

Analysis of mental illness in the Danish media

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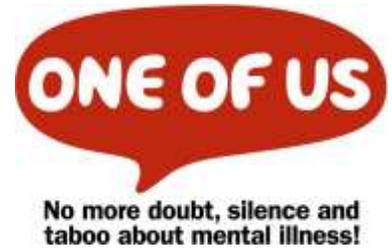
Agenda



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- Short presentation of presenter
- Mental illness in the Danish media:
Selected results from an external (Infomedia) analyses conducted for ONE OF US based on daily mediawatch in 2016
- How do the media representation of mental illness affect people with lived experience? Results from a ONE OF US – panel survey in June 2016
- Important changes in conditions for the media the last five years:
Signals from a report from the Danish Publicist Club in 2015/2016
- Questions and debate

The media's role countering prejudice and myths – obvious challenges



- The public gets a large part of their knowledge about mental illness from the media
- Stories about people with mental illness and crime are regarded as 'good stories' by journalists and editors
- Stories in the media have an impact on how people with mental illness are met or perceived by others → can lead to fear to disclose or to seek help

Vision of ONE OF US



No more doubt, silence and
taboo about mental illness!



To create a better life for all by
promoting inclusion and combating
discrimination connected to mental
illness

Partners behind ONE OF US



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Mandate:

Focus on knowledge, attitudes and behaviour related to anti-stigma

No mandate for:

Critiquing structure, services and financing services for people with mental illness

1. phase: 2011-2015

2. phase: 2016-2020

Find us here: www.one-of-us.nu



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The screenshot shows the EN AF OS website homepage. At the top left is the EN AF OS logo. To its right is a navigation menu with links for Nyheder, Arrangementer, EN AF OS, Din Region, Viden og værktøjer, Presse, Kontakt, and English. Below the logo is the tagline: "Væk med tavshed, tvivl og tabu om psykisk sygdom!". The main content area features a large image of four young people talking. On the left side of this image, there is a text box with the heading "Bryd tavsheden" and the subtext "Nyt online unge undervisningsmateriale er blevet lanceret". A "Læs mere" button is located at the bottom left of this text box.

Find os på facebook

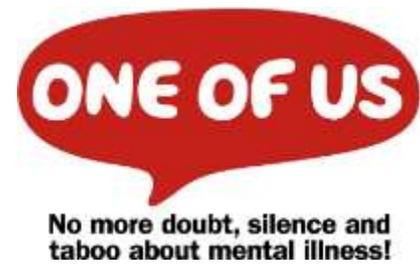
The screenshot shows the EN AF OS Facebook page. At the top left is the EN AF OS logo. To its right, it says "EN AF OS" and "39,369 likes". The main post text reads "Psykisk sygdom kureres ikke med tavshed." Below this text is a "Liked" button. Underneath, it says "You and 108 other friends like this" and shows a row of profile pictures of people who liked the post.

ONE OF US panel

Online survey panel of approx. 2.000 people with lived experience of mental illness

The screenshot shows a Facebook post from the EN AF OS Fællesskab page. The post features a black and white image of a person's legs and feet, with the text "For få er klædt på til at tale om deres problemer." Below the image, it says "Det første skridt er tit det sværeste. Ta' det i hånden." The post has a "Synes godt om" button and a "Følger" button. The page name "EN AF OS Fællesskab" is visible at the top of the post area.

At least three important reasons to work with anti-stigma



1. **Sensational and negative portrayal of mental illness in the media**
 - e.g. "Mentally ill commit more murders"...
2. **Mental illness affects more people**
 - and more people get a psychiatric diagnosis
3. **Spread the message of recovery**
 - break with the story of chronicity "once mentally ill, always mentally ill"



Statements in ONE OF US related to the media

➤ **Spread the knowledge about mental illness and recovery**

It is possible to recover for many – “once mentally ill – always mental ill” is a myth!

