



The Media Diversity Institute

THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN PROMOTION OF INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

Report to Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities Programme

Prepared by Media Diversity Institute

May 2008

Note

In aim to produce this document, the MDI has consulted 29 organizations, direct or indirect beneficiaries of the MDI activities, mainly European members of MDI-lead Reporting Diversity Network. They come from civil sector as well as from media and academia. 14 fully responded to our questionnaire. This report is based on those responses as well as responses by the representatives of governments, media outlets and NGOs visited by the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities Programme Team of experts. Method used: the Appreciative Inquiry. The document presents Media Diversity Institute's suggestions for programme to enhance and support community efforts to make the best of cultural diversity.

1. Challenges

1.1. Majority of mainstream media fail to reflect social diversity existing in the communities they serve and target.

1.2. Majority of mainstream media lack innovative approaches to the challenges of the new European reality: most of them see Europe as the place where non-white and non-Christians still only pop in as 'guest-workers'. At their best, they provide special 'corners' for the marginalized groups, thus emphasising what makes communities different from each other, and failing to explore what these communities have in common. The least practiced and the most needed,

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right now, is a joint media space where different communities would learn from each other. The balance of the three practices could present media's contribution to the social cohesion.

1.3. On all levels, from owners downwards – to editors-in-chief, editors and reporters mainstream media are lacking space for an open dialogue on the issues around language, race, faith, ethnicity, gender and other diversity challenges. The opening is needed in two segments: a) content (in most of the cases – media content does not reflect existing social diversity), and b) hiring (the staff working in the media organisation is less diverse than the audience). The latter does not mean that black/Muslim/female reporters should report exclusively on black/Muslim/women issues, but that reporters coming from marginalized/under-represented communities could be a link, a door to and a source of information on 'otherness'/communities they come from.

1.4. Management and editorial teams lack training which could help them understand the role their media could play in intercultural processes. There is a need for seminars, roundtables or conferences but, in particular, a need for hands-on training - training consisting of production, learning through doing, where the outcomes of the training – articles, radio/TV pieces – should be published/broadcast by the media trainees come from.

1.5. Most of the media decision makers see 'promotion of diversity' as either noble or legal obligation. Very few see it as a way to broaden their audience and therefore their own significance/ impact, and - in case of commercial media – their own profit. Even fewer are aware of the EU 2005 Business Case for Diversity study, which shows that employing members from minority ethnic background brings innovative content/product, therefore new market/profit. Not many are challenged to apply the EU findings.

1.6. There are not many reliable studies of the impact media coverage (of diversity) has on the audience and its attitudes towards social diversity. Results of this kind of studies would help challenge media's responsibilities towards communities they serve.

1.7. Journalism schools and journalism academia, in particular in new EU member are still very theoretical and very much 'mainstream-oriented'. This especially goes for societies with no long history of democracy (former communist block), where most of the journalism curricula lack practical exercises in inclusive journalism.

1.8. Minority/community media need to reach professional standards of the mainstream media, not to be, as still happens – bulletins of local NGOs.

1.9. Representatives of different ethnic communities and NGOs representing those communities need a training in how to communicate their messages/agendas to and through the media.

1.10. Community members need a greater media literacy education, not only to be able to communicate with media (minority and mainstream), but to be able to communicate between them selves, in aim to explore (and expose) internal diversity of views, cultures, customs and traditions.

2. Solutions

Program Activity Framework: Media as tools for promotion of intercultural dialogue.

As a response to the listed challenges, the MDI is suggesting a comprehensive programme of activities consisting of three core elements: awareness raising, education, and production. This can be done through the following ‘activity baskets’:

- Media monitoring
- Mid-career diversity training and professional development
- Diversity reporting initiatives
- Diversity Reporting Journalism Education and Curricula Development
- Media assistance for Civil Society Organisations and marginalized communities
- Interculturality Award

2.1. Media Monitoring for Program Development and Implementation

Ongoing, in-depth, and systematic media monitoring aiming to set up the ‘state of art’ in the mainstream media field, in aim to confront sceptics and opponents of remedial action with extensive documentation of the problem. Using its own methodology, MDI has done its own monitoring in 13 countries throughout Europe. Our current monitoring study covers 30 EU and EFTA countries. It has also participating in other organisations’ monitoring of the coverage of diversity issues in national media. The same kind of monitoring could be done in the cities participating in the ICC programme, to analyze the ways national and local media report on the issues related to interculturalism. The monitoring could be done by local media analysts / NGOs, if they are provided with an appropriate training and guidance by experts in this field. The experts could be from their country or/and MDI.

