



MEDIA & DIVERSITY

HOW COMMERCIAL TV CHANNELS ENGAGE WITH DIVERSITY

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Introduction

The Association of Commercial Television in Europe (ACT) is a trade association representing the interests of the commercial broadcasting sector in Europe. The ACT has twenty eight member companies active in 34 European countries operating more than 400 free-to-air and pay-tv channels and distributing several hundred channels and new services.

Diversity is key to the future of the European media industry. Given Europe's increasing diversity through the existence of various minorities, ACT members acknowledge the need for the industry to be a true mirror of the society. In this purpose, minorities play an important role in the programmes and news productions of commercial channels, be it on and off screens. Minorities shape our audience, and it is important for us to represent them. But it is also a corporate and social responsibility for our members to engage with the whole society and to act as an open-minded and varied industry. Being a mass media brings a large responsibility. Since the beginning of the commercial sector, ACT members have worked with people of colour for example. This is not seen as an obligation, but rather as an incentive to stay every day closer to our audience.

Pluralism, tolerance and intercultural dialogue are key phenomenon to understand each other today. And the media industry has its role to play. Therefore, discrimination must be well avoided on and off screen. When promoting equality, it is important not to use "clichés".

This document aims at showing some of the best practices initiated by the ACT members in various fields, such as:

- 1) National, Racial or Ethnic origin
- 2) Religion or Belief
- 3) Disability
- 4) Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Equality
- 5) Age

Coming from different countries, these examples show that diversity is a pan-European issue. Every ACT member is actively involved in this dialogue and tries to engage with the whole society to change minds and make minorities full players of the European media industry.

ACT members' good practices

1) National, Racial or Ethnic origin

Name of the channel	Description of the initiative
RTL-TVI (Belgium)	Already at RTL-TVI's very beginnings in 1987, Myriam Lafare who is Creole, is part of the RTL-TVI's "dream team" of female programme presenters. More recently, in 1999, RTL-TVI hired Hakima Darhmouch, a journalist originating from Morocco, who is now presenting the news bulletin of the channel.
M6 (France)	<p>A flagship programme of M6 is the news magazine <i>66 Minutes</i>, which is presented by the journalist and editor in chief of <i>66 Minutes</i>, Aïda Touihri, originating from Tunisia.</p> <p>M6 states that the channel has a responsibility to represent the diversity of cultures and origins that make up the French society. As per its agreement with the CSA, and in accordance with Article 9, the network must promote "the values of integration and solidarity that are those of the Republic" on the air. As reflection of society and its diversity, television is an important vehicle for promoting integration. With reality television shows like <i>Loft Story</i> and <i>Popstars</i>, M6 was the first network to show the reality of a racially mixed France through its shows' contestants. M6 hopes, through a wide range of programmes, to be a vehicle for representing minorities in a positive light, promoting the values of tolerance, sharing and solidarity. Groupe M6 extends its promotion of diversity into the music world as well, with the broadcast of music videos, concerts and artists' portraits on its various channels. In this way, the Group's music channels help to promote artists from many different backgrounds and help viewers discover extremely varied music genres like rap, raï, R&B, zouk and reggae.</p>
RTL Television (Germany)	<p>RTL Television in Germany always considered the topic of migration and integration related to the media of high interest. Already in 2007, the RTL Television Chief Editor Peter Kloepfel met the Federal Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration, Minister of State Dr. Maria Böhmer to discuss the topic. Peter Kloepfel said: "We want moreover to integrate young people with migration background in our broadcasting station and also want to try to get more contact with schools to offer teachers the possibility to additionally develop media competence that can be communicated during class." Following the first initiatives launched in 2007, on January 2009, RTL Television presented its 2nd Com.mit Award for integration. For this</p>