➤ **Increased self-regulation in the media**

Sensational and dramatic stories in the media about people with mental illness contribute actively to stigmatisation

➤ **Visibility of discrimination in daily life**

Discrimination is a fact/problem – and part of existing laws and regulations that have an impact on opportunities in everyday life



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Strategy in ONE OF US related to the media

Three important tracks in ONE OF US:

- Dialog with the media based on **documentation** of the imbalance in the media
- Contributes with information and offers **positive stories** to the media about persons with lived experiences with mental illness
- Cooperation with and teaching **students** at media and journalist educations





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Special analysis of media coverage of mental illness in 2016 - by Infomedia

Objective:

- To identify how, where and how often mental illness is covered in the media
- How this coverage develops over time
- To what degree the media coverage is positive, neutral or negative
- Which themes and organisations are dominant in the coverage of mental illness

Analysis based on 4.508 articles and segments in 2016 – from the daily ONE OF US media watch



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Big news stories

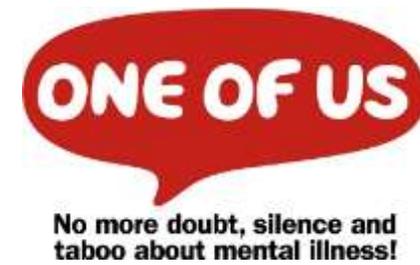
- The coverage of mental illness was in large part dominated by single cases about murder og violence
- Especially the cases about murder og violence directed towards staff in mental health facilities caused a political and professional debate about resources for mental health services
- Single cases mentioned in Ritzau telegrams – often distributed broadly and quoted to the letter without further argumentation or data (crime, violence, murder)

”Murder triggers conflict about compulsory treatment in housing facilities”

”The government wants to lock up the mentally ill”

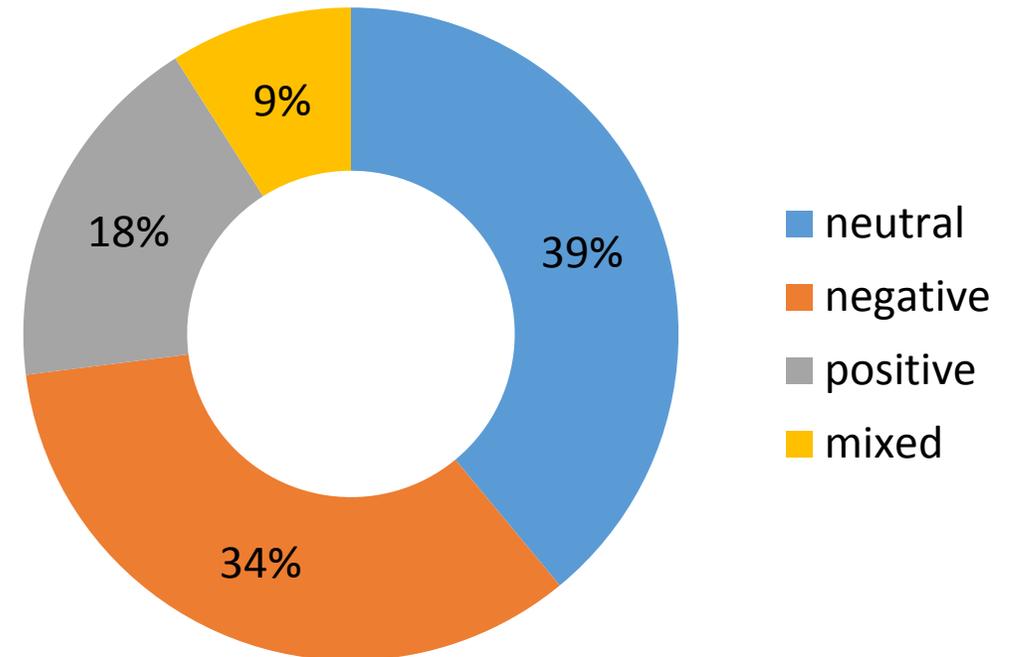
”Putting their lives at risk working in housing facilities”

The tone of the articles/segments



- **Neutral:**
Descriptive, focused on specific treatments, potential positive tone
- **Negative:**
Specific cases about violence, murder, substance abuse, etc. – the crime directly linked to the perpetrator’s mental health. One sided and stigmatizing.
- **Positive:**
Focused on “the good story”

