

**Federation of Community Radios in Austria
Media conference 2003 – Open Media for an Open Society
Multilingualism and Participation in Radio, TV and the Internet**

16 May 2003, Schloßbergrestaurant, Graz
9.00 - 21.00

in co-operation with
European Civic Forum, Initiative Minderheiten, Renner Institut

"Under the auspices of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr Walter Schwimmer"

Programme

9.00 Opening and introduction by the conference organizers
Helmut Peissl, Federation of Community Radios in Austria
Reni Hofmüller, Radio Helsinki, Graz

ROLE OF THE MEDIA

Main input:

9.10 **Heike Klempa** (ECRI/European Council) – "The role of the media in the struggle against intolerance and xenophobia from the perspective of the Council of Europe and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance"

Further statements:

9.40 **Ljubomir Bratic** (Office for Unusual Measures, Vienna) – „Mainstream, media and social struggle“

9.50 **Amina Krüger** (Network Online/More Colour in the Media, Köln) – „The situation from a German perspective“

10.15 Discussion

Chair: **Amara Dissanayake**

Coffee break

MULTILINGUALISM BETWEEN SOCIAL REQUIREMENTS AND MEDIA REALITY

Main input:

11.00 **Brigitta Busch** (University of Klagenfurt, Centre for Intercultural Studies) – „Media and multilingualism: Community Radios as a forum and interface“

Further statements:

- 11.30 **Elvira Kurabasa** and **Andrea Reisinger** (Medea, Linz) – "Perspectives from Austria, self-organisation of migrants"
11.40 **Usama Suleiman** (University of Vienna) – „City Spaces – Media between city and state“
11.50 **Rui Monteiro** (NORDSAM/Indvandrer TV,DK) – "Multiethnic TV in Denmark"

12.00 Discussion

Chair: **Leo Kühberger**

Lunch

PRACTICE

- 14.30 **Helmut Peissl** (VFRÖ) – "babelingo – Multilingualism in Community Radio"
14.40 **Eva Dertschei and Carlos Toledo** (dezentrale medien, Wien) – „Multilingualism in youth work using video and new media“
14.50 **Amina Krüger und Esther Lubenau** (Network Online/More Colour in the Media) – „A European Manifesto of Multilingualism“

15.00 Discussion

Chair: **Reni Hofmüller**

15.30 - 17.30 Uhr

Working groups to elaborate demands for the "European Manifesto of Multilingualism"

1. Radio: Facilitated by **Yasmin Darwisch**, Orange 94.0
2. Video/TV: Facilitated by **Rui Monteiro, Eva Dertschei, Carlos Toledo**
3. Internet: Facilitated by **Jogi Hofmüller**, mur.at

Presentation:

"best practice" – Examples of projects and realized ideas

Art projects on the topic of multilingualism

Forum of ideas

Book stall

17.45 - 18.30 Final plenary – Reports from the working groups and discussion

Intercultural buffet

DEBATE

19.30 Round table discussion

"More than an opinion:

Statements about interculturalism and multilingualism in the electronic media"

Herwig Hösele (Bundesratspräsident, ÖVP), Ilse Reinprecht (LAbg., SPÖ), Terezija Stoisits (Abg. z. NR, Die Grünen), Alfred Grinschgl (RTR-Rundfunk und Telekom Regulierungsbehörde) as well as speakers of the conference

Chair: **Kamdem Mou Poh a Hom (Chiala Afriqas)**

Buffet and music à la Helsinki

Co-ordination: **Adnan Balcinovic**

Summary of conference inputs

The conference was divided into four panels which represented different approaches towards the main subject of multilingualism in electronic media.

ROLE OF THE MEDIA

Chair: Amara Dissanayake

Heike Klempa (ECRI/Europarat)

The role of the media in the struggle against intolerance and xenophobia from the perspective of the Council of Europe and the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance

Heike Klempa presented the work of ECRI, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance and referred to a number of documents, agreements and recommendations which stress the important role of the media – especially regarding the right to media access for minorities.

The attempt of ECRI to strengthen contacts and exchange with civil society was very much approved by the conference participants. It seems necessary to find ways of mutual information and the possibility for civil society organisations to get involved in European policies.

<http://www.coe.int/ecri>

Lubomir Bratic (Büro für ungewöhnliche Maßnahmen, Wien) Mainstream, media and social struggle

Lubomir Bratic introduced a concept of racism as a structural problem of our society and possibilities of political anti-racism acting on a structural level as well.