	<p>year, the call for entries went out to students at schools all over Germany. The award’s patron was Dr. Maria Böhmer. Interested students between the ages of 15 and 20 years drew up concepts for film footage dealing with the topics of integration and migration. Following an initial pre-selection, the most promising concepts were reviewed by a panel of VIPs from sports, media and music. Judges included TV presenters Nazan Eckes (RTL Television) and Nina Moghaddam (Super RTL and Vox), the singer Adel Tawil and RTL Television’s Chief Editor Peter Kloeppe, as well as Bundesliga football pro Ümit Özat from 1. FC Cologne. RTL Television invited the students with the best submissions to Cologne for a weekend workshop at the RTL Television School of Journalism, where they learned the basics of TV journalism. Staffers at the RTL studio provided professional assistance as they turned their scripts into films. Peter Kloeppe, said: “Last year’s numerous submissions for the media awards, some of which were really very compelling, encouraged us to expand the call for entries to all of Germany. Through this award, we would like to promote dialogue, which is so crucial to successful integration.”</p>
	<p>From 2005 to 2007, RTL Television broadcasted the sitcom <i>Alle lieben Jimmy</i>, which described the life of a Turkish family in Germany, letting apart all the widespread clichés. All family members are fully integrated in the German society and speak standard German with no Turkish accent. <i>Alle lieben Jimmy</i> has been nominated at the Deutscher Fernsehpreis 2006, Rose d’Or 2007, Prix Europa 2007 and at the International Emmy Award 2007.</p>
	<p>In 2008, 9 out of the 10 final contestants of the casting show <i>Deutschland Sucht Den Superstar</i> had a migration background. The German daily newspaper TAZ reported on 18 March 2008 about the positive coverage RTL Television made on these contestants described as “friendly”, “ambitious” and giving a positive insight of their different culture.</p>
<p>MTV Media (Finland)</p>	<p>MTV3 broadcast many programmes dealing with national and ethnic origins. “Mogadishu Avenue” was a programme about the large Somali minority in Finland and “Käenpesä” showed how immigrants have managed to integrate in the Finnish working life.</p>
<p>TVN (Poland)</p>	<p>Although the talk show “Rozmowy w toku”, broadcast on the free to air channel TVN during week days from 15.50 until 16.55, is not exclusively devoted to promotion of diversity and integration of minorities, discrimination is often the subject of its episodes. Recently "Rozmowy w toku" tackled the issue of discrimination against Roma communities in Poland.</p> <p>The 24 hour news channel TVN24 broadcasts every day a 50 minute long current affairs program “Prosto z Polski”. Program often focuses on problems that minorities living in Poland face.</p>

2) Religion or Belief

TVN (Poland)	<p>Religia.tv channel owned by TVN Group targets viewers who desire to have an unlimited access to programmes about faith and religions. Religia.tv's extensive programming offer including a broad variety of formats such as interactive shows, documentaries, classic movies, programmes on culture and popular science, talk-shows as well as cooking and traveling formats, promotes religious tolerance, curiosity of the world and intercultural dialogue. Religia.tv is broadly appreciated both in Poland and abroad. In 2008 religia.tv was nominated to prestigious Hot Birds TV Awards and Dariusz Fikus Award. Religia.tv reaches 3,5 million households in Poland.</p>
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3) Disability

Five (UK)	<p>Five in the UK has a strong commitment to its hearing-impaired audience with 80 per cent of the programmes subtitled. For digital transmission, sign language translation has been introduced and will grow in the next few years, as will audio description for visually impaired.</p>
	<p>Five made the following statement to the Employers-Forum on Disability and Recruitment/Learning and Development:</p> <p>“Five believes that diversity is one of our company’s strengths, and strives to attract talent from all sections of our community including those with a disability. At Five, individuals are selected, treated and promoted on the basis of their abilities and merits and according to the requirements of the job. Reasonable adjustments will be made when appropriate for individuals with a disability to ensure they are treated fairly. Five is actively working to build the diversity of its employee profile to align with our viewers and programming strategy and in particular, Five is focusing on disability. At Five, we are committed to making every effort to support people with a disability to access both facilities and opportunities. Support includes giving applicants selected for interview the opportunity to specify access requirements and/or to request reasonable adjustments to</p>