TONE



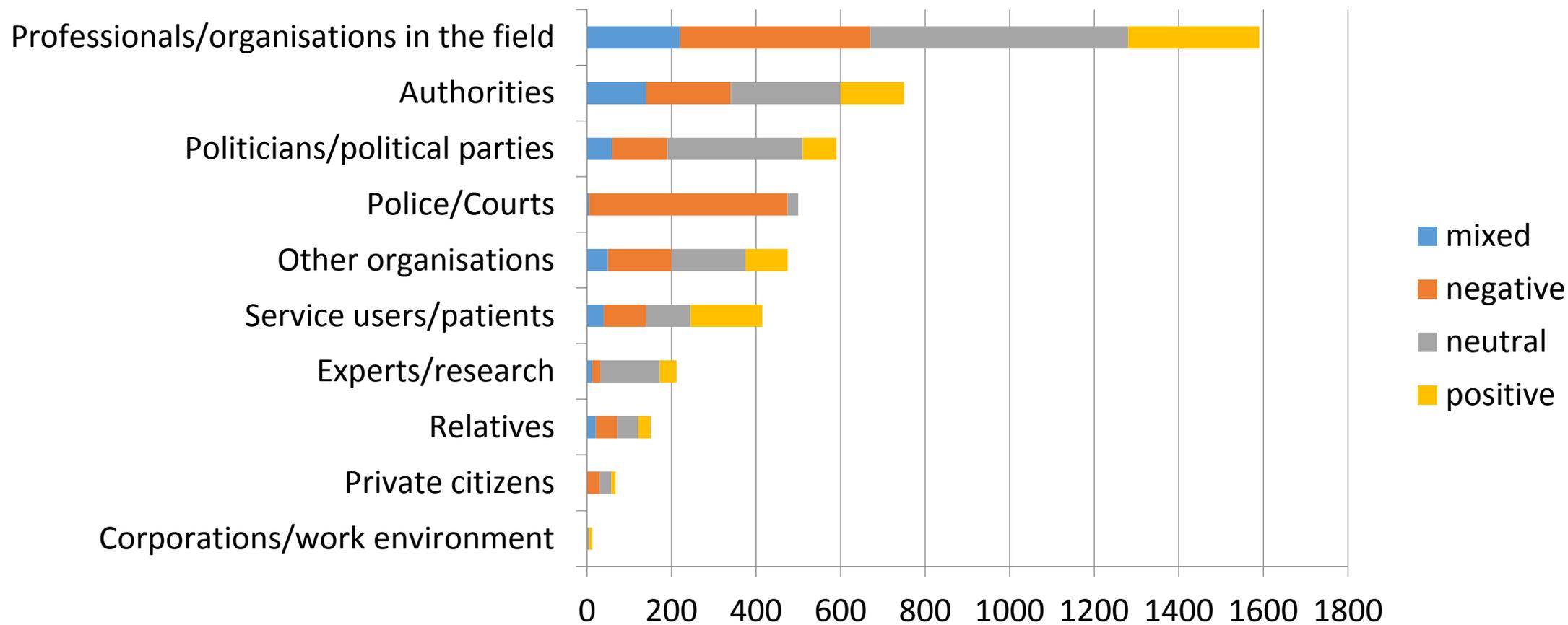
Themes of the articles/segments

- The main part of the media coverage was founded in the theme "specific treatment and the mental health system" - This was the area where the analysis exposed the largest part of the positive stories
- The theme "mental illness" also had a large share of positive coverage – Here were the professionally based stories and personal stories
- The theme "crime" was almost entirely dominated by negative stories
- Research plays only a very small part among arguments – potential area of improvement!



