

**Community Media recognized:
Providing social benefit & public value**



During the Covid-19 period, Radio ARA in Luxembourg provided crucial information through its programming in languages not covered by any other media in the country. (Photo: courtesy of Radio ARA)

These are tumultuous times - for community media and community media advocates - and for all. While the community media have convincingly proven that having a **clear niche in the media landscape** does not mean being of limited value, but it rather highlights having a **very**

specific and important value - we continue to identify lessons learnt to share. As experienced by Radio ARA in Luxembourg, the urge and need to cover life-saving messages in the languages needed, propelled their development forward, finding themselves doing life-saving programmes in - at least - 12 languages.

COVID-19 has given community media around the world an opportunity to - forcefully - **document the special value of trusted community communication for behaviour change and transformation in a crisis situation** - and quite a number of decision makers are step-by-step realising this,

Documenting this may be hard, but carrying out **assessments of the value of community media** have been brought forward both in the community media networks in Austria and in Ireland, where research and documentation focus on the social benefit and public value of community media. You will find the articles below.

We also in this newsletter share **the dates of the next CMFE Annual General assembly** to take place in Luxembourg. The local struggle to advance the need for a legislative framework favouring real community media, is presented in the newsletter. The GA & conference will take place in Luxembourg October 9-10, focusing on the enabling environment needed for community media.

In the newsletter we furthermore present **the Irish Annual community media day**, - and the Austrian. And we ask you: "Should we - while celebrating existing community media days - consider a European one?"

CMFE has joined the global GFMD (200 partners from 70 countries) to support and benefit from the potential to test new ideas with partners - and to learn in the process. CMFE has signed up to collaborate around Local and community media and Women and Media - and CMFE are founding members in the GFMD initiative and a part of the **#HoldTheLine** coalition, launching the campaign and petition.

In **Bosnia Herzegovian the OSCE partner of the community media environment**, is favourable towards community media support (see below) and in Switzerland the national association has just successfully concluded their AGM.

This month we are highlighting one of the founding stations of CMFE, the Irish Community Media broadcaster, Near FM.

We also this month present **information of relevance to community media in our other strategic priority areas: (i) Enabling environment; (ii) Visibility and communication and (iii) Action and coordination**. - and in our classifieds section we - as always - share information about upcoming events, new publications for inspiration, and relevant calls. Enjoy!!!

Continue to stay safe !!!

Birgitte Jallo
CMFE President

CMFE Newsletters

Dear subscribers!

The next issue of the CMFE newsletter will be with you mid September!

The newsletter appears 10 times a year, on a monthly basis - except for the months of August and December. Our next issue will focus on

Languages and Community Media

[Judith Purkarthofer](#), the former President of CMFE, will be our guest editor of September's thematically focused content.

[Past newsletters](#)

News from our own CMFE-world

Save the date - Save the date - Save the date - Save the date

CMFE General Assembly & Conference

The CMFE Annual Conference and AGM will take place in Luxembourg on

October 9-10, 2020

Much more information on the thematic focus, travel plans etc - will follow!

Toby Mendel - New Member of the CMFE Expert Group

Executive Director of the Centre for Law and Democracy, an international not-for-profit human rights organisation focusing on the rights to freedom of expression, access to information, to participate and to the freedoms of association and assembly, with a specialisation on law and policy reform.

Works at both the international level on standard setting to support community media and in many countries on the legal and policy framework. Publications include *Broadcasting, Voice, and Accountability: A Public Interest Approach to Policy, Law, and Regulation* (2008, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press) and *Tuning into Development: International Comparative Survey of Community Broadcasting Regulation* (2013, Paris, UNESCO).



