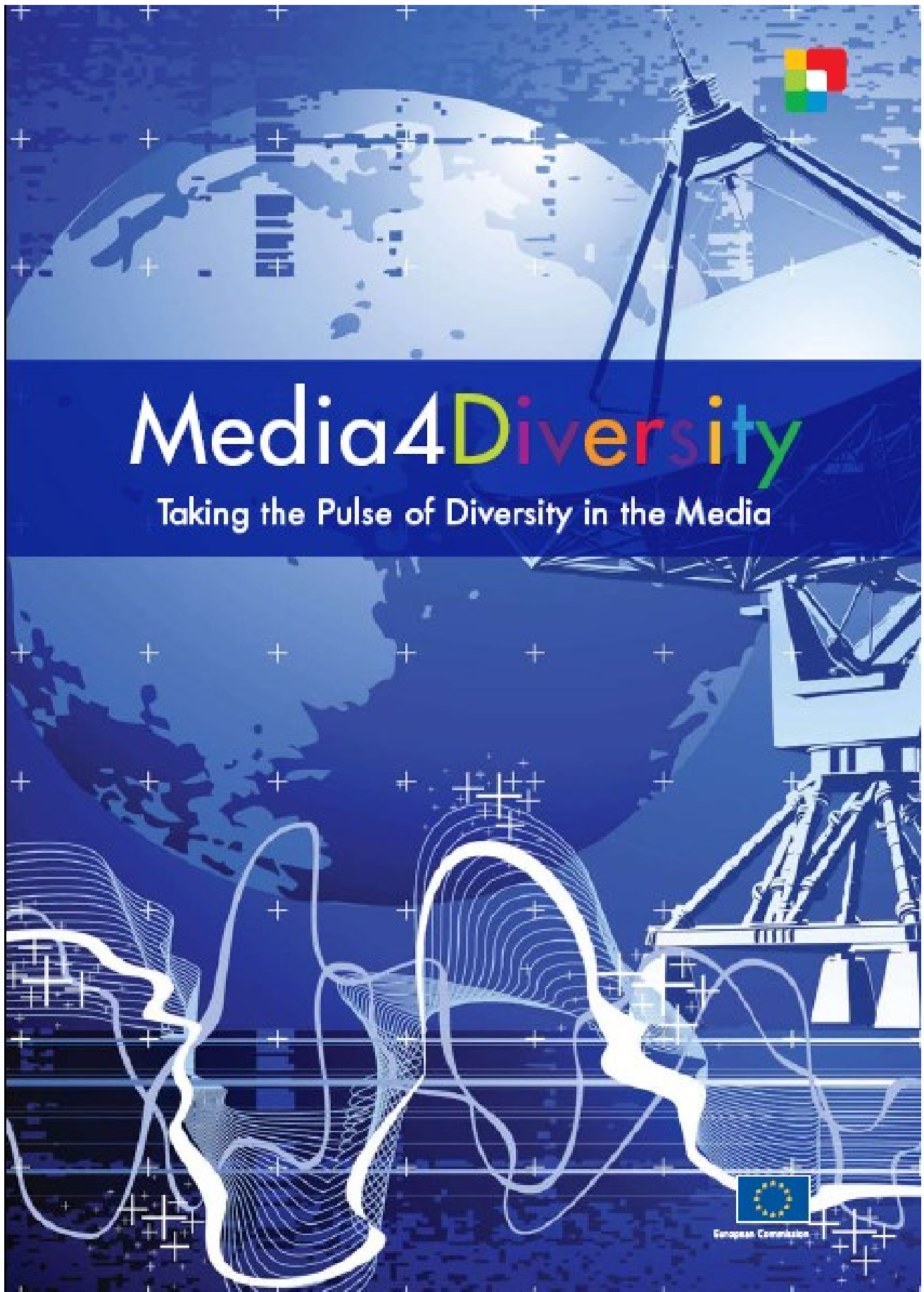# RECOMMENDATIONS

**From 'Media4Diversity: Taking the Pulse of Diversity in the Media -
A Study on Media and Diversity in EU and EFTA countries'**

Media4Diversity

**Taking the Pulse of Diversity in the Media –
A Study on Media and Diversity in EU and EFTA countries**

Recommendations

The Study on Media & Diversity identified over 150 initiatives by, or about, the media that countered discrimination and addressed diversity in a responsible way, across EU and EFTA countries, from 2003-2008. From the 150, 30 selected examples have been included in the final publication together with analysis and recommendations for future action at the EU and national level – for policy makers, the media industry and civil society. The study was conducted by the Media Diversity Institute, Internews Europe and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), and commissioned by the European Commission.