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Agents and tone of the articles/segments



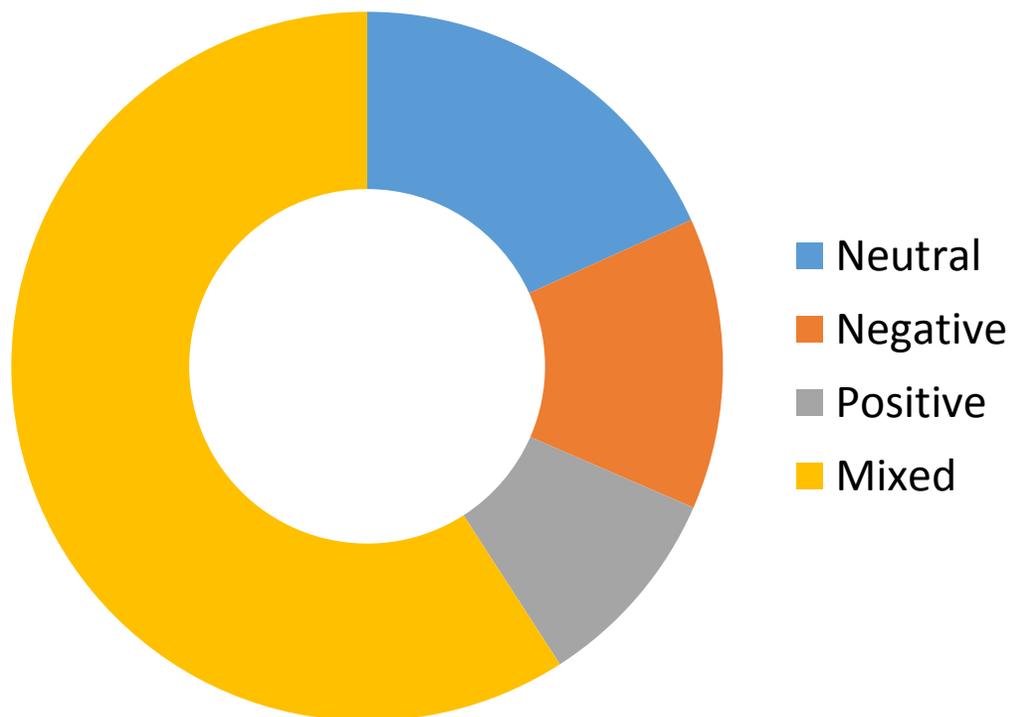


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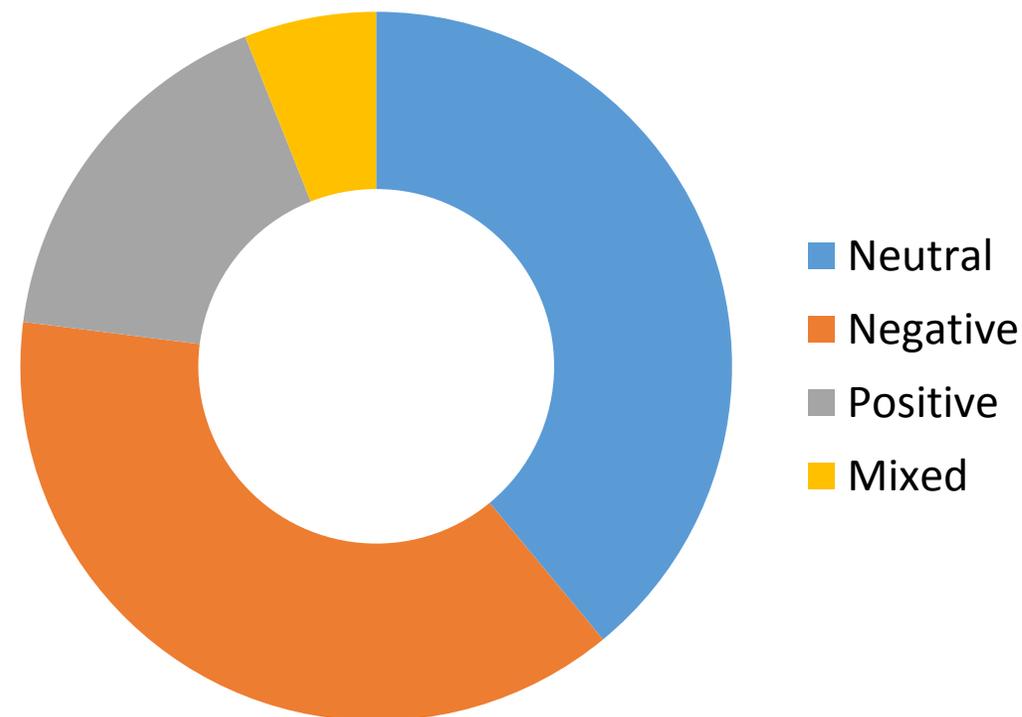
Profile tone and angle