[More here!](#)

CMFE strives to root and strengthen our work through collaboration with likeminded organisations

CMFE, new member of GFMD

CMFE has joined the around 200 other member organisations from 70 countries of the Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD) to contribute to and benefit from the platform's work to **support the creation and strengthening of journalism and free, independent, sustainable and pluralistic news ecosystems.**

Its main focus is to ensure proper collaboration as well as an exchange of information and experience among its members with a view to **creating a strong, independent and pluralistic media environment, which contributes to the development of empowered societies.**

CMFE will be active in the GFMD in general in our work to advance the CMFE objectives, and specifically in its working groups on **Local and Community Media** as well as **'Women and Media'**.

[About GFMD](#)

Strengthening an enabling environment

Finally recognizing Community Media in Luxembourg?



Text and all photos: Courtesy of Radio ARA, Luxembourg

After 2 years of struggle, Radio ARA, Luxembourg's only nation-wide operating community media, presented their case on July 7 in front of the chamber of deputies. A reform not only of the state's press funding but also of the funding of "Public Service"-assignments of Radio and TV is being discussed and should be voted in autumn. Luxembourg does not yet recognize the third pillar of the media sector and is under scrutiny because of its lack of media pluralism, its concentration of media ownership and its incapability to represent large parts of the population. In fact, during the last 20 years, the part of Luxembourg's population without the luxembourgish nationality has grown to 50%, many of those not fluently speaking one of the grand-duchy's three official languages and not being represented by any media.



For Luxembourg's Radio ARA the current debates are somehow a last chance. The radio financed itself during the last 15 years mainly through ARA City Radio, ARA's English-speaking morning-shows that funded themselves and the volunteers' program through advertising. This financial engine was closed end of last year due to the rise of English-speaking (and partly state funded) competitors. Jobs are at risk, ARA currently has 12 people working at the radio, mostly on part-time contracts. Important tasks, for example technical maintenance, are fully handled by volunteers. A dramatic and to some extent absurd situation, as Radio ARA is as healthy as never before. 170 volunteers produce 80 different shows in 13 different languages, reflecting the country's diversity like no other medium. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Radio ARA was able to set up a new daily news show in 9 different languages (none of them an official language in Luxembourg), becoming the only source of information for parts of the population and its most vulnerable groups. The program was a huge success and Radio ARA is heading to become more than ever the voice **for** and **of** marginalized groups, civil society, youth- and subculture. But politics has not reacted so far, leaving out community media not only of the pandemic emergency press help, but also again out of the political discussions around

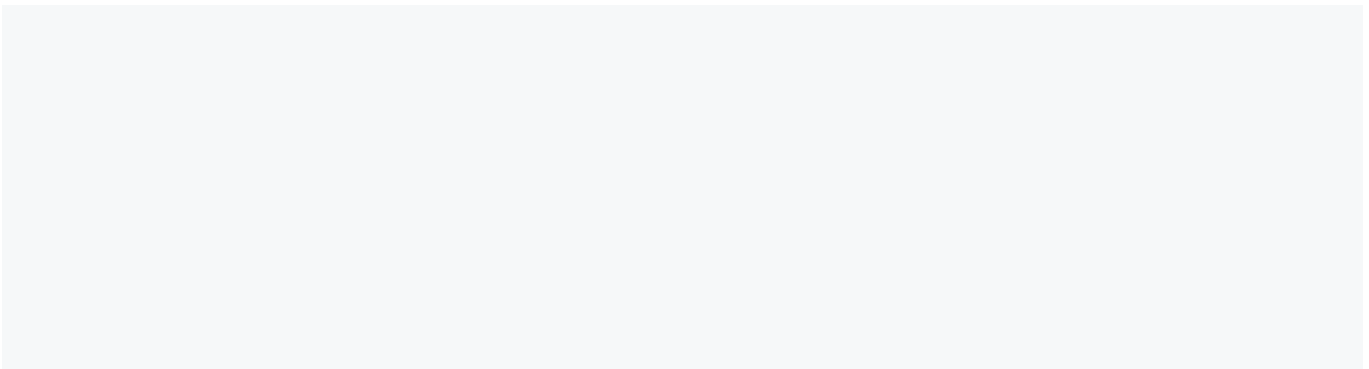
Luxembourg's future media landscape. On July 7th Radio ARA was at last able to present a strong case for community media in parliament, proving their capability to enhance inclusion, media literacy and participation. Recognizing and funding community media would be a real chance to tackle Luxembourg's biggest challenges.