This document contains the recommendations section of the Study.

The full study can be downloaded as follows:

PDF version in English available from:

http://www.media4diversity.eu/files/Media4Diversity_Publication_Web.pdf

PDF version in French available from:

http://www.media4diversity.eu/files/Media4Diversity_Publication_Web_FR.pdf

Free copies of the Study Publications can be ordered in English or French from:

http://bookshop.europa.eu

info@media-diversity.org

Recommendations

The recommendations that follow are grounded in both good practices and gaps that the study identified and are addressed first to **all stakeholders** in the field of diversity in the media, then to **Media**, **Civil Society Organisations** and **Policy Makers.**

The methods for promoting tolerance and diversity through media in Europe strongly depends on the social, economic and political structures of each country, as well as on their media governance structures, which vary widely from one country to the other. This Study thus does not propose that every Public Service Broadcasters (PSB) station and CSO across Europe should imitate the ones mentioned in this Study, or that every country in Europe should have the same media legislative framework. Rather, that these initiatives should help to inspire other broadcasters, CSOs and policy makers in Europe to take actions adaptable to the social, economic, political and cultural realities of their respective countries.

1. What all stakeholders can do

1.1. See the opportunity and responsibility
A more **balanced and faithful representation** of Europe's diversity will reap a dividend of **greater social cohesion and security, public trust in the media, and new avenues for income** through journalism and production that has greater resonance with its audience.

1.2. Step up the Dialogue
Encourage and participate in balanced, inclusive **national and European dialogues**, platforms for reflection, debate, cooperation and partnerships **between policymakers, civil society organisations and media organisations** on the role of media in reflecting diversity and combating discrimination in order to identify emerging issues and opportunities and exchange best practices.

1.3. Be Comprehensive
Take into account all grounds of discrimination – national, racial or ethnic origin, also specifically related to Roma, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, youth and old age, as well as gender and multiple discrimination – **both as a whole and individually** in relation to the specific objectives of any media diversity initiatives.

1.4. Take Aim... and Measure
When designing any media initiative in order to promote diversity and challenge discrimination in an organisation or across organisations, **establish and communicate clear and quantifiable goals** (such as minimum targets in diversity recruitment, minimum annual training hours for the workforce, and concrete targets for audience increases from groups facing discrimination) and ensure **that progress is monitored continuously and fully evaluated once an initiative has run its course.**

2. What Media can do

Media include privately owned media outlets, public service broadcasters, community media organisations, production companies as well as news agencies across broadcast, print and online formats.

News Production/Content Production

2.1. Bring Diversity into the Mainstream
Existing and new regular media programming and productions should **aim at reflecting the diversity of society and feature fundamental rights and diversity in all its forms**. The media can do a great deal to promote a more realistic image of the groups facing discrimination and the long term issues that they deal with.

2.2. Use All Platforms and Formats
No formats for media content productions dealing exclusively with issues of diversity need be overlooked - **examples of excellence exist across all media types and production genres.**

2.3. Marshal the Talent Out There
Create in house Directories of Contributors from groups facing discrimination with the help of discriminated communities and civil society organisations, designed to help locate people from these groups in order to participate as reliable and consistent sources of information, opinion and expertise as well as in the production of programmes. Media that seek to properly address diversity issues should actively reach out, find and relay the voices of civil society that do not have the resources to be heard next to the impressive Press Relations facilities of politics, industry and other power centres.

