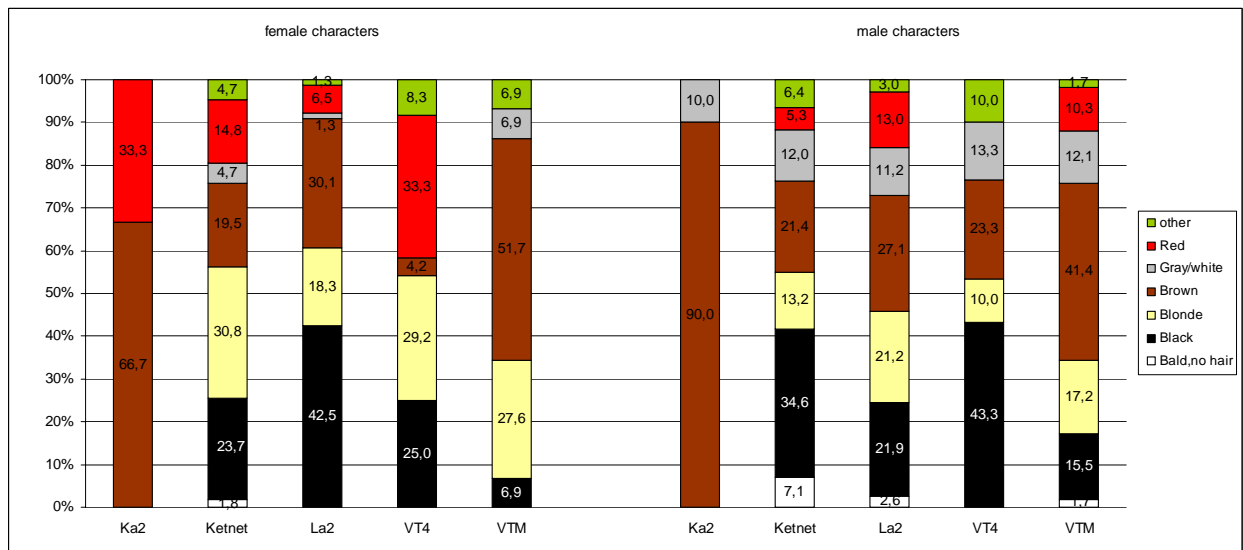
The highest percentage of blonde females can be seen on Ketnet (30.8%), while of brown-haired on Ka2 (66.7%). The highest share of female black-haired had La2 (42.5%). The highest percentages of red-haired females are shown on Ka2 and VT4 (33.3% each).

The highest percentage of blonde male characters appeared on La2 (21.2%), while of brown-haired on Ka2 (90%) and of black-haired on VT4 (43.3%). So, among both sexes Ka2 and VTM had the highest shares of brown-haired characters.

What age are the protagonists?

We coded the age as far as visible or clear from the content. Adult if they have the recognisable characteristics such as acquisition of earnings, role of mother/father etc., or elderly if there are recognisable traits such as role of grandma/grandpa, walks with cane etc.

In terms of age, two larger groups could be found in the sample: 443 (42.9%) are adults and 275 (26.6%) are children. 257 (24.9%) are teenagers. Only one (0.1%) is a baby, and 43 (4.2%) are seniors.

Age of the characters

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Austria, 111 h fict. children's prog.; 497 fict. shows; 2120 human characters

Children's Television Worldwide:

Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Baby/ Toddler		Child		Youth/ Teenager		Adult		Elderly	
Egypt	8,7%	Malaysia	64,3%	Hungary	58,1%	Argentina	62,0%	Argentina	12,0%
Kenya	6,7%	China	52,5%	Netherlands	42,9%	Brazil	54,9%	Norway	9,3%
Netherlands	6,1%	New Zealand	49,2%	Israel	41,6%	Cuba	48,6%	Brazil	8,8%
Cuba	4,1%	Germany	44,5%	Australia	40,3%	Egypt	47,7%	Canada	7,1%
UK	3,0%	Austria	44,1%	USA	37,8%	UK	46,7%	Syria	6,0%
China	1,8%	Hong Kong	43,7%	South Africa	36,7%	Belgium	42,9%	Kenya	5,7%
Israel	1,6%	Kenya	40,4%	India	36,4%	Canada	42,8%	Slovenia	5,4%
Germany	1,1%	Syria	36,1%	Slovenia	35,1%	India	37,1%	Egypt	5,0%
Austria	1,1%	Slovenia	34,1%	Hong Kong	31,8%	Norway	34,0%	Germany	4,9%
Canada	1,0%	Netherlands	32,2%	Norway	27,9%	Kenya	32,2%	Austria	4,9%
New Zealand	0,5%	USA	31,2%	Syria	26,5%	Syria	31,3%	South Africa	4,5%
South Africa	0,5%	Canada	29,8%	Belgium	24,9%	Australia	30,4%	China	4,2%
Norway	0,5%	UK	29,5%	Germany	24,7%	Malaysia	30,2%	Belgium	4,2%
USA	0,3%	South Africa	29,5%	Austria	24,6%	South Africa	28,7%	Cuba	3,7%
Brazil	0,2%	Norway	27,0%	New Zealand	24,0%	USA	28,4%	Hungary	3,4%
Belgium	0,1%	Israel	26,8%	China	22,1%	Israel	25,9%	Malaysia	3,2%
Slovenia	0,1%	Belgium	26,6%	Brazil	19,6%	New Zealand	25,9%	Australia	3,1%
Argentina	0,0%	Australia	26,0%	Canada	19,2%	Slovenia	25,3%	Netherlands	3,1%
Australia	0,0%	Egypt	25,5%	Cuba	18,9%	Austria	24,6%	Israel	2,8%
Hong Kong	0,0%	Cuba	24,7%	UK	18,5%	Germany	24,1%	India	2,5%
Hungary	0,0%	India	23,9%	Argentina	18,0%	Hungary	23,1%	UK	2,3%
India	0,0%	Brazil	15,9%	Kenya	15,0%	Hong Kong	22,7%	Hong Kong	1,8%
Malaysia	0,0%	Hungary	15,2%	Egypt	13,2%	China	19,3%	USA	1,8%
Syria	0,0%	Argentina	8,0%	Malaysia	2,4%	Netherlands	15,6%	New Zealand	0,4%
total	**1,6%**	**total**	**33,9%**	**total**	**29,3%**	**total**	**30,6%**	**total**	**4,1%**

Belgium is way below the average regarding its numbers of babies, children and teenagers. On the other hand it is above average regarding the adult characters shown and about average with its elderly people. It seems that Belgium likes to tell its stories in children's television with adults and not so much with children and teens.

Children's Television Worldwide:
Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Gender Perspective: Females are more often children and teens, males more often adults and elderly

Out of the female characters none is a Baby or Toddler, 116 (30.9%) are children, 135 (35.9%) teens, 109 (29.0%) adults and 14 (3.7%) seniors. 1 male character (0.2%) is a Baby or Toddler, 144 (22.5%) are children, 122 (19.1%) teens, 334 (52.3%) adults and 29 (4.5%) seniors. So, there seem to be more mature males than females in Belgian children's TV.

