

On newspapers in Germany

Although the majority of editors-in-chief of the largest German daily newspapers are still men, it is possible to state that the women's presence in such positions is higher than in other European countries with similar characteristics.

Indeed, we can highlight the appointment of the Swiss journalist Ms. Judith Wittwer as co-editor-in-chief of the progressive daily newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in July 2020.¹

Two months earlier, in May 2020, Ms. Barbara Junge took over as head of the ecologist German newspaper "TAZ", relieving the former male editor-in-chief, Mr Georg Löwisch. In addition, along with this, Ms. Junge is expected to split her role with another woman starting from August 2020: Ms. Ulrike Winkelmann.

Historically, we can cite the case of Ms. Marion Dönhoff, who was editor-in-chief of the Hamburg-based liberal weekly newspaper "Die Zeit" since 1968 and had a significant influence on the intellectual life of her time².

The genders of the chief editors among the seven largest German newspapers by circulation³ are shown in Table 1 below:

TABLE 1

| Newspaper | Circulation (Q4 2019) (IVW) | Political alignment | Publishing group | Gender editor-in-chief (name) |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Bild | 1,182,699 | Right-wing, conservatism | Axel Springer SE | Male (<i>Julian Reichelt</i>) |
| Süddeutsche Zeitung | 279,079 | Progressive liberalism, centre-left | Südwestdeutsche Medien Holding | Male and Female (<i>Kurt Kister and Judith Wittwer</i>) |
| Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ) | 192,770 | Centre-right, liberal-conservative | FAZIT-Stiftung | Male (<i>Gerald Braunberger, Jürgen Kaube, Carsten Knop and Berthold Kohler</i>) |
| Handelsblatt | 87,560 | Economic and business newspaper | Handelsblatt Media Group | Male (<i>Sven Afhüppe</i>) |
| Die Welt | 66,957 | Conservative | Axel Springer SE | Male (<i>Ulf Poschardt</i>) |
| Die Tageszeitung (TAZ) | 42,113 | Left-wing, ecologism | Taz, die Tageszeitung Verlagsgenossenschaft | Female (<i>Barbara Junge and Ulrike Winkelmann</i>) |
| Neues Deutschland (ND) | 19,010 | Left, democratic socialism | Neues Deutschland Druckerei und Verlags | Male (<i>Wolfgang Hübner</i>) |

¹ Previously, Ms. Wittwer was also editor-in-chief of the Swiss newspaper *Tages-Anzeiger*.

² Please note that "Die Zeit" is a weekly newspaper and is therefore outside the scope of this report. In any case, at present its editor-in-chief is a man, the German-Italian journalist Mr. Giovanni Di Lorenzo.

³ The data comes from the quarterly circulation report published by the German Audit Bureau of Circulation ("IVW") relating to the fourth quarter of 2019. Further information on the survey can be found on the IVW website: <http://www.ivw.de/>. For this Report, such information has been used as collected by the German media information website "Meedia": "The circulation figures for daily and weekly newspapers: "Bild" and "Welt" again lose more than 10%, "Die Zeit" increases thanks to massive digital growth", <https://meedia.de/2020/01/17/die-auflagen-bilanz-der-tages-und-wochenzeitungen-bild-und-welt-verlieren-erneut-mehr-als-10-die-zeit-legt-dank-massivem-digital-plus-zu/> [Date consulted: July 18th, 2020]

In the light of the data contained in Table 1 above, some facts can be inferred:

- 1) There are 3 women at the top of the 7 daily newspapers with the highest circulation in Germany, 2 of them being co-editor-in-chief of the same newspaper, “TAZ”.
- 2) All major women-led newspapers share a leftist ideology.
- 3) In addition, all female editors-in-chief share leadership with someone else —a man in the case of “Süddeutsche Zeitung”, another woman in the case of “TAZ”.
- 4) Regarding the other daily newspapers, the case of the liberal-conservative “Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung” (“FAZ”), led by a committee of four editors, none of whom is a woman, is particularly noteworthy.
- 5) Finally, Germany's leading economic and business newspaper, “Handelsblatt”, is run by a man as editor-in-chief, Mr. Afhüppe.

As a final point, it should be noted that in 2019 (1) 40,25 million Germans aged 14 years and older read newspapers several times a week during leisure time, meanwhile (2) 11,36 million German did it several times a month and (3) approx. 10 million once a month or less than once a month.⁴ With a population of over 80 million people, these figures give us an idea of the potential influence of the German press.

⁴ According to Statista, a company that consolidates data on several topics from various sources: “Number of persons reading newspapers during their free time in Germany from 2016 to 2019, by frequency” <https://www.statista.com/statistics/383150/leisure-newspaper-reading-frequency-germany/> [Data consulted: July 20th, 2020]. Further information on the survey can be found on the VuMA website: <https://www.vuma.de/vuma-praxis/die-studie/> [Data consulted: July 20th, 2020].