MEDIANE

Media in Europe for Diversity Inclusiveness

September 2013

JOURNALISM PRACTICE & MEDIA DIVERSITY INCLUSIVENESS

GUIDELINES FOR ACTION

FEP EFJ | European Federation of Journalists

(These recommendations are proposed by participants during the encounter on ethics and journalism practices in Greece and German)

JOURNALISM PRACTICE

- **Adopt /create concrete guidelines/terminologies for journalists** to cover certain issues, e.g. reporting on Islam, correct terminologies when addressing certain groups, criteria for mentioning one's nationality in reporting.

- **Journalists should apply the same standards when writing online or using twitter**. WAN-IFRA has developed best practices guidelines on content moderation while the Belgian Press Council has developed guidelines on moderating forums.

- **Journalists need to understand that the different perspectives exist** and take this into account in their reporting.

- **Segregation of different communities and different media**. The voice of minority groups can only be heard through their own media / community media. There is no mainstreaming in the media on these issues.

- **Ensure the independence of media by avoiding political influence and pressure** on media agenda. But this is a complex issue regarding the media ownership.

- **Improve the role of press councils and their structures**. For example, press council's decision on issues related to gender, minority rights, refugee, immigrants, etc. How do press councils make the decision? Who sit in its decision-making body?

- **Avoid stereotypes and ethnic profiling** in media report

- **Take into account the background** (e.g. gender, ethnic minority, etc.) when interviewing experts

- **Journalists need to understand their audience** and reflect the reality in their reporting

- **Develop detailed guidelines** (including terminology) on covering specific issues, e.g. race, migrants, etc.

TRAINING & AWARENESS RAISING

- **Organise awareness-raising and educational campaign for media professionals**, journalists' and media organisations, as well as the readers.

- **Offer more family friendly services to journalist to help them achieve work-life-balance**. A few media houses offer childcare to journalists in media house although it helps. But this service is offered to female journalists rather than male. In Germany, only 2 % of German men take responsibility for their children when working.

- **Raise awareness of journalists on issues on ethnicity** discrimination

- **Journalism education emphasises too much on practical skills** rather than ethics. A balance needs to be achieved.

- **Training** should be provided for journalists.

- **Make mentoring available to young people** at workplace

- **Raise awareness of a non-discriminatory use** of wording/terminology among journalists

- **Organise informal 'meetings' or social events providing a networking opportunity** for journalists from different backgrounds discuss issues matter to the profession, e.g. ethics, working conditions, best practices, etc.

- **Extra trainings are needed for journalists covering specific issues** such as far right politics, ethnic minority, migrants, etc.

- **Publicise good practices among media professionals** and shaming bad practices

MEDIA & UNIONS PRACTICES

- **Carry out monitoring projects to measure the performance** of the media in this area. E.g. The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) helps to highlight the place of women in the news whomakesthenews.com).

- **Journalists and media organisations should make use of social media** which helps identifying/highlighting discrimination. Because mistakes get noticed much more quickly on twitter. Content can be enhanced when readers interact and ask questions to the journalist.

- **Journalists' unions are ageing, they need to re-vitalise the unions** and reach out to young journalists and engage them in union movement

- **The future of journalists' unions very much relies on recruitment** (reaching out to young members), diversifying its members, making the unions "sexy" and attractive enough for young journalists.

- **Journalists' unions should focus more on recruitment** in order to get more young members.

- **Integrate journalists with a minority background** into mainstream media and their assignments

- **Improve newsroom diversity through equal employment policy** or traineeship scheme that provide opportunities for less advantages journalism students from a minority background

- **Lack of support from and engagement of media managers and owners** to develop policies to tackle diversity and inclusiveness in the newsroom and news content. Such policy should be developed.

- **Leaders** (in unions, newsrooms or media companies) **should take responsibility by participating in meetings, trainings and conferences on diversity** and inclusiveness issues so that these issues are less marginalised and are part of the organisations' priorities and agenda

- **Encourage people from different backgrounds to stand for decision-making positions** (in unions, media companies, etc.)

- **Investigate the composition of newsroom staff** (to achieve a balanced representation in terms of age, gender, ethnic background, etc.) and reflect on it through its policy

- **(Unions) support networks for different networks of journalists**, e.g. freelancers and journalism graduates or young journalists

- **Journalists' unions should support newcomers** to the industry and journalism graduates

- **Create special committees** to respond to all journalists' needs

- **Unions to develop policies and innovative ways to support media practices** to sustain diversity inclusiveness

- **Carry out discussion with media owners on the need to develop diverse and inclusive content** through independent editorial decision-making. This can be led by journalists' unions.

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.

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?

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.