Age of the characters

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1042 fict. human characters
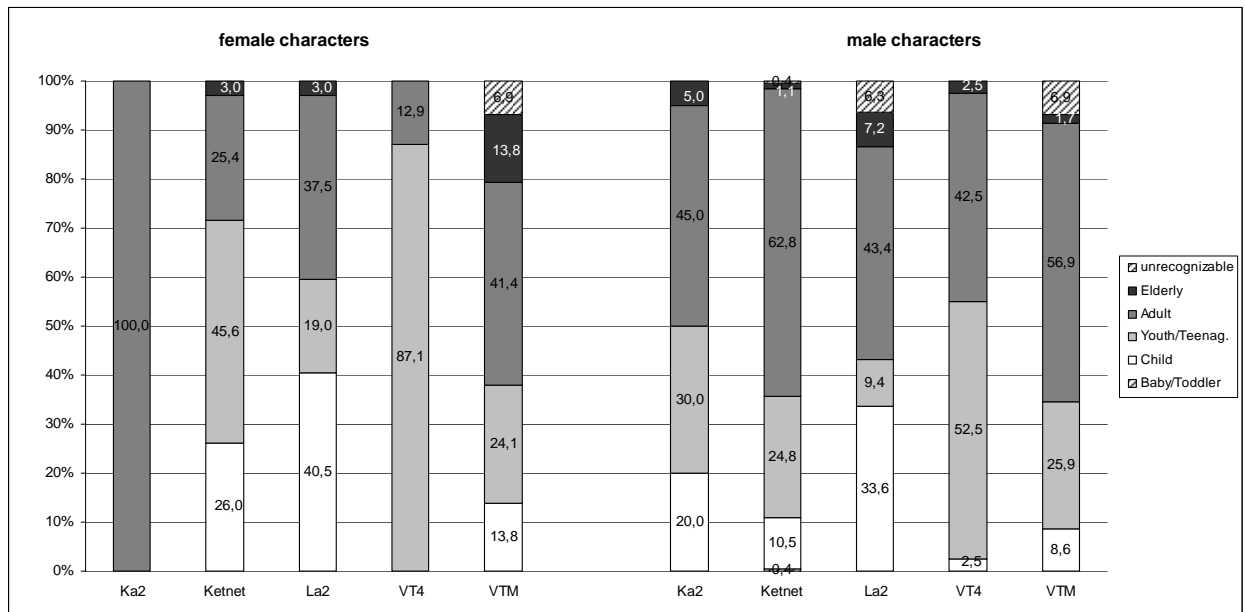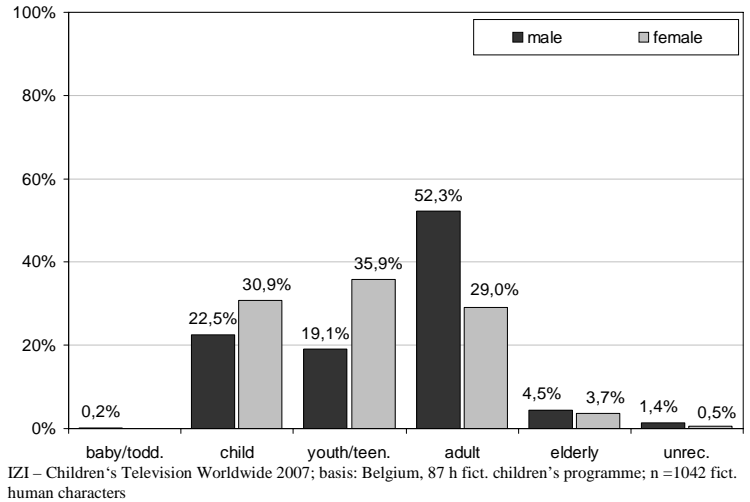
There are no female babies, while the highest percentage of female children was counted on La2 (40.5%), and of female teenagers on VT4 (87.1%). Ka2 tells its stories – at least in this sample – only with female adults (100%). The highest share of female elderly humans appeared on VTM (13.8%).

The only male baby was shown by the channel Ketnet (0.4%), while the highest percentage of male children appeared on La2 (33.6%), and of male teenagers on VT4 (52.5%). The highest share of male adults could be seen on Ketnet (62.8%) and of male elderly people on La2 (7.2%).
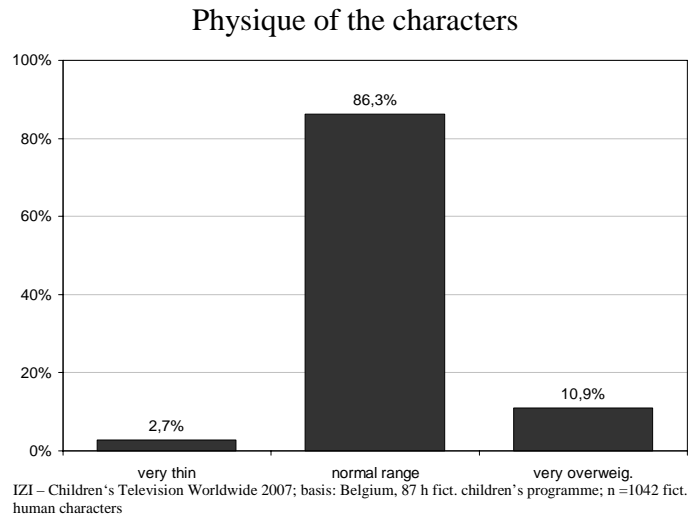
Children's Television Worldwide:

Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Physique of characters: What weight or shape does the main character have?

We coded if the body of the main character is in the normal range or the authors want to make clear that here is an overweight or very thin body.

1009 (86.3%) of the sample are of average weight. 29 (2.7%) of the characters were very thin, and 134 (10.9%) very overweight.