- significance of organisation perspective

At least one organisation mentioned



No organisation mentioned



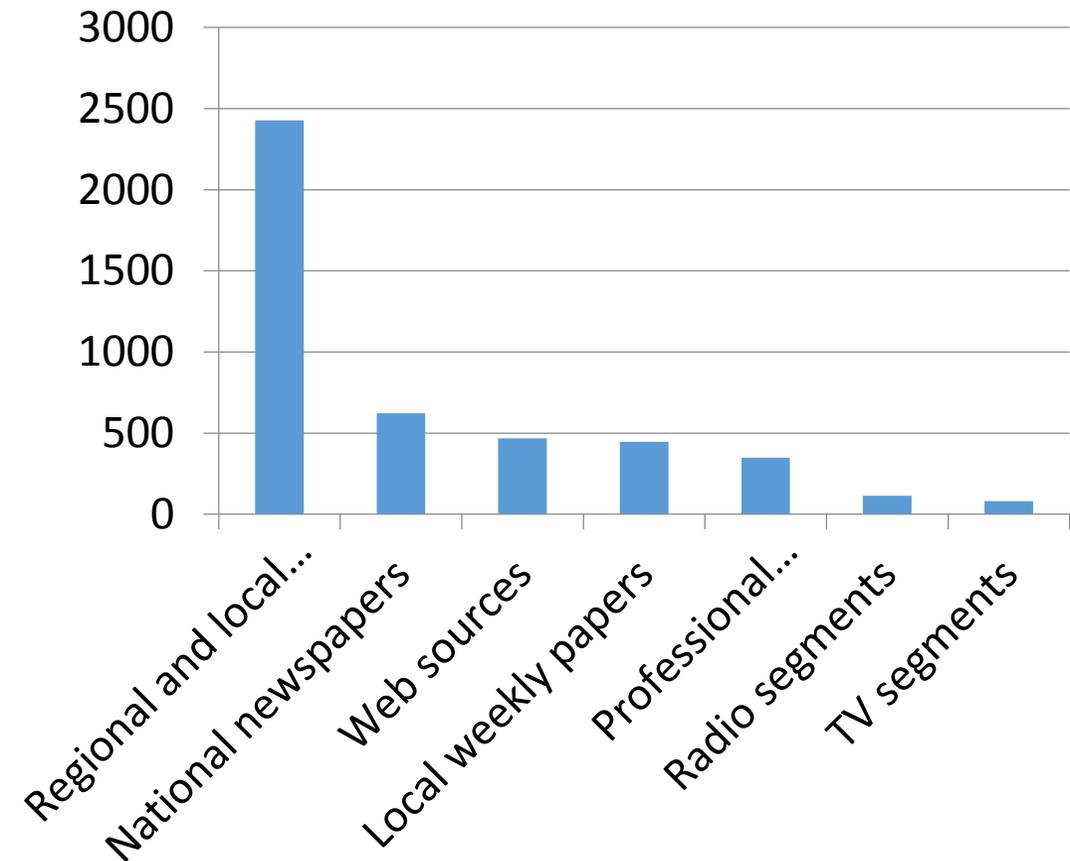
In 30% of the articles/segments at least one organisation is mentioned