2.2. Mid-Career Diversity Training and Professional Development

The mid-career programs should be designed not only to enable journalists to improve their reporting on non-mainstream communities, inter-community relations, and other diversity issues,

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but also to impact others in the media sector (specifically editors and owners of media organizations) who ultimately control how such issues are covered. There are three components there and all of them have been already part of MDI 10-years programmes implemented throughout Europe:

2.2.1. Awareness raising workshops for journalists. These trainings are the mainstay of any MDI activity. They are usually three-day affairs, held in a workshop-style and are basically an introduction to the general concepts of diversity and their relevance to journalistic practice. They usually last for 3 days (sometimes, 5 days, if the need shows), including not more than 12-15 participants, from all sorts of media outlets ('virtual' production included – participants are encouraged to 'sell' their story ideas to the guests editors).

2.2.2. Production of Training Manual: To establish a systematic methodology for all future training activities, a generic training manual to be produced in reporting on minorities, inter-community issues, human rights, and related issues which can be used in a variety of training applications – for both reporters and media decision-makers. MDI has already produced 11 national and two Regional Reporting Diversity Manuals for reporters (for SEE and for South Caucasus), in different languages. It would be a challenge to produce a generic version of Reporting Intercultural Issues Manual for the Intercultural Cities Programme, considering the complexity of it, with around a dozen countries; numerous languages & cultures; different levels of media opportunities; different technologies; and limited budgets.

2.2.3. Media Decision-Makers Roundtables on European and national level: The reporters can do very little to change the news product without the support and understanding of the organization's editors and owners – the decision-makers who ultimately control news content, style, and attitude. The workshops/conferences should be organized to address decision-makers. The presentations by MDMs from the media which have already adopted editorial policies to reflect social diversity would help the 'un-converted' learn the reason and techniques in how to address the issues.

2.3. Diversity Reporting Initiatives: Journalism and educative-entertainment projects that directly create high quality news products on the most challenging issues related to inter-community relations, minority rights, tolerance, and other diversity issues. Potential project ideas:

2.3.1 Team Reporting Projects: In the experience of the MDI, this is one of the most popular and most successful ways of providing intercultural dialogue. TRPs bring together multi-cultural teams of reporters to report and write joint feature stories under the supervision of outside team

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leaders. The resulting stories are printed or broadcast by media organizations in cities covered by this programme. MDI has done so far more than 20 TRP projects in some 14 countries. The TRPs ARE hands-on training, where journalists and trainers set up a virtual newsroom, and after 2 days of very inter-active learning about the issues around interculturalism, are supervised to produce articles, radio or TV packages. The TRPs usually last for 10 days, and with the participants selected along one or more diversity lines (ethnicity, religion, gender, age...) The TRPs should be separately done for different types of outlets, since the participants REALLY produce a content. In MDI 10-years experience in doing this kind of projects, we have always had all the outputs (articles, radio, TV packages) published/broadcast by leading media organisations in concerned countries (our bi-lingual students newspaper in Israel with Jewish and Arab Students received British Diversity Award 2004). A curiosity: even articles written in the style of news agencies have been broadcast on radio and TV. The MDI has done TRPs in Serbia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan... and most recently in Jordan with Iraqi reporters (Sunni, Shia, Kurds, Arabs...).

2.3.2. Workshop for soap-opera script writers: for TV and radio soap-opera script-writers that raises their awareness and sensitivity towards media diversity issues. General diversity issues to be dealt with include: how to understand intercultural dialogue? Who is to speak? Why does it matter? More specific issues, tailored for this group include: How to develop characters and story lines to be more sensitive to diversity issues; How to introduce diversity and social issues in responsible ways, and mould them into plots, without making the show boring or lecture-like; How to inspire discussion amongst listeners/viewers of sensitive diversity issues.

2.3.3. RD Training and programme for talk show hosts and TV producers: development of a TV series that highlights the diversity of the country/region and the equality of traditions, language, and culture. Production of a weekly TV talk-show that allows issues of concrete community concern with national policy implications to be discussed. Video diaries (stories told by ordinary people in the format of Citizen Journalism) to be a core elements in both formats. The film produced at the International Intercultural Cities Conference could be a model for the series.

2.4. Diversity Journalism Education and Curriculum Development

Training and working directly with mid-career journalists will facilitate improved coverage of the issues around interculturalism. But for the long term the most effective way to improve coverage is to instil in media professionals early in their careers (or before their careers have even started)

the approaches and ways of thinking that engender high-quality reporting on these issues. The work in this area consists of two parts:

2.4.1. RD curriculum development projects: To help journalism professors in the cities covered by the project - develop effective mechanisms for teaching Reporting Interculturalism (RI).