2.4. Follow and Support the Demand
Respond to a growing demand for higher quality journalism standards and programming with ethical values that foster social cohesion and inclusion. Identify commercial opportunities in improved coverage of these issues and in reflecting and targeting an increasingly diverse European society.

2.5. Expand Your Audience
Support and develop new formats and **use new media and technologies** (particularly subtitling and multi-lingual versioning) in order to have an impact on the new generation of media consumers and to **reach out to and include audio & visually impaired as well as ethnic and cultural minorities**.

2.6. Monitor Inside and Verify from Outside
Establish internal and external structures involving managers, journalists, editors and trade union representatives in order to **review the quality of reporting diversity**, encourage best

practices and improve news-room performance. **Cooperation with civil society organisations and specialised diversity media could help strengthen independent monitoring of diversity coverage and contribute to increase intercultural dialogue** in Europe and across its borders with organisations such as Unity in the US61. Increased monitoring is especially important during times of crisis (financial or otherwise) due to the fact that societies that feel 'threatened' tend to ignore diversity or worse use groups facing discrimination as scapegoats.

Human Resources

2.7. Reboot your Recruitment Policies

Existing Employment Policies should be first **checked against discriminating procedures**. **Recruitment of personnel at all levels** from minority communities, disabled persons and other vulnerable groups, including from those that are victims of discrimination, should be promoted. Internal procedures should recognise the need and opportunity for such personnel – male and female - to have opportunities for advancement within the organisation. Vulnerable groups should be provided with **adequate access to media facilities**. Finally, debates should take place, when and where necessary, in regards to affirmative or positive action and the establishment of quotas.

2.8. Train, Train, Train!

Train in diversity reporting and in effective ways to overcome stereotypical portrayal of groups facing discrimination. **All personnel will benefit from knowing how to deal with diversity issues and use a fair and inclusive vocabulary**, including executives, content producers, journalists and support staff of media outlets, production companies and news agencies in particular.

2.9. Access and Transfer the Knowledge

Use, disseminate and translate the several existing manuals **for journalists covering issues, terminology and providing guidelines** related to covering migration, relations between different communities, security, asylum policy, data protection and children's rights, as well as related to discrimination based on national, ethnic or racial origin, religion or belief, young and old age, disability, sexual orientation. This can also be facilitated by greater networking efforts among media to exchange good practices.

Organisation/Strategy

2.10. Raise the Standard

Voluntary **codes of ethics should be applied and publicised as clear mission statements and declarations** to avoid all forms of discrimination in reporting as well as reporting based on common stereotypes and prejudices. These codes should also include guidelines helping journalists and media outlets to **denounce hate speech**, especially when it comes from public authorities62. Public Service Broadcasters should continue their efforts to cater to the most diverse audiences and lead in setting programming standards that can shift the balance toward competition on quality rather than exclusively on ratings. Media organisations, which make

extensive use of **news agencies'** services, should urge them to provide content which is grounded in higher quality journalism standards that reflect and ethically address diversity.

2.11. Organise for Diversity

Ensure that internal reviews of editorial practice and ethical matters, such as the **presence of an internal ombudsman/commission or reader's editor**, also take into account as a priority the need to **address diversity issues** appropriately. Establish diversity policies based on preinitiative research, and continue with on-going evaluations of all diversity activities.

2.12. Go European and International

Take part in transnational media diversity projects including programming, twinning arrangements and other activities that will ensure better transfer of knowledge and experience in dealing with these issues. There is a severe shortage of this type of initiatives not only between partners at a European level (e.g. projects that involved PSB from North-western European countries and Central and East European countries), but also at a global level.

2.13. Find Support

Actively search for information about existing funding opportunities for media diversity initiatives from different EU funds and programmes (e.g. European Social Fund, Youth in Action, Lifelong Learning, Europe for Citizens or Culture)

3. What Civil Society Organisations can do

Civil Society organisations include non-governmental organisations, cultural groups, professional associations and institutions, which support the promotion of diversity and the fight against discrimination.

