



ROME & BIRMINGHAM – A DIALOGUE

1. Exchange Partners

	Partner 1	Partner 2
Name and Surname	Anita BHALLA	Laura ZANACCHI
Job title	<i>Head of Public Space Broadcasting</i>	<i>Producer</i>
Organisation / Media	BBC United Kingdom	RAI Radio3 Italy

2. Summary

We looked at the efforts of broadcasters in Rome and Birmingham to reach out to diverse audiences. We talked to the main broadcasters and to community of ethnic minorities settled in the counties for many years. In the Italian public broadcasters there is a limited number of working people from ethnic minorities, on screen and in the newsrooms. We talked with some of the few journalists of ethnic minorities in the public digital TV channel Rai News 24. All of them worked in RAI Med, a satellite TV that broadcasted every day the translation in Arabic language of the news and television shows dedicated to Mediterranean and middle east countries. This channel closed in 2012 and now there isn't another one like Rai Med, in Italy. There are few foreign journalists in the channels Rai Radio1 and only one in Radio3 (Marina Lalovic). All of them are included in the foreign staff. Few others are free-lance in private TV Italian situation appears like England 30 years ago. In comparison the migration between Birmingham and Rome is quite different: Britain's immigration goes back decades, the Italian is more recent, ten years old. But the numbers of immigration are important: there are 5 millions of migrants living and working, paying taxes to the Italian government. They are citizens. The recent migration however needs to be considered when looking at how broadcasters deal with new communities. Anyway, the recent migration cannot be considered and excuse to say that migrants are not skilled enough for the career in the media, because this is not true especially for young people (the so-called "second generation", G2).

This was our conclusion:

- By diversity we mean an acute consciousness and greater awareness of difference determined by factors such as culture, ethnicity, colour, national and regional affiliation, gender, sexuality, religion, language, age and disability

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- These differences are major determinants of our lives and provide the foundations on which our identities are constructed
- Diversity adds a valuable aesthetic dimension to our lives, broadens the range of our moral sympathy and imagination and encourages us to engage in a process of critical self-analysis
- Diversity is fundamental to the working of a mature, open and democratic institution

3. *Biographies of the authors*

Anita Bhalla is currently Head of Public Space Broadcasting for the BBC. Her media career has been varied; from presenting local radio programmes she went on to present Channel 4's Eastern Eye and other national programmes. At the BBC she developed the Asian Network in the West Midlands (this is now a national digital service). Her next move was to BBC Television News, she became one of the first regionally based bi-media correspondents when she became the Community Affairs Correspondent for Midlands. During this time she produced several documentaries for network television and national radio as well as daily news reports. She was President of Circom a European wide group of public service broadcasters. As a trained teacher Anita has had a very varied career working as a Community Relations Officer in Leicester, a Community Worker with the Asian Resource Centre in Handsworth, Birmingham, where she set up and ran one of the first hostels for Asian Women, as well as dealing with wider issues around welfare and social care. She has also worked as a lecturer teaching language and employment skills to Industrial workers in the Midlands, alongside training their managers in effective communications. Throughout her life Anita has maintained a strong commitment to public service and her portfolio in this area ranges from being a member of the Independent Commission on Social Justice, chair of Governors of Grestone Junior and Infant School, Governor of Birmingham City University, High Sheriff for the West Midlands and Chancellor of the Children's University being some of them. Her interest in the Arts includes being chair of the Midlands Arts Centre, Chair of the Creative City Partnership which is a sub group of the Birmingham and Solihull LEP. Anita is also Trustee of the Symphony Hall and Town Hall in Birmingham and a Trustee of the Children's University. Anita has won several awards including the CRE's Race in the Media Award when she won the national Television News Award. In 2009 she was awarded an OBE for her services to Broadcasting and Communities.

Laura Zanicchi - I've been graduated in Political Science at the Rome University La Sapienza. I've been working for Radio3 since 1999. In the multi-ethnic school of my son that I adopted in Togo, I belong to the parents' school association that realizes initiatives and projects for social and racial integration. The school is very active in the neighborhood and represents a successful job of cooperation among school, parents, city hall. Good practice of active citizenship have come from this experience of "open school" for other schools in Italy. For my radio I realized an audio documentary about the first multi-ethnic chorus of popular music for children in Rome and I'm going to realize an audio documentary about UndeRadio, the radio of Save the Children Italy against discrimination in Rome, Naples and Turin. I work in the staff of Fahrenheit, the Radio3's radio main show of the afternoon, that broadcasts and analyses cultural events and news through interviews to novelists, experts, journalists and people involved in the topic. Fahrenheit discuss of the racism in the language and the wrong use of the words about the minorities in the media, as we did about the insults and the offences to our black politicians or football players. Last year I participated to the training workshop for journalists "Civil talk" about the media language used for disability, gender and sexual orientation, immigration, poverty and marginalisation, prostitution and trafficking, religions, mental health.