Thanks to the MDI, journalism academics at 12 universities in the SEE and the South Caucasus has developed their own modules RD courses. Currently in cooperation with the Westminster University (UK), the MDI is developing and MA module in Reporting Diversity. The case of Lyon has shown that an interest for such activities exists even in 'old' EU member-states.

2.4.2. Establishment of an InterCulty student newspaper: for students who attended the RI course to practice the knowledge gained at the Courses. If such a paper exists already at the journalism department – the RI component can be added. In both cases national newspaper could republish students paper as a RD supplement. MDI has implemented the supplement model in 14 countries already.

2.5. Media Assistance for Minority Communities and NGOs

In concert with training and other initiatives focused mainly on mainstream media, a comprehensive strategy to improve intercultural dialogue must include a strong initiative to support the media efforts of minority communities and organizations, to increase their capabilities to interact effectively with majority media in order to introduce their perspectives and proposals into mainstream reporting and help counter discriminatory reporting on their communities. MDI has been working with community media since 1999. Specifically, this undertakes the following:

2.5.1. Media Relations Guide: In order to provide basic guidance for establishing effective relationships with mainstream media, the MDI has produced a generic Media Relations Guide, which could be adopted for use in the cities included in the CoE's programme. MDI National versions of the Guide already exist in 6 languages.

2.5.2. Communication skills and advocacy training for Community NGOs: conducting of communication skills/media relations and advocacy workshops, attended by minority representatives who will learn how the media works, what it needs, and how to most effectively communicate with it – including first-hand from guest speaker journalists and editors from their region. The need for this kind of training was shown in Lyon, in particular among city's NGOs, as well as among EuroCity representatives.

2.5.3. Professionalization of Minority media management: Workshops for community media editors and station managers to assist them develop and sustain high professional standards of media management.

2.5.4. On-site media consultants for Minority Media: Long-term consultants, experienced in international journalism (Radio/ TV), and with knowledge of broadcast media management to help minority media organizations build their capacity.

2.5.5. Professionalization of Community Journalists: Community media outlets are often fuelled largely by enthusiasm, cultural ambition – both valid motivations – and donor funds. Journalists at these outlets need training in journalism in order to allow them to deliver higher quality material more tightly attuned to their target audience.

2.6. Reporting Diversity Award

This might be a 'carrot' to encourage media outlets from participating cities to compete in their reporting on the issues related to inter-cultural learning. The Award could be given at one of the Council of Europe's or the EC's events related to the Year of Intercultural Dialogue, or, since the Year ends December 2008, in one of their events related to interculturalism. In the UK, there are enough awards of this kind, but in other European countries – the need still exists.

3. Starting Package

Taking into consideration the initial reports from the ICC media team experts who visited most of the cities included in the CoE ICC programme, the enthusiasm of city media and NGOs' representatives (and their understandable cautiousness), the uncertain available funding and the experience from Liverpool ICC Conference, the MDI is proposing the 'Starting Package' which would, in our opinion, be able to a) get the cities hooked on the idea of interculturalism, and b) lead to more broader and more effective contribution of the local media to the promotion of intercultural activities in given cities.

The Starting Package should consist of following:

3.1. Transferring DiverCities on-line magazine to CoE's ICC website. The most urgent and probably the most suitable activity at this stage is to turn the DiverCities concept, as designed (and partially implemented) for the Liverpool conference to a generic model to be shared with colleagues from cities across Europe for whom interculturalism is a novel idea. In aim to do so, the DiverCities, should be transferred to the CoE's website and established there following the initial MDI concept - not a blog, as it appeared on the Liverpool's conference – but, an on-line magazine with a menu of different types of journalism with news and features, photos and moving pictures, human interest stories to illustrate the concept of interculturalism, as well as some archive material (made earlier by the participating reporters or by some other journalists, copy rights respected). The magazine should be downloadable for the local media eager to print it or broadcast it. If transferred to the CoE's website, (as Robert Palmer offered) the DiverCities would have more visibility. In this format it would help the ICC Media Experts explain better to the colleagues across ICC cities what they could do to promote interculturalism. If any of the participating cities express an interest to create their own on-line, print, radio or TV DiverCities magazines, the MDI would be happy to assist.