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Type of media

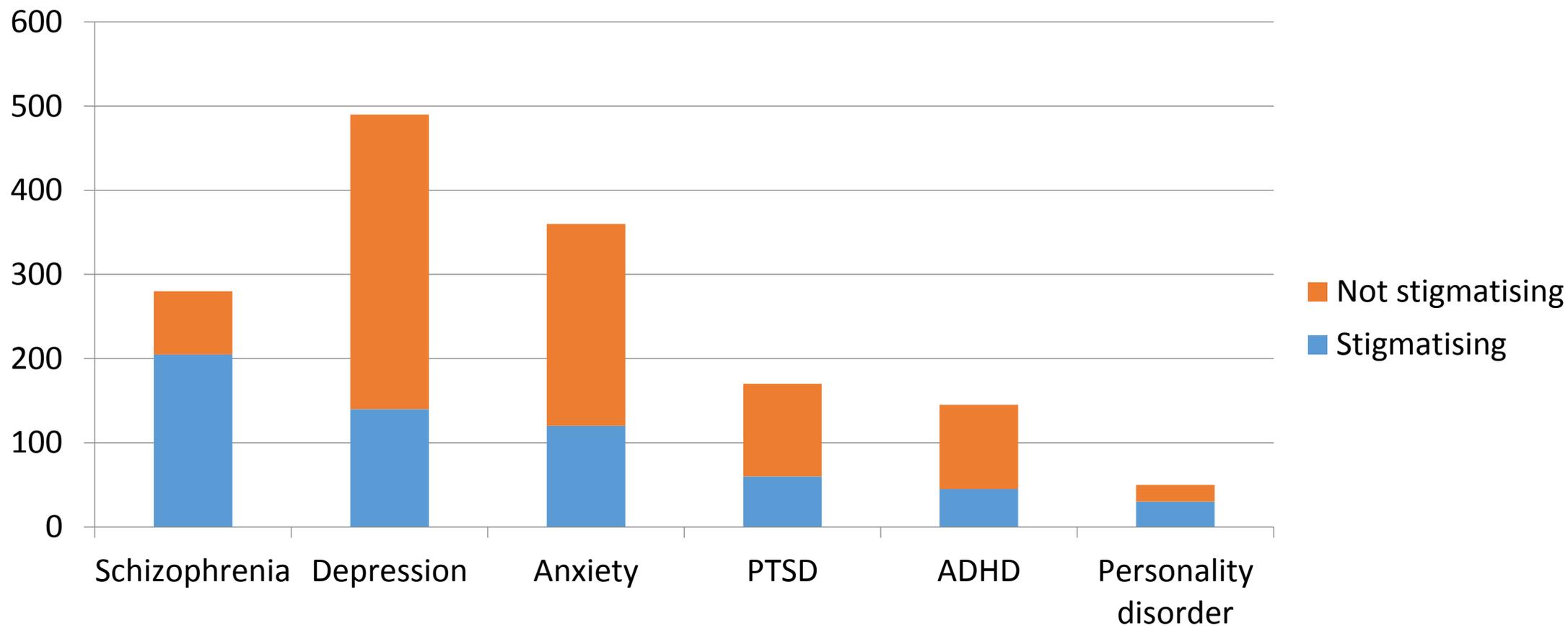
- Local weekly newspapers had the largest share of coverage of mental health services
- Crime was mainly covered by web sources and tv
- National newspapers and professional journals had the largest share of coverage of mental illness





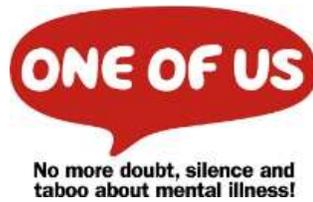
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Coverage of selected diagnoses



Selection of data from a ONE OF US panel survey from May 2016

- among people with lived experiences about the media and mental illness



- 65% experience that the media in general present a negative image of mental illness
- How does the majority of negative media stories affect you as a person? (more than one option possible):
 - 51% become sad
 - 48% feel stigmatised
 - 38% become angry
 - 31% mood affected

Only about 18 % respond that they either do not care or do not take it seriously
- 89% have the opinion that the way the media portrays mental illness to a "high degree" or "to some degree" maintain prejudice about people with mental illness



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The panel survey also focuses on the following:

64% have noticed that the media in the last two years has exposed more positive stories about and with persons with lived experience with mental illness

Among those that has noted more positive stories:

- 72% respond that this to a higher or minor degree has had an impact on their own openness about their actual or former mental illness

69% of these persons have further shared the more positive stories on social media

The survey supports that the strategy to stimulate more positive stories in the media has had some positive effect