Establishing (temporary) alliances between different discriminated groups is one way of pointing out and fighting the “norm” of social power relations.

Through facilitating counter discourses of those who are usually excluded from the public free media can themselves become part of anti-racism work.

<http://no-racism.net/antirassismus/>

Amina Krüger (Netzwerk Online/More Colour in the Media, Köln) The situation from a German perspective

Amina Krüger showed positive examples of German public service programmes such as Radio Multikulti in Berlin or the WDR TV magazine „Babylon“ as possibilities of access for migrants to the (mainstream) media. However, there is a negative tendency to replace multilingual programmes by programmes which cover multicultural issues in German only. This approach of “Intercultural Mainstreaming” is led by the understanding of integration as assimilation.

The development of exclusion of other languages than German from public service programmes also means to reduce the visibility of migrants in the public sphere. It therefore seems more and more important to find ways of access to the media to ensure the right to receive information as well as have your own.

MULTILINGUALISM BETWEEN SOCIAL REQUIREMENTS AND MEDIA REALITY

Chair: Leo Kühberger

Brigitta Busch (University of Klagenfurt, Centre for Intercultural Studies)

Media and multilingualism: Community Radios as a forum and interface

In an overview of the development of the European media landscape after World War II Brigitta Busch explained the idea of a national public as (re-)presented by electronic media such as public radio and TV. This national public is imagined and reproduced as male, white, middle class and monolingual, thus not reflecting a multilingual reality on both the recipients' and the producers' side of media.

Programmes in other languages than the dominant national language were only established in the 70ies as a result of the struggle of social movements. During the 80ies these programmes were replaced by German languages broadcasts to enforce linguistic integration.

On the other hand there is the concept of the media landscape as divided into three sectors – the public, the commercial and the open access, community based media. This concept has been strongly recommended by the Council of Europe, but has only been established in very few countries (e.g. Switzerland, France).

A European-wide survey about community radios in 1991 (Hans Kleinsteuber. Radio. Das unterschätzte Medium) showed that nearly all of them broadcast programmes in other languages than the dominant one.

In this context multilingualism can be seen as a bridging element and a factor to determine the process of communication itself through which social relations are established

As such the so-called third sector (community media) can act as an interface and model of a public space which integrates the usually excluded. The transformations which are the result of crossing borders of formats and genres represent openness for potentially other concepts than the mainstream.

Elvira Kurabasa und Andrea Reisinger (Medea. Linz)

Perspectives from Austria, self-organisation of migrants

The media initiative Medea denies the separation of art, media, social work, so called integration, politics and training.

Medea links "Public Access" (especially of socially disadvantaged groups) with interactive art projects ("Public Art"). All projects have in common that they take place in public spaces and therefore deal with participation of migrants in public life. They support young people in translating their ideas into action.

Education and training are seen as a collective process in which self-organization, empowerment and participation in society are the most important aims to be accomplished.

The intercultural media lab Pangea is used by more than 100 young people from 33 different countries.

<http://www.servus.at/medea>

Usama Suleiman
Changing City Spaces – New Challenges to Cultural Policy in Europe
Media between city and state

Usama Suleiman presented the project „Changing City Spaces“ which is concerned with contemporary social and cultural developments in Europe, set in motion by and responding to new dynamics of global migration into and across Europe. To explore these issues, the research takes as its central focus urban culture and policy in the European space, in order to address broader questions of sociocultural diversity, interaction and citizenship.

<http://cis.uni-klu.ac.at/projects/citynex.html>

Rui Montero (INDVANDRER TV (ITV), Århus)
Multiethnic TV in Denmark

Indvandrer TV is a non commercial TV-station, based at the Mediehouse in Århus City, Denmark. Indvandrer TV (ITV) was founded by several ethnic organisations in January 1997. The idea was to produce television that is committed to the ethnic minorities cause and is fighting against discrimination and racism in Danish society. The main purpose is to give ethnic minorities a chance to speak up and become more visible in the Danish media landscape.

ITV provides multilingual news, music and cultural and current affairs programmes for target groups ignored by the mainstream media. There are 21 ethnic groups involved in ITV, 17 of which are active constantly. They produce 8 different programmes. The programmes are subtitled in Danish, so everyone can follow.