3.2. Media Monitoring – With the help of MDI media monitoring experts, local media analysts and trained NGO representatives to monitor the ways city (and national) media cover the issues related to interculturalism in the cities covered by the ICC programme. The monitoring will help confront sceptics and opponents of remedial action with extensive documentation of the problem. Its results could be presented at the other 'Starting Package's activities (see points 3-6). Detailed description of the MM procedures:

What: Training of the relevant organizations in the ICC cities – in conducting sophisticated media monitoring and analysis, employing a specific research protocol which will facilitate high quality outcomes for individual studies, and cross-cities comparisons. There will be three components:

1. **Media Research Protocol (MRP):** MDI will commission the creation and translation of a detailed, systematic, and methodologically sound city/country-specific research protocol to provide detailed guidance on how to research and analyse media coverage of ethnicity, race, religion and other issues relevant for intercultural communication in the project's cities. One MDI Media Monitoring Leader Expert.
2. **Training:** Local monitors will be trained in the use of the research protocol (a sample of coding sheet in Annex 1). At least two local monitors will be trained to cover print and broadcast media. Training: two days.
3. **Monitoring by local monitors:** Using the research protocol, and consulting with the MDI Expert, media monitoring will be implemented in a city. At least one survey will be conducted for at least one week – preferably at the beginning of the work in a city. Based

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on the figures from the survey, a local monitor (or MDI Expert) will produce a report on the ways city/country's media coverage of project issues.

Who: City and international monitoring specialists, MDI staff, city partners.

Outputs: A media research protocol, trained monitors, and at least one monitoring survey per city.

Time: Preparation: 15 days on MDI side. Duration of the monitoring: min 7 days. Analyzing results & Report: 3 weeks.

3.3. Media Decision-Makers Roundtables on European and national levels: without media's editors and owners – the decision-makers - who ultimately control news content, style, and attitude, it would be difficult to have journalists participating in this programme. So, the workshops/conferences should be organized to address decision-makers. Representatives from media organisations which have already adopted and have been practicing inclusive journalism will present their policies, the benefits of practicing inclusive journalism, and the challenges they've met when looking for new links with communities they are suppose to service. The MDI would be happy to assist with the content of the conference and choice of speakers and experts. If this kind of events get organised – a DiverCities webzine could be produced around the event following the generic concept designed for the Liverpool conference. Again, if needed, the MDI would be happy to contribute its experts. Detailed description of the activity:

What: A 2-days media decision-makers roundtable aiming to gain the support of editors and media owners for training of their staff. 20-25 key media decision-makers from ICC programme's cities will be invited for a series of sessions based around three themes:

1. Serving your communities: why reflecting diversity is your main role.
2. Building your business: can diversity help your business.
3. What it takes to get serious about diversity in your media organisation.

The roundtable will be a mixture of high level media and diversity speakers and working sessions aimed at opening up the audience to both the challenges and opportunities presented by embracing diversity.

Who: 20-25 media decision-makers: news editors, editors-in-chief, media owners. MDI staff and trainers, international and regional speakers.

Outputs: one 2-day roundtables for media decision-makers from all ICC programme's cities or, alternatively (and more suitable) – two 2-days roundtables, to group the ICC cities based on their similar needs and experience.

Time: Preparation on MDI site: 15 days.

3.4. Team Reporting Projects – As described already, TRPs bring together multi-cultural teams of reporters to produce joint feature stories (print, radio, TV or internet) under the supervision of outside team leaders. The resulting stories are printed, uploaded or broadcast by media organizations/ relevant websites in cities covered by this programme. The same (or some of) materials produced by TRP teams could be uploaded to CoE ICC website or just linked to it. The TRPs could be implemented by local media or NGO organisations, with MDI providing the concept and an international team leader. Detailed description of the TRP procedures:

What: MDI will bring together teams of reporters to report and write in-depth stories on the issues around intercultural communication under the supervision of outside team leader. In cities with mixed populations cross-cultural teams will be used. The resulting stories will be printed or broadcast by all media organisations involved, in identical versions, as agreed on by the team.

Why: Team reporting and cross-cultural team reporting can bridge gaps between different communities in the city, and can allow informed, in-depth analysis of human rights and minorities issues. The team reporting approach:

1. builds cross-cultural professional bonds;
2. provides models of high-quality reporting on intercultural issues;
3. builds professional skills and confidence.

Such projects are designed to provide permanent institutional change among the participating news organisations.

Who: Participating journalists (eight per team), MDI trainers and staff, international and local trainers.

Outputs: Ten team reporting projects, one in each city; min 5 in-depth investigative feature stories (either broadcast material or press articles) published or broadcast by each of the participating journalists' media outlets; plus a cadre of journalists versed in sophisticated intercultural investigations.

Time: Preparation on MDI site: 15 days.