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General trends in the media and media conditions

- selected messages from a report 2016 from The Danish Publicist Club

- More than 80% of the journalists are concerned about the quality in the Danish news media caused by lesser time to produce stories
- More than 60% consider that the social media trivializes the public debate

Critic of:

- the tendency to focus too much on single cases
- lack of thoroughness
- too often use other journalists' sources
- lack of quality in the education for journalists



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Questions and debate

- How to challenge the media profile?
- Could we all advocate better together and in a way that stimulates a more balanced presentation of people with mental illness?
- Positive stories of people with mental illness promote de-stigmatisation – but realism is important when promoting identification and empathy
- How do we best cope with the objective conditions for the media and maintain an anti-stigma and ethical approach?

Cooperation with the Danish Broadcasting

– Denmark's public service canal

1. TV-program "How mad are you?" Maj 2012
2. TV-campaign "Invisibly Ill" spring 2014, including "World's maddest job interview"
3. Professional feedback and assisted in the recruiting process for the TV-programmes i 2015 about loneliness, suicide and a forensic psychiatric ward
4. Recruitment of casepersons for radio- and TV-segments, web articles, etc.

2,7 million Danes watched at least one program in "Invisibly ill". Quality score high - ranking from 4,1-4,5 (5 is max)

As a result of the positive responses from the public the Danish Broadcasting produced other programmes to challenge taboos about loneliness and suicide.

Furthermore a documentary about a forensic psychiatric ward in 2015 and in 2016 a documentary about a child- and youth psychiatric ward



Debat: Fælles udfordringer og indbyggede dilemmaer

- **Profilen i mediebildet:**

Medieovervågningen fra Infomedia viser klart, at historier om psykisk sygdom og kriminalitet ofte udløser historier om mangler eller svigt i systemerne – så ændring af mediebildet i mere positiv retning er også afhængig af især psykiatriens håndtering af vanskelige personsager. De positive historier er i langt højere grad solo-historier.

- **Fortællerroller:**

Politikere, fagforbund, bruger- og pårørende organisationer har en legal og vigtig rolle ifht at italesætte behov for forbedringer mht systemernes samspil, tilbud, finansiering, m.m. – men kommer derfor også til at præge farvningen af mediebildet især i forhold til de negative historier

- **Afstigmatisering:**

Fremmes især af de positive historier – derfor er det vigtigt at ikke bare EN AF OS har det som en oplagt satsning – men at vi alle er opmærksomhed på værdien af at få egne gode historier i medierne.

Dilemmaet kan være at finde den rette balance: Solstrålehistorier kan være med til at bryde tabuer – men nogle har svært ved at identificere sig med disse, medens andre netop reagerer med håb og åbenhed.

- **Mediernes objektive vilkår**

Kampen om opmærksomheden er stor for os alle – og at undgå at tempokrav ifht nyheder og historier ikke tiilsidesætter soberhed i fremstillingen

Seer vurdering af TV-programmerne i ”Usynligt syg”

EN AF OS fik fortaget to målinger efter udsendelserne i april-maj 2014:

- En repræsentativ befolkningsundersøgelse (juni 2014)
- En undersøgelse i EN AF OS panelet, hvor alle har erfaring med psykisk sygdom. (maj 2014)

I begge undersøgelser blev benyttet den samme liste med både positive og negative svarmuligheder.

Undersøgelserne viste begge:

- Der var uendelig få svar i de negative kategorier (f.eks. Ekskluderende)
- Et helt entydigt og klart sammenfald i begge undersøgelser med følgende tre topscorere:

- ✓ **Tankevækkende**
- ✓ **Oplysende**
- ✓ **Spændende**

Konklusion:

Hvis man prioriterer at producere kvalitetsprogrammer, hvor der også er høj etik omkring eksponeringen af enkeltpersoner, der har egne erfaringer med psykisk sygdom, så kan man på en positiv måde nå både befolkningen og de som selv er berørt!



Væk med tavshed, tvivl og tabu om psykisk sygdom!

Infomedias måling af omtaler af EN AF OS i tilknytning til DR's satsning "Usynligt syg" i foråret 2014