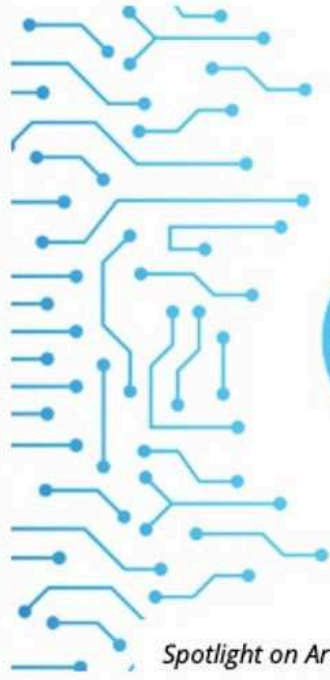
All comes now down to decisions being taken in the liberal lead ministry of media and the Luxembourg chamber of deputies. Who will speak up for community media during a debate mainly focused on the future funding of Luxembourg's quasi-monopolist RTL and Luxembourg's public radio 100komma7. Radio ARA will try to keep the pressure at a high level, knowing that much depends on these decisions.

OSCE AI and freedom of expression initiative (#SAIFE)

Freedom of Expression at Risk?



Impact of Artificial Intelligence



SPOTLIGHT ON

Artificial Intelligence & Freedom of Expression

Spotlight on Artificial Intelligence & Freedom of Expression (OSCE)

Machine-learning technologies, like artificial intelligence (AI), are becoming the main tools for shaping and arbitrating information online. Content moderation and content curation are often an automated procedure, with algorithms and AI deciding on which content is taken down or to whom it is disseminated. While most of these processes and AI-powered tools lack transparency and accountability, as well as effective remedies, their increasing use accelerates existing challenges to freedom of expression, access to information and media pluralism.

The **OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media** has launched a project to put a spotlight on AI and freedom of expression ([#SAIFE](#)).

A [Strategy Paper](#) with preliminary recommendations has just been published, with guidance for further discussions and actions to prevent any intentional or unintentional negative implications of the use of AI on free speech.

As a next step the Office of the RFoM will initiate an **online public consultation** phase in view of further elaborating policy recommendations on how to safeguard free speech when AI is deployed. All information will be available on the website:

<https://www.osce.org/fom/ai-free-speech>

Visibility of Community Media

What is the social benefit of Community Media in Ireland?



In Ireland, one of the statutory requirements to be met by community radio, is to deliver a **social benefit** to the community it serves. To clarify what 'social benefit' is and how it could and should be assessed, [a toolkit](#) has been developed for use by the community radio stations. The toolkit and [“The Community Radio – Delivering Social Benefit”](#) report are the products of more than two years of research, looking in-depth at the community radio sector and how it delivers social benefit to communities. Both reports are

published by the [The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland](#) (BAI) and the national community radio network: [Community Radio Ireland](#) (CRAOL).

The Chair of CRAOL, Declan Gibbons stresses in the promotion of the reports (see link below for more): “The social benefit can be derived through a number of ways, including volunteering, programming, training, engagement, participation, listening or broadcasting. The report aims to support the community radio sector to capture and describe that valuable and often under-recognised work; work our member stations are engaged in every day. It arms us with the tools to gather and document the stories that best demonstrate the essence and ethos of community radio. It is only through demonstrating the social benefit that our sector delivers, that we can capture the true value of community radio and media.”

The reports and all the work around them, will also be used to review and revise the Irish Community Radio Policy, to reflect the changing face of community media, which has evolved considerably since the original policy was first published in 1995.