Physique of the characters

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1042 fict. human characters

very thin		normal range		very overweight	
Australia	27,5%	Israel	97,7%	Argentina	14,0%
UK	27,4%	Hong Kong	97,1%	Kenya	12,7%
Norway	18,6%	Hungary	94,2%	Germany	11,1%
New Zealand	18,1%	South Africa	92,7%	Belgium	10,9%
Syria	17,9%	Netherlands	92,6%	Austria	10,9%
Germany	14,0%	Brazil	91,2%	Canada	10,7%
Austria	13,9%	USA	91,1%	UK	8,9%
Egypt	11,7%	Malaysia	90,5%	China	7,9%
Slovenia	11,3%	Cuba	88,9%	Norway	7,4%
Kenya	10,2%	India	88,8%	Malaysia	7,1%
China	8,1%	Slovenia	88,2%	USA	7,1%
India	6,1%	Canada	86,5%	Egypt	7,1%
Cuba	4,9%	Belgium	86,3%	New Zealand	6,5%
Brazil	4,2%	China	84,1%	Cuba	6,2%
Argentina	4,0%	Argentina	82,0%	Netherlands	5,9%
Canada	2,8%	Egypt	81,2%	South Africa	5,4%
Belgium	2,7%	Syria	78,6%	India	5,1%
Malaysia	2,4%	Kenya	77,1%	Brazil	4,7%
Hungary	2,4%	New Zealand	75,4%	Australia	3,7%
South Africa	2,0%	Austria	75,2%	Syria	3,6%
USA	1,9%	Germany	75,0%	Hungary	3,4%
Netherlands	1,5%	Norway	74,0%	Hong Kong	2,5%
Israel	0,6%	Australia	68,8%	Israel	1,7%
Hong Kong	0,4%	UK	63,7%	Slovenia	0,5%
total	**9,1%**	**total**	**84,1%**	**total**	**6,8%**

The thin characters in Belgian children's TV are with a proportion of 2.7% below average, the overweight people are above average and the normal ranged humans are about the international average.

It should be positively marked that there is a relatively high percentage of overweight main characters in Belgian children's TV which probably is closer to reality than in many other countries.

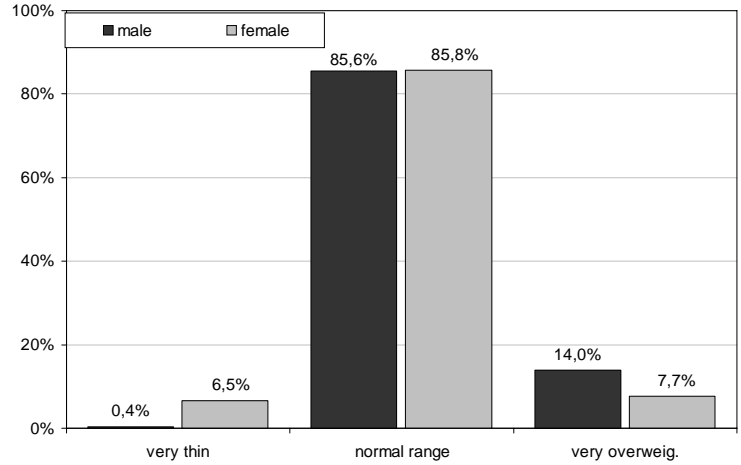# Children's Television Worldwide:

Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Gender Perspective: Thin girls and overweight boys

Out of the female characters 345 (85.8%) are in the normal range, 26 (6.5%) are very thin and 31 (7.7%) are very overweight.

601 male characters (85.6%) are in the normal range, 3 (0.4%) are very thin and 98 (14.0%) are very overweight.