Interactions with Media

3.1. Consult with Media

Before embarking on any media diversity initiative, **consult with appropriate journalists, media experts, academics, consultants, etc** in order to ensure the correct preparation, for instance through feasibility studies, and implementation of projects as well as provide on-going and final evaluation, including the development of general and assessment guidelines.

3.2. Understand Media and their routines

Consider **media training of personnel working on diversity issues** in order to improve their knowledge and understanding of how media, journalism, and their routines and timing work and of how to set up effective media partnerships and strategies to promote diversity.

3.3. Be a Resource

Engage with media and journalism schools as sources of expertise and information for them and to help them design and produce programmes covering diversity issues. Media content produced by CSOs should be of high quality with news and/or entertainment value and it should not be confused with the public relations press release or video.

3.4. Collaborate on Monitoring

Assist in the process of monitoring and establish a framework for working with media to monitor and consider the performance of media in coverage of these issues.

3.5. Adapt content and pay attention to 'transferability' across boarders

Encourage more translation and adaptation of good quality content (as well as handbooks and other resources), on the full range of discrimination issues, which will improve European and international programme sales and raise awareness. At the same time, full attention needs to be paid when an initiative is 'transferred' from one setting to another, since often time it can be irrelevant or worst have a negative impact.

3.6. Build Capacity in Media Diversity

Develop sustainability strategies for all media diversity initiatives (such as initiatives with joint funding from media houses), **exchange best practices** on the implementation of projects with media partners, and **develop guidelines** for choosing partners and contractual staff for media diversity initiatives.

Across the Diversity Spectrum

3.7. Link with other CSOs who do complementary work

Explore networking and partnership opportunities with other CSOs, which have complementary skills or resources that can strengthen planned or existing media diversity initiatives, such as NGOs specialising in training on media relations, programme production techniques and tools. Conversely NGOs that can provide these skills or resources should disseminate more effectively information about these opportunities, for instance through online directories.

3.8. Clarify the Message

Design individual programmes around a clear and defined issue – even while it can be explored through various perspectives and for instance address multiple discrimination – in order to clarify the message and avoid weakening the impact by making it too generic and not enough targeted.

3.9. Link discriminations to their origins

Promote **better understanding of the origins and realities of discrimination**, particularly related to discrimination based upon national, racial and ethnic origin, which is insufficiently present in the public debate in many parts of Central and Eastern Europe.

3.10. Address Multiple Discrimination

Address the gender dimension of discriminations by considering the situation of **both men and women** of each group, as well as **younger and older** members of each group and other possible multiple discrimination.

3.11. Consider Belief

Stimulate awareness that **freedom of religious expression**, in the context of tolerance of all faiths and secular opinion, is **an increasingly important aspect of European society.**

3.12. Open the Horizon

Encourage **co-operation between groups campaigning on different forms of discrimination** – whether based upon nationality, race or ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability, age, religion or belief or sexual orientation – in **developing structures for dialogue with media organisations** on coverage of these issues.

3.13. Find Support

Actively search for information about existing funding opportunities for media diversity initiatives from different EU funds and programmes (e.g. European Social Fund, Youth in Action, Lifelong Learning, Europe for Citizens or Culture)

4. What Policy Makers Can Do

Policy Makers include EU Member States' national authorities, the European Union's institutions, intergovernmental organisations, funding agencies as well as other institutions in Europe, which support the policy framework, training and financing of initiatives related to media diversity.

Policy Level

4.1. Establish the Benchmarks

Facilitate or conduct a mapping exercise of diversity policies as they relate to recruitment (within the media) across members states, with a view to assembling effectiveness data, generating debate and action, and providing benchmarks against which progress might be measured.

4.2. Support the Ombudsperson Role and coordination at a European Level

Create a specialist post – an ombudsperson role – to facilitate dialogue, cooperation and networking and with **responsibilities in programme level priorities** related to diversity with a specific focus on media diversity. The role of the **European Platform of Regulatory Authorities** should be strengthened and coordination with other international associations, such as the **European Audiovisual Observatory**65 of the Council of Europe should be encouraged.