[More here](#)

New study documents mature and unique 3rd sector providing
voice and building community:

Public value of non-commercial community broadcasting in Austria



Photo: FRO_Petra Moser

By Helmut Peissl

A study by the Austrian Academy of Sciences and COMMIT on behalf of the Austrian Regulatory Authority for Broadcasting and Telecommunications (RTR) and the forum journalismus und medien wien (fjum).

The study was presented on Monday 6th of July in Vienna at the premises of the regulator as is available for download <https://www.rtr.at/de/inf/StudiePublicValue-2020>

The recent study on community broadcasting in Austria was initiated and realised by the community media institute COMMIT and the Austrian Academy of Sciences within the last two years. The authors Josef Seethaler and Helmut Peissl stress with their conclusions that non-commercial broadcasting (the formal term for community broadcasting in Austria) has arrived in the middle of society. Wherever non-commercial radio and television stations operate, they meet the need for local information, communication and community building. They ensure diversity in the local area, represent social nodes, convey critical media competence - and make democracy tangible. They are thus in line with the media

policy objectives of the European Union formulated in the "EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024", which call for the promotion of civil society as an important player in the media landscape.

In Austria the first community radio stations went on air in 1998. More than two decades later, the study leaves no doubt that the 17 non-commercial radio and television stations operating in Austria have developed into an independent institution during the period of their existence, supported by a shared set of values. In other words, they have developed a common identity and a common idea of what goals are to be achieved with the range of programs offered or what communicative functions are to be fulfilled. This "public value" provided by non-commercial broadcasting, this added value for society, cannot be provided in this form by public or private commercial broadcasting.

The analysis of focus group discussions with 120 mainly volunteers from 15 broadcasters show that they are oriented towards five communicative functions that serve the implementation of specific values in programming across broadcasters:

With the **articulation function**, community stations offer people in their distribution areas the opportunity to communicate their concerns and to bring them into public discourse - this is especially true for population groups that otherwise have no voice in public for social, cultural or linguistic reasons ("open access").

The **participatory function** empowers people to go beyond communicative participation to actively participate in shaping their social and natural environment and thus in the political process as a whole.

With the **complementary function**, the radio and TV stations meet the specific information needs of the local population and take up topics that are hardly represented in the mainstream media.

With the **media education function**, they promote critical, not merely technical, media competence both by creating their own media contributions and by raising the audience's awareness of how the media works.

With the (still expandable) **realisation of media-convergent strategies**, a counter-model to the sham participation offerings of commercial online platforms could emerge that enables authentic and responsible participation.



Photo: FRO_Petra Moser

The presentation of the study was followed by a vivid discussion with community media representatives and MP Eva Blimlinger from the Green party and Stefan Schennach from the social-democrat party who furthermore holds the function as the general rapporteur for Freedom of media and safety of journalists with the council of Europe. Stefan Schennach invited the authors to Strasbourg to present the study and their findings with the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe.

Media literacy at the heart of EU media policy... But what about the role of CM?



Photo source: <https://news.media-and-learning.eu/type/featured-articles/european-union-conclusions-place-media-literacy-at-the-heart-of-media-policy/>

During the Croatian Presidency from January to June 2020, the Council of the European Union adopted the “[Conclusions on media literacy in an ever changing world](#)”. These conclusions represent a significant step in how media literacy is viewed at a policy level across the European Union and are an important development that has implications for media literacy policy, funding and visibility.

The conclusions highlight the need to develop new models of lifelong learning in media literacy for all ages and to enable all citizens to learn the skills needed to understand and operate within the highly complex media communication landscape. Cultural institutions such as libraries, museums and cinemas, which have access to relevant infrastructure and which enjoy a high level of trust in society, are encouraged to reinforce media literacy through their services and activities.

CMFE however misses a reference to the important role that [community media](#) play in actively promoting, organising and coordinating media literacy activities and projects.

Ireland just celebrated its sixth annual Community Media Day - highlighting the value of community voices

We would love to know about countries having an annual day, celebrating community media. So far we have heard about two - let us hear from other (European) countries!!!