3.5. Inclusive Reporting curriculum development workshops: As already confirmed by Lyon Journalism School, these workshops will help journalism professors in the ICC cities developing their own effective mechanisms to teach Inclusive Journalism. By putting together journalism academics who already teach this subject with those who want to develop their own courses, the MDI will provide the content and the experts for these workshops. Since the needs of academics in 12 cities are different, the MDI suggest two separate workshops to address different needs. Detailed project's description:

What: Development of Reporting Interculturalism (RI) curriculum for use by professors of journalism in the cities covered by the ICC programme. Even those journalism professors who understand and appreciate the importance of quality reporting on racial, minority, and ethnic-

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relations issues typically do not have the tools to transfer that understanding to their students.

Effective curricula are lacking. MDI will:

1. create a core group of journalism professors (max six) to develop – with the MDI's assistance – an RI curricula. An inaugural, two-days meeting will see them meet with two to three international journalism professors for an exchange of information, best practise, and experience;
2. work with the participating professors to help them adapt existing curricula to their own needs, based on an MDI diversity reporting curricula framework;
3. promote the new curricula within the education departments and universities of the city, with the aim of creating a momentum for moving it from elective (voluntary for journalism students) to mandatory (compulsory for journalism students);
4. work with the participating professors as they begin to teach their new curriculum. At least one MDI expert will travel to each participating city to assist in implementing the new curriculum;
5. conduct a curriculum development conference for participating academics, at which the successes and failures of the new curricula will be discussed, models shared, and plans made for the future.

The core group will form the basis of an academic network of journalism educators dedicated to promoting improved teaching of the RI. The network will be launched at the curriculum development conference, which will show-case the new curriculum developed by the core group.

Who: Journalism professors from the participating cities, MDI journalism professors, MDI staff.

Outputs: Curriculum development workshop, up to six curriculum for universities and institutes from the participating cities, curriculum development conference, plus an academic network of journalism educators.

Possible partners: Westminster University (London), Lincoln University, CEU, Vienna University.

Time: Preparation on MDI site: 20 days. The whole project might take up to 6 months due to academia's calendar.

3.6. Communication skills and advocacy training for Community NGOs: As CoE ICC media experts' visits and the roundtable discussion at the Liverpool conference have shown, conducting of these kind of workshops is necessity. Three-days events with guest-journalists and a simulated press-conference would demonstrate effective ways of getting the media attention. Again, due to different levels of experience and needs, at least two different events should be organized. An adaptation of MDI Media Relations Guide will be a suitable handout for participants. Detailed description of the project:

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What: Media advocacy workshops for community NGOs and actions groups to empower them to advocate, campaign and generate attention to the issues and problems relevant to their organisations. Through these workshops they will learn how to communicate with media in order to have their agenda promoted through the media.

Who: One international and one local media advocacy experts, participants from local action groups and NGOs and MDI staff. Local partners will provide logistical support as well as input to the content of the training.

Outputs: One 3-day media advocacy workshop per city. Alternative: two 3-day media advocacy workshops for two sets of cities, grouped around similar needs.

Time: Preparation on MDI site: 15 days.

3.7. Reporting Diversity Award

This might be a 'carrot' to encourage media outlets from participating cities to compete in their reporting on the issues related to inter-cultural learning. The Award could be given at one of the Council of Europe's or the EC's events related to the Year of Intercultural Dialogue, or, since the Year ends December 2008, in one of their events related to interculturalism. In the UK, there are enough awards of this kind, but in other European countries – the need still exists. Detailed description of the activity:

What: 'Serving Community' Awards for best stories (print, radio, TV) as related to intercultural issues. At the end of Year One and Year Two of the ICC programme ICC programme cities will nominate three pieces in either of the categories (print, radio, TV) for the award. The award will be given at the suitable ceremony either in one of the ICC cities or in Strasbourg.

Who: A jury consisting of ICC Media Experts Team will select three best pieces in each category.

Outputs: Awards, promotion.

Time: Preparation on MDI site: 15 days.

4. Potential local media partners

The initial visits by CoE ICC Media Experts have shown a high level of curiosity by local media for interculturalism as a novel idea. Some of them can become active participants in the local intercultural strategy development and its implementation. They could use activities listed under 'Solutions' and 'Starting Package' as their ways to support the efforts of the local communities in

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the context of the programme. The reports produced by ICC media experts have identified their possible involvement in the programme, their ideas, possibilities and limitations. However, in aim to get more precise picture of their capacities and willingness to participate in the programme, the second, more specific visit to the cities is needed. This will be an opportunity for the ICC media experts team to present its own package of possible cooperation as well as checking and discussing the response by the local media.