4.3. Increase Legal Awareness

Consult with women and men in the various communities, journalists, media professional groups and media on the **balancing between self-regulation and legislation in contributing to the recognition of diversity through the media**, and ensure that existing statutory instruments, such as Audiovisual Councils, Public Service Broadcasting guidelines and laws or European Anti-Discrimination legislation, are known, **promoted and applied**, for instance through Equality Bodies, and that affirmative or positive action is considered when relevant.

4.4. Use Political Influence

Use the EU's influence to urge Member States to keep up their efforts on the respect and protection of minorities and other groups facing discrimination, and of fundamental rights, if necessary by reminding of the importance of continuing to respect the Copenhagen Criteria or by "naming and shaming" Member States that perform poorly in regard to media and diversity.

4.5. Support a Diverse Media Landscape

Advocate for broadcasting licensing systems that will **facilitate the creation of communitybased/not-for-profit media outlets** run by, but not exclusively for, minority communities.

Programme Level

4.6. Make Longer Term Commitments

Develop longer term funding programmes and plan for follow-up funding for relevant media diversity initiatives. Aiming at strengthening values of social cohesion and inclusion, the impact of media diversity initiatives can only be expected to produce long term and durable effects on society if they are supported on a long term basis.

4.7. Fund Wisely and Relevantly

Give priority to initiatives that address gaps (particularly in regards to grounds of discrimination), **support media productions about/by diversity** as well as within existing programmes, **support mainstreaming**, promotion and dissemination of diversity themes and issues, **build capacity** of media organisations and civil society organisations that undertake such initiatives as well as **enable dialogue** and networking.

4.8. Disseminate Knowledge of Existing Good Practices

Support the creation of a clearing house or "virtual library" where people involved in media and diversity issues are able to consult handbooks and other relevant information on the issues, practices and actors of media and diversity. This study includes an initial list of handbooks for media diversity, but strongly urges policy makers to fund a mapping of the existing literature and the creation of such a clearing house/virtual library.

4.9. Disseminate Knowledge of Existing Funding Opportunities from the EU

A great effort must take place to **disseminate information among all the interested parties in regards to the existing funding opportunities for media diversity initiatives** from different EU funds and programmes (e.g. European Social Fund, Youth in Action, Lifelong Learning, Europe for Citizens or Culture)

4.10. Disseminate Knowledge of Existing Media Literacy Programmes

Support **media literacy programmes** and the creation of a clearing house of existing media literacy programmes for the general public and especially those that can groups facing discrimination take advantage of**.**

4.11. Establish Strategic Associations

Involve all of the 20+ European Media Associations such as the European Newspaper Publishers Association, the Association of Commercial Television in Europe, the Association of European Radios, the Association of Television and Radio Sales Houses, the European Digital Media Association, the European Federation of Magazine Publishers, etc in media diversity projects.

4.12. Commission Research Studies

Support research studies on the negative and positive **impact of media coverage of diversity**, on the **business opportunities for media diversity** including **business models with mixed funding**

(advertising, subscriptions and public funding) for media organisations dealing exclusively with issues of diversity.

Project level

4.13. Reward Good Practices

Support media awards for diversity at national and European levels and measure their impact in order to promote quality and enhance standards in journalism and programming while paying attention to the fragmentation that can result from having many awards covering the same domains.

4.14. Encourage Networking

Support networking projects and dialogue platforms, which **facilitate exchanges of good practices among media diversity projects** in Europe, but also from around the world, especially from regions with longer traditions in such projects. These could be networking projects that involve only media professionals, only CSO personnel, but also aim at strengthening links between both sides.

4.15. Support Training

Encourage the establishment of bursaries, promote training, as well as training-oftrainer projects, using expert journalists as tutors and course designers, on how to cover issues related to migration, asylum seeking, refugees, disability and other groups facing discrimination, organised in cooperation with the NGO sector and aimed at:

- schools of journalism (promoting 'intercultural education' courses),
- mid-career training within media organisations,
- professional organisations of editors, journalists and owners/managers,
- as well as public officials and civil dialogue actors [such as judges, ministry officials and other civil servants] on how to present messages to the press and opportunities to learn from the experiences of other NGOs.