- **Austria** celebrates "Tag der Freien Medien" on June 15th every year.
- **Ireland** organises a National Community Radio Day every year on the 3rd Friday of June - much more below:

National Community Radio Day in Ireland

The NCRD was started in 2015 by CRAOL to promote and celebrate Community Radio and to acknowledge the work of over 2500 volunteers and Staff involved in the sector.

It is held on the 3rd Friday of June and is hosted by one of our member stations. Ideally it is an event that is held in a public area but due to Covid 19 this year it was on air and online only.

The Craol network is made up of 21 fully licenced and 10 developing Community Stations and 92.5 Phoenix FM based in Blanchardstown, Dublin, hosted this year's event with input from volunteers and representatives from member stations spread across Ireland in a four hour broadcast that was available to all Community Stations to broadcast

National Community Radio Day aims to create a greater awareness among the public of the importance of radio and to urge decision makers to establish and support access to information, access to the airwaves and community access to radio.

It is also a day to keep in mind the unique capacity of Community Radio to promote social inclusion, promote community cohesion and engagement and empower and support community broadcasters nationwide to deliver a social benefit to their communities through active volunteerism, shared resources, good governance, partnership and networking.

This year also saw the launch of two reports **focusing on the Social Benefit of Community Media presented above.**

Action for Cooperation and Change

OSCE in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) on the media situation during Covid-19:

Community Media need to be supported - Local Media are the most vulnerable and exposed

Zlatan Music is the Press Officer at the **OSCE Mission to BiH** where he **heads the Media Freedom portfolio within the Human Rights Sections**. In a conversation with CMFE board member Dragana Jovanovic about the effects of COVID-19, he among others stressed the urgent and much needed support to community media in BiH:



"Media at the local level are the most vulnerable and the most exposed, bearing in mind that the media market is underdeveloped, still with a lot of different media. COVID-19 has had a great economic impact on the media sector. A lot of journalists lost their jobs, free-lancers did not get extension of their contracts, marketing and advertising options decreased. Economic vulnerability is obvious, as well as the fact that access to information is unequal."

And he continued:

"We at the OSCE consider the media sector as a whole. We cooperate with public service broadcasters, the commercial sector and we cooperate - and want to cooperate even more - with the community radio stations. **Community media is a fabulous concept that need to be supported and nourished**. What we have done so far is monitoring the situation of media workers, identifying economic, legal and political issues faced. **In the following period we will establish better communication with the community media sector, which needs to get more support.**

The **community media** sector is extremely important for its **contribution to media pluralism and needs to be developed by democratic societies.**"

A new Board for the Swiss Federation of Not Profit-Oriented Radios



On June 10th 2020 the General Assembly of [UNIKOM](#) elected a new Board of Directors reflecting the recent expansion and evolution of the association.

The enlargement of the association was voted at the General Assembly 2017, when the new DAB+ local radios joined UNIKOM. One year later, the sub-group “Meldepflichtige Radios” and the sub-group “Komplementäre Radios” were constituted for this purpose.

The 23 radios subject to registration (Meldepflichtige Radios) are start-up radios, mainly commercially oriented in order to cover their costs. They broadcast their programmes via DAB+ and are working through different business models (events, sponsoring, advertising, crowdfunding, subscriptions, etc). The group of nine non-profit complementary radios (Komplementäre Radios) such as 3FACH, LoRa or RaBe broadcast their programmes via FM and DAB+ and fulfil a public value mandate, for which they receive public funding.