However, one needs to be aware that minority groups are very diverse in themselves. The impact of minority media is that they constitute a multiplication of points of reference in a multicultural social reality.

<http://www.indvandrer.tv.dk>

PRACTICE

Chair: Reni Hofmüller

Helmut Peissl
babelingo – Multilingualism in Community Radio

The start of community radios in 1998 in Austria meant a first opportunity for several ethnic groups to gain access to the media. A large number of minority and migrant editorial groups were established to produce their own radio programmes. Meanwhile the approach of multilingual production has become a central focus of community radios in Austria.

The project babelingo develops concepts and methods to bridge linguistic (and community) borders in media communication.

babelingo also analyses the existing framework of media policies with a special focus on the question of access to the media for migrants and minorities. In the long term babelingo aims at establishing a pool of trainers to implement language-bridging media production. Models of such programmes will be collected and documented.

It became obvious that there is a need for capacities and resources and their financing to support the work of radio stations in this field.

<http://www.freie-radios.at/babelingo.php>

Eva Dertschei/Carlos Toledo (dezentrale medien, Wien)
Multilingualism in youth work using video and new media

dezentrale medien is a new media project working since spring 2001 together with (disadvantaged) teenagers, most of them from migrant and refugee backgrounds in Vienna. The living realities of the participants are the medium for social, aesthetic and technical practice.

Although dezentrale medien works with new media, it cannot be seen as a purely technical workshop. An important issue is the demand of minority groups for (public) space, to articulate themselves in this majority society and thus to define their own way of integration. Dreams, fantasy, expectations for their future etc. and realities can be gathered and become public. The exchange of experience and images about living in Vienna encourages mutual solidarity and helps participants to see their situation not only as a personal problem but also as the result of structural problems or strategies of this society.

<http://herein.at>

Esther Lubenau/Amina Krüger
A European Manifesto of multilingualism

The network OnLine/More Colour in the Media has started the process of developing a European Manifesto to promote the access of ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic minorities to the media in order to ensure an appropriate representation of social reality in Europe.

The Manifesto consists of a number of basic demands such as the right to information, media access etc. As a second step it also refers to the different national contexts and the varying media situations although the problems of minority media are quite similar in most countries: no legal establishment and usually no or only very few subsidies for the "public service" which these media projects provide.

During election campaigns for the European Parliament elections in 2004 the Manifesto will be promoted to put its demands on the EU agenda. Furthermore it should be available to be used for lobbying on a national basis.

www.multicultural.net

RESULTS OF WORKING GROUPS

During the discussion in working groups a number of demands were developed to be integrated into the text of the European Manifesto of Minority Media.

TV

- As there don't exist any projects with a participative approach in the Austrian TV sector so far, the most urgent need is to establish a political framework which ensures the possibility of future minority TV projects. The Open Access TV station which is planned in Vienna should be supported.

Internet

- Ensure know-how transfer
- Support the use of free software (e.g. software development in minority languages)
- Guarantee the access to network resources
- Control of network resources by the users/self-determined projects
- Development of financing models analogous to the demands of community radios

Radio

- High expectations towards multilingual programmes require more resources than monolingual radio production
- Migrants pay public broadcast fees as well. Therefore the income should go to those media which provide programmes meeting the needs of migrants and minorities
- New definition of „public service“ corresponding with the social (and media) reality
- Equality for minority media in terms of technical resources, broadcasting range and licences.

In general the participants stressed the need for transparency, communication channels and contact persons on a European level to ensure continuous exchange and the involvement of minority media in political processes.

Round table discussion – "More than an opinion: Statements about interculturalism and multilingualism in the electronic media"

Chair: Kamdem Mou Poh a Hom (Chiala Afriqas)

The four representatives of Austrian political parties (Herwig Hösele, ÖVP; Ilse Reinprecht, SPÖ; Terezija Stoisits, Die Grünen) and the Austrian Regulatory Authority for Telecommunications and Broadcasting (Alfred Grinschgl) all supported a model of using part of the income from radio/TV licences to finance community and local radios – as it has been suggested by the Federation of Community Radios Austria. This model also refers to examples such as Switzerland where community radios receive subsidies based on the principle of "Public Service".

However, the problem in putting concepts into action is the current conservative/right wing government and the political mainstream represented by this government which does not understand pluralism as a strength of an open society.

Report compiled and translated by Fiona Steinert – Vienna, December 2003