

MEDIANE

Media in Europe for Diversity Inclusiveness

September 2014

**MEDIA PRODUCTION &
DIVERSITY INCLUSIVENESS**

**GUIDELINES FOR ACTION
& CHECK LIST**

CMFE

COMMUNITY MEDIA FORUM EUROPE



Authors – REPORT by Stefan TENNER, MEDIANE Coordinator, *Community Media Forum Europe (CMFE)* and Larry FERGESON, Secretary of the Board, *Community Media Forum Europe (CMFE)* & General Manager Cyprus Community Media Centre (CCMC). This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union and the Council of Europe. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union or the one of the Council of Europe.

(These recommendations are proposed by participants during the encounters on media production and diversity inclusiveness in Spain & The Netherlands, September 2013 and Croatia, April 2014)

MEDIA PRODUCTION & DIVERSITY INCLUSIVENESS – THE MAIN CHALLENGES

- Not having the space and time to cover different side of the issues
- Comfort / The routines - When we are used to work in a certain way it's difficult to start thinking differently from another perspective / laziness on the journalist side
- Consciousness - If the journalist doesn't care about women's problems his/her story news wouldn't be inclusive
- "mono cultural" approach to diversity
- Deficit on knowledge on some themes
- Personal limitations: language
- Lack of Empathy for Diversity Issues
- Lack of education in schools for understanding diversity & multiculturalism
- Own cultural / social background and networks
- Lack of confidence / Fear of failing / Prejudices
- Language and self-esteem
- Oneself can be the biggest limit
- Lack of time to in depth work
- Laziness of journalists
- Problem of stereotype about minority to have one position and Media reporting pro or against that group without understanding
- Prejudices from minorities towards media
- Limits of the sources
- Journalist schools don't focus on diversity, so after their studies journalists don't care
- Not seeing the importance of cross-generational work & sharing responsibility
- Lack of innovation from editors
- Budget / Access to funding resources
- Marketing the ideas to search a wider audience
- Expectations of your audience
- Lack of effort on the editors-in-chief-level / Policy of the media company / Hierarchy in the office
- Stereotypical coverage of mainstream media
- Limited resources: time, financially, human resources to develop programmes, projects & trainings,... with communities
- Market-oriented media are not focused on minorities

MEDIA PRODUCTION & DIVERSITY INCLUSIVENESS – GUIDELINES / CHECK LIST

Preparing a media report

- Get informed about the real situation and keep updated with knowledge: Read (reports, books, etc.) and continue studying to know what new things are being released about the subjects
- Talk to experts, politicians, and leaders in order to find solutions and make proposals
- Use alternative media
- Crowd funding and access to the web can overcome financial limits
- Establishing a network through lobbying and contacting multipliers through personal contacts and relations
- Broaden your network of contacts to include representatives from all communities - This is applicable in newsrooms, for picking up broader range of stories and to ensure experts from those communities are *not kept solely for diversity stories*
- Community and 'minority' media groups are good sources of stories and offer fresh voices.
- To avoid simply reporting diversity, ask whether the story has a wider universal interest.
- Ensure you set a story in context; what's the big picture?

Producing / Editing a media report

- Treat the subject in a way that can be acceptable by the Chief Editor or presenting your idea in a flexible way to obtain an agreement to develop it; find a clever approach to the subjects so that they can be accepted; Tell the editor that: an inclusive approach to a subject can increase the audience
- 'Making strange': Inserting an unexpected element into a normal situation; or disrupting an expectation. For instance, having a person with disability presenting the weather, or a (macho) man advocating against violence against women - it breaks the familiar, making it strange and forcing a moment of reflection
- Give Minorities a chance to set the topics themselves
- If you are involved, find always the other side!
- Getting people more involved on a local level
- Double check information isn't based on stereotyping when covering sensitive stories.
- Challenge assumptions when you hear them.
- Include different media formats in order to give voice to a wider and more diverse audience; the internet and social media generally is easier for people to access.
- Consult with local journalists 'on the ground' to verify national stories.
- Are 'minority' interests asked to speak for themselves?
- Don't exclude certain voices because of a difference in language, there's always a way round it.