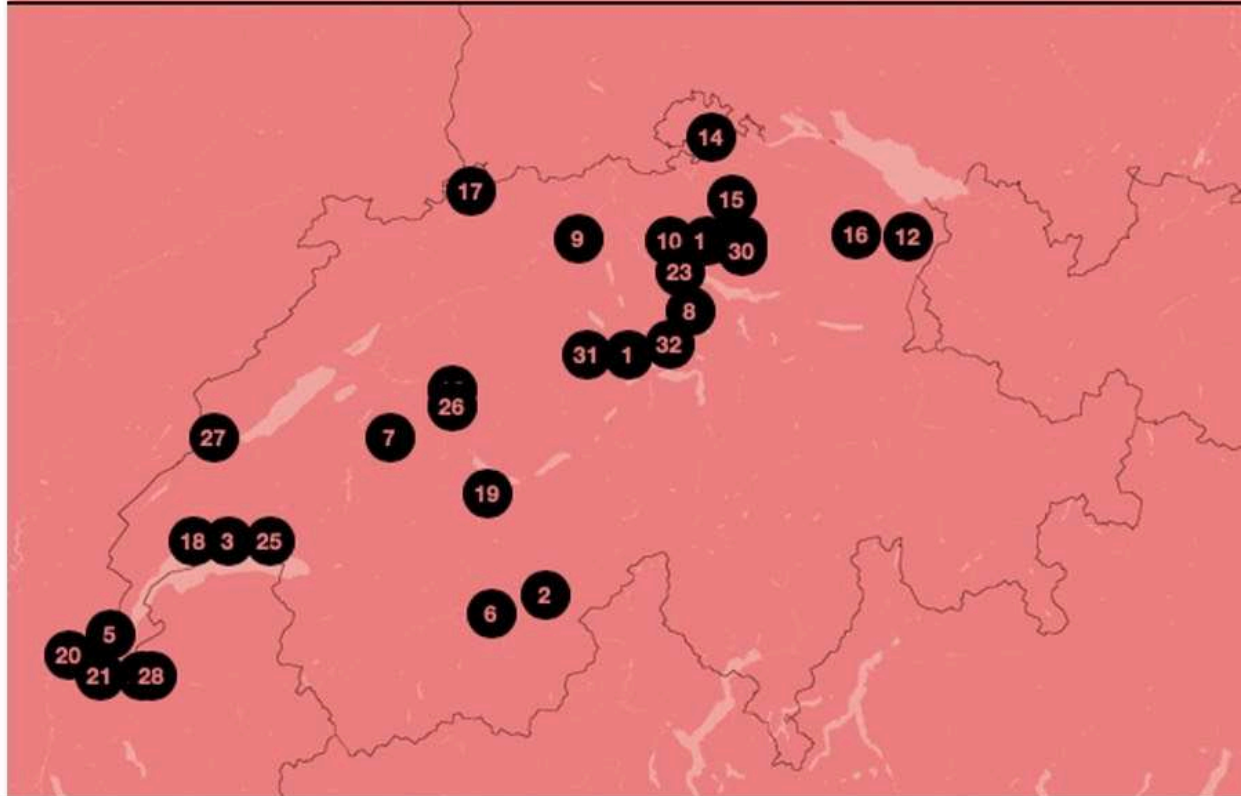
UNIKOM currently has 32 members and is thus the largest radio association in Switzerland. The 23 radio stations subject to registration are diverse music radio stations or moderated cultural, sports or church radio stations for Swiss citizens or foreigners living in Switzerland.

The general assembly elected a new board of directors taking into account the commercial interests of new members and integrating multilingualism.

Lukas Weiss, former president of UNIKOM, is stepping down after 25 years of engagement and Patrick Studer of diis Radio resigned due to lack of time available for voluntary work.

Continue reading:

[Here !](#)



Who are we in the CMFE? A monthly member portrait

Near FM (Ireland)

Near Media Co-op is a not-for-profit community media project made up by Near TV and NearFM operating across the Northside of Dublin City and beyond. Near encourages groups to use community media as a tool in their development work and aims to support the issues, events and stories important in the local area.

One of the main challenges in 2018 was staying on the airwaves- Every ten years community radio stations need to re-apply at the Broadcast Authority Ireland for their broadcast licence which takes a lot of work and time. It's all good, we are still here- ever so strong Near Media Co-op employs 10 staff, runs Community Employment Schemes, a training scheme for long term unemployed people for over 20 positions and counts over 100 volunteers.



