

CMFE

COMMUNITY MEDIA FORUM EUROPE

COVER PAGE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF COMMENTS TO THE ISSUES PAPERS OF THE COMMISSION REGARDING THE REVISION OF THE TVWF DIRECTIVE

In order to facilitate the consultation process you are kindly requested to fill out the following form:

Organisation (exact name): Community Media Forum Europe
Organisation (abbreviation): CMFE
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Subject:

(please tick **one** appropriate box)

- 1. Material and Territorial Competence
- 2. Rights to Information and Short Extracts
- 3. Cultural Diversity and Promotion of European and Independent Audiovisual Production
- 4. Commercial Communications
- 5. Media Pluralism
- 6. Protection of Minors and Human Dignity, Right of Reply

The European Commission invites you to submit your observations on these issues papers by **5 September 2005**. Please submit your comments in a generally readable electronic format. Please submit a **separate document** for each issues paper you would like to comment on. All submissions will be published on the Commission's website if not requested otherwise. If you would like your contribution to be treated confidentially, please indicate this at the top of the first page of your submission. Should you want to add a cover letter please do so in a separate document. In case your comments exceed four pages please start your submission with an **executive summary**. All submissions should be mailed to the functional mailbox of the Audiovisual Policy Unit of the Directorate-General for Information Society and Media: avpolicy@cec.eu.int.

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Position paper for the EC consultation on the revision of the Television Without Frontiers Directive

Premises

The following proposal has been prepared by the members of the Community Media Forum Europe - CMFE and is supported by the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters - AMARC¹. At present CMFE includes representatives from non-profit Community Media (CM) in 13 European countries.²

CMFE welcomes the actual step for public consultation on the revision of the Television Without Frontiers Directive. Simultaneously we express our concern that during the process of revision until now there has been no explicit and adequate inclusion of the community media sector. We would welcome for the future debates a gathering of a specific focus group on CM being organised by the commission.

We also welcome the acknowledgement by all the stakeholders of the important role of the Council of Europe in its vital work for the development of a media landscape characterised by freedom of expression and plurality. We are convinced that the proceeding of the CoE 7th European Ministerial Conference on Mass Media Policy 2005 in Kiev, with the official organisation of an accompanying NGO Forum is an example to be adopted by the EU-institutions for similar events. Therefore we recommend that in all future Presidency or Commission conferences, as that in Liverpool in September 2005, there should be official planned and supported accompanying NGO Forum.

CMFE, 4 September 2005

¹ AMARC is the world's largest international membership organisation in the community media sector, counting in membership around 1500 community broadcasters and federations of community broadcasters, representing over 5000 community broadcasting organisations in 110 countries, including most European countries. AMARC has INGO consultative status at the UN through ECOSOC and with UNESCO; sector membership of the ITU

² (i.e. Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, UK)

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5. Issues Paper on Media Pluralism

Community media welcome the commitment of the European Union to protect media pluralism as well as the right to information and freedom of expression enshrined in Article 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, Article 10 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. We therefore welcome the European Parliaments report on the risk of violation, in the EU and especially in Italy, of freedom of expression and information (Article 11(2) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights) and urge the EU to contribute to safeguarding the status and independence of public service broadcasting and community media.

Although it is clear that the issue will remain firmly in the competence of the Member States, CMFE ask the EU to work further with the Council of Europe to draw up a minimum set of standards for media pluralism which should be observed by all Member States.

Considering that digitalisation of media-distribution networks not automatic provides access for small scale, not for profit community media, the framework should also include safeguards to guarantee access for this sector to new media distribution forms in terms of interoperability, must carry rules as well as frequencies.

We therefore recommend that the revised TVWF directive should:

1. Consider that the question of media pluralism has to involve the role of commercial, public-service and community broadcasters.

2. In respect to the CoE AP-MD report on “Transnational media concentration in Europe”³ acknowledge the contribution of the community media sector to media pluralism and encourage member states to legislate for the establishment of community media.

3. In respect to the report on “The information of the citizen in the EU: obligations for the media and the institutions concerning the citizens right to be fully and objectively informed” by the European Institute for the media, to analyse the role of community media in the media landscape especially in local settings. And to encourage member states to consider measures to implement financial and technical conditions to empower community media.

4. As the delegation of Cyprus at the CoE 7th European Ministerial Conference on Mass Media Policy stressed out: "Other measures supported by Cyprus in the effort to check the trend towards increasing media concentration include, inter alia, the encouragement of development of community media in a pluralistic media landscape". EU should implement possibilities for supporting community media at European level."

5. Another important aspect, not to be forgotten, is media literacy. Media are playing a more and more important. Citizens should be empowered to understand the way media work, e.g. by encouraging community media in where citizens can actively

³ "Member states should encourage the development and strengthening of the contribution of Community media in a pluralistic media landscape" Transnational media concentration in Europe – report prepared by the AP-MD for the CDMM (November 2004)

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participate in the media process.