Physique of the characters

IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Belgium, 87 h fict. children's programme; n =1042 fict. human characters
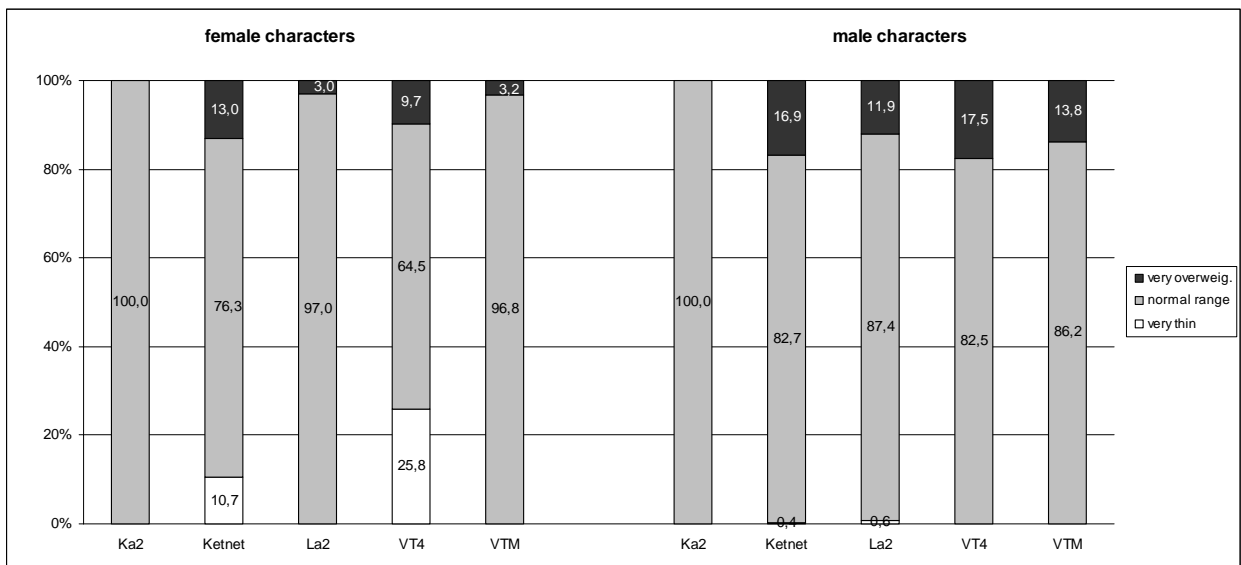
The highest share of very thin females was counted on VT4 (25.8%), while of overweight female characters on Ketnet (13%). Exclusively normal sized females were seen on Ka2 (100%).

There are almost no thin males (only 0.6% on La2 and 0.4% on Ketnet), while the highest share of overweight characters appeared on VT4 (17.5%). Again, exclusively normal ranged males were seen on Ka2. So, the commercial channel K2 is the only channel that shows characters that are of a normal body range for a 100%.

Disabilities of main characters: Nearly not there!

We coded if the character has a clearly identifiable disability or serious chronicle illness (HIV/AIDS, cancer, diabetes etc.) which can be seen obviously or is an important part of character construction.

5 disabled characters are among the recorded and coded characters of the Belgian sample. And these disabled persons are male. This is certainly not commensurate with reality.

99.6% of all characters are without any recognizable disability.

Children's Television Worldwide:
Gender Representation in Belgian Children's Television

Summary[3]

In the specific context of Belgian broadcasted children's television, most of the international results are reconfirmed. Although Belgium has a specific media spectrum with public and private broadcasters, there is a specific children's broadcaster from 8.00 am till 8.00 pm where high quality domestic children television is broadcasted.

Almost half of the analysed programmes are fictional. Most of these fictional shows are animation. 39.8% of the fictional shows are produced in Belgium, and on public TV always more than one third is domestically produced. And while the commercial TV stations Ka2 and VT5 show exclusively internationally produced program for a 100%, at least 43.3% of VTM programs is domestically produced.

In Belgium's broadcasted children's television more than half of the characters are males, and one third is female. Remarkable is that two of the three analysed private broadcaster have a better gender representation than the public broadcaster.

As showed in the global results, also in Belgium protagonists are with 66% more than half of the time male. Amongst all antagonists, more than 22% are female. Most of the character types are human (57.8 %). Of the total amount of characters, 72.8 % are humans, 4.1 % monsters or mythical creatures and 19.3% are animals. Most of the represented characters are in a group and within that, there is almost gender-equality. Female characters are less represented as loner than male. And female and male characters are almost equally represented as duos, too.

Most of the characters are represented in the private sphere. More than 60% of the characters are hierarchically positioned as equal. Only 5.3% of the female characters appear as leader and 12.5% male characters are positioned as leaders. 86% of the human characters are white. Also female characters are represented mostly as white. The few Asian and Blacks are twice as often females. They also have most of the time black, brown and blonde hair. Females are more portrayed as blonde and red than males. Specific in the Belgian context is how often adults are represented in children's programmes. And we get to see more male adult characters than female. Most characters are represented with an average weight, but when characters are portrayed as very thin, we see that 6.5 % are female and 0.4% male.

Only 0.4% of the represented characters are obvious disabled and all of them are male.

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[3] By Dr. Sofie Van Bauwel, Marieke Rodenburg.