On NEAR FM

All that you did not know you might be missing...

CLASSIFIEDS

COVID-19 resources

For resources - journalistic and financial - related to the Corona-virus outbreak, do go back to the CMFE April news letter here:

April 2020

The [CMFE member repository is found on a google drive](#), available for upload of change stories and information and for download of inspiration.

Global Community Media Dialogues

The Hyderabad-based Chair on Community Media launches a series of **Global Community Media Dialogues**, focusing on **Community Media in the post-Corona world**:

- South Asia on June 16
- Australia on June 23
- UK and Ireland on July 3
- Eastern & Southern Africa, July 15
- Western Africa - Anglophone, July 24
- Western & Central Africa - Francophone, TBC
- Latin America, TBC
- Europe, TBC (CMFE on board, waiting for more).

The generic questions address **what has been found to be the role and impact of community media during the Corona crisis**, and **what can we learn from it - and do next?**


CMFE works closely with the Chair on the European dialogues.

The recorded dialogues can be found [here](#).

Publications

Achieving gender equality and promoting diversity in the
European Audiovisual sector

Good Practice Handbook



This Good Practice Handbook published in May 2020 presents the results of research carried out by the social partners of the EU Social Dialogue Committee in the Audiovisual sector, including commercial and public broadcasters, producers, and trade unions representing journalists, cast and crew, and other audiovisual professionals. Unfortunately the Community Media sector was not included - still there is important lessons to be learnt.

The manual is organised in three parts:

A first section puts the information provided in the publication in context, with a general overview of global and European statistics on gender equality. This section also presents the EU legislative framework on equality between women and men and the fight against other forms of discrimination.

Secondly, the Handbook highlights key policies and statements adopted in the sector in the last years to advance gender equality. Are also presented some of the available gender statistics for the audiovisual sector at European and national levels.

The third and final section of the Handbook features initiatives taken by industry stakeholders in different EU countries and at different places in the creative value chain to

promote the presence of women and of other underrepresented groups on screen and on air, as well as in the workforce.

[Info & download](#)

Calls

Call for articles on local and community media



Call for papers – Discussing local and community media | OJCMT journal -
Deadline Sept 30 2020:

[More here](#)

Events

Open call for "(Audio) Moves"

The SONOHR Radio & Podcast Festival in Bern is asking: how does audio move (us)?

For the next Festival edition (26 to 28 February 2021), SONOHR is looking for submissions that demonstrate the varied ways in which movement can be translated into sound or that put people in motion in public spaces.

- Audio pieces up to 20 minutes max.
- Live formats such as performances, interactive session, live podcasts up to 60 minutes max.

- Innovative formats, audio- and soundwalks, audio games or similar layouts that can either be experienced regardless of location or are flexible enough to be adapted to Bern

If you are a producer or author of audio pieces, radio features, podcasts or audio art, a sound researcher, trainer or inventor of rich, new sound formats, you can submit until August 3 [here](#) or contact info@sonohr.ch for more information.

World Forum for Democracy

Civil society is invited to take part in work to realise the **Sustainable Development Goal 16 on building just and peaceful societies in Strasbourg, 16-18 November 2020.**

Something for you? Read on:

Initiated in 2012, the World Forum for Democracy is a platform for dialogue and innovation in democratic governance, which promotes the Council of Europe principles across the world. A unique event of its kind, it addresses key CHALLENGES facing democracy taking as a starting point ground-breaking initiatives, and fostering debate between different actors in order to find concrete SOLUTIONS. A democratic exercise in itself, the Forum aims at giving the people – demos – their rightful place in political decision-making. It thus contributes to the evolution of democracy towards more participatory and inclusive structures and institutions, and to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16 on building just and peaceful societies.

[Read more](#)

Community Media Forum Europe - cmfe.eu

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