For your next media reports

- Build long-term relationships with women, minority communities in order to make them trust in your work and approach; have a better/richer access when you need to cover their issues
- Use Internet and Social media to keep in contact and show that your interest for the minority group issues is real - improve your access and deepen your approach
- To raise consciousness (ex: gender consciousness) - it is necessary investing in training courses and education
- Questioning yourself, your work process, your prejudices, and your way to approach the subjects
- Find allies in the media company
- Connections and relations between mainstream and community media
- Media education specifically for people from minorities offered by public TV/radio
- Scientific/statistical monitoring of public Radio/TV
- Peer feedback about the inclusiveness of stories / Peer support in the form of feedback from colleagues at weekly meetings
- Database of interviewees / Database of journalists
- Database of sanctions/rewards
- Launch database on television on European / National level
- (More) Partnership and less competition
- Link with other like-minded colleagues to gain support for promoting different stories and angles.
- Encourage a broader range of people into the newsroom / classroom: mentoring them will often help them to flourish.
- Encourage change in the sphere you work in; one person can often make a big difference.
- Offer different experts from the norm on mainstream stories, both in newsrooms and classrooms.

MEDIA & DIVERSITY INCLUSIVENESS – WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

Today, in Europe, too many people are not very visible; in fact some remain invisible, on screen!

Even worse, when these same groups appear in the media, they are confined to very specific roles and consigned to limited topics. Thus, as different groups are barely visible, they are being denied their voice in the democratic debate!

This is why the joint European Union (EU)/Council of Europe (CoE) MEDIANE – *Media in Europe for Diversity Inclusiveness* - programme has chosen to focus on the media's abilities and capacities to include diversities of today's European societies in the production process as well as in the design of media content, in particular of news that contributes to inform the public opinion.

Building upon various recommendations of the CoE bodies on media pluralism and diversity expression, the achievements of the 2008-2010 antidiscrimination campaign and its joint EU/CoE programme MARS – *Media Against Racism in Sport*, MEDIANE aims at considering diversity and non-discrimination as on-going angles of media coverage. Through this approach, MEDIANE wants to encourage truly inclusive modes of media content design and production.

To do so, MEDIANE offers the media and their professionals (journalism students and trainers, journalists, media managers, etc.) the opportunity of committing themselves to sharing professional practices, either during European or thematic encounters or on one-to-one basis, through European Exchanges MEDIANE activity. Beyond this sharing of experiences, these professionals will be invited to build a Media Index on diversity inclusiveness. This index shall be a tool, for the media and media professionals, to monitor their capacities to include diversity in the design and production of media content. It is also intended to serve as a decision making tool in favour of truly inclusive and intercultural modes of media content design and production.

Through the sources they use, the subjects they select and the treatment they choose, the media influence the agenda (what to think about) and public perception (how to think) of contemporary debates. This is why the Council of Europe considers truly inclusive information - where people can participate as witnesses, players, producers etc. – as crucial for democratic participation and social cohesion.

Some key figures about the problem!

In Europe, only a quarter of news items feature women, even though they account for over half of the European population (GMMP, 2010)

Immigrants represent around 10% of the EU population (*Eurostat, 2011*); they appear for less than 5% of the main actors in the news (*Ter Wal, 2004*)

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people account for roughly 6% of the population of the United Kingdom but are represented as less than 1% on screen

Still in the UK, 20% of the population is disabled, but they are less than 1% to be represented on British TV (*CDN 2009-10 Progress Report*)

In Belgium (CSA, 2012), persons with disabilities still appear in secondary roles and only as subjects in relation to disability

Still in Belgium, women and ethnic minorities appear mostly in secondary roles or as extras in the information (CSA 2012, AJPB 2011), rarely as an expert or a spokesperson

In France (CSA, 2008), while ethnic minorities account for 19% of actors in all TV news, they are represented more heavily in sports and music stories, than in political, social and economic news: more than a third, compared with less than 10%.

In Europe generally (Ter Wal, 2004), these minorities appear less than 5% in political coverage, with women (GMMP 2010) account for less than 5% of actors in the economic or scientific news

... Something to add?