	<p>the interview process. Successful disabled candidates will be supported during employment through reasonable adjustments to their working arrangements, premises/facilities and to their job. Learning and development events are also designed and arranged to take into account an individual's needs (...)"</p>
M6 (France)	<p>In 2007, M6 was an innovator, as the first network to offer live close captioning of its news programmes at 12.50 and 19.50, as well as close-captioned football matches, cartoons and video clips. In four years (2004-2007), and in conformance with the law on equal rights and opportunities, participation and the community status of the disabled, M6 quadrupled the number of close-captioned hours in its programme schedule. In 2007, with 2,756 close-captioned hours, the legal requirement of 2,200 hours has been greatly surpassed</p>
	<p>As part of France's Working Week for the Disabled (November 2007), M6 participated in an initiative dubbed "One day of professional experience" set up by AGEFIPH, a French organisation that promotes the integration of disabled people into working life. M6 has been given job-seekers a peek behind the scenes in many of its departments (e.g. editorial, financial, IT and HR), where a staff member showed one job-seeker exactly what their work entails. That should give the job-seekers a realistic idea of the job and show them what it's like working in the media sector. By participating in this initiative, M6 showed its commitment to both the integration of disabled people and its active, socially oriented HR policy.</p>
Mediaset (Italy)	<p>One of the contestants of this year's Reality-TV show Big Brother is a blind person.</p>
RTL Television (Germany)	<p>In November 2008, both RTL Television and N-TV received the German Paralympics Media Award 2008 for their extensive coverage of the Paralympics in Beijing. Since 1999 this award honours outstanding journalistic contributions on the topic of sports for people with disabilities. Sport reporter Klaus Jakob (<i>RTL Aktuell</i>) who himself has been blind on one eye since the age of three said: "As a sport reporter I have witnessed many a sporting highlight. But what I was privileged to experience and learn at the Paralympic is even more valuable." RTL Television Chief Editor Peter Kloeppe added: "People with disabilities are an integral part of our society. By regularly reporting from the Paralympics in Beijing, we deliberately set a signal for sports in the disabled community, while showcasing the enormous achievements of top athletes with disabilities."</p>
MTV Media (Finland)	<p>MTV3's daily drama "Salatut Elämät" that has now been on screen for 10 years has done a lot of things address the issue of disability. This programme has a daily average audience of about 800,000 Finns (2 million households) and is one of the most watched programmes in Finland according to Finnpanel.</p>

	The programme has addressed the issue of disabilities in a very positive way and how disabled people can be integrated in the society. A woman with Down syndrome was at the time portrayed in the show and the programme received an award from the Finnish Association for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities .
TVN (Poland)	Poland's first metropolitan television channel TVN Warszawa mainly in its news bulletins increases the visibility of disabled people and helps to integrate disabled people into the society . By covering the issues which specifically concern disabled people and their families (providing a barrier-free environment for the independence, convenience and safety of people with disabilities) and encouraging positive images of disabled people (promoting sports and cultural events intended for disabled) TVN Warszawa introduces new standards to the media coverage. TVN Warszawa reaches 600,000 households in Poland.

4) Sexual Orientation and/or Gender Equality

RTL Group	Several women are holding top management positions within RTL Group , managing a number of our companies, e.g. Anke Schäferkordt (CEO of RTL Television and President of Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland), Dawn Airey (CEO of Five), Lorraine Heggessey (CEO Talkback Thames), Cécile Frot-Coutaz (CEO FremantleMedia North America), Ute Biernat (CEO Grundy Light Entertainment).
Mediaset (Italy)	<i>Il Bivio-Cosa sarebbe successo se... - The Crossroads-What if...</i> is an entertainment programme that tells real stories, in which destiny plays a fundamental role, and tries to imagine possible alternative developments. It is hosted by Enrico Ruggeri and it's carried out through the help of docu-fiction, some recorded pieces and the presence in studio of the protagonists. There have been three different editions, 2005-06, 2007 and 2008, sometimes dealing with difficult stories of men and women with a hard and controversial past. During the episode aired on Monday 19/6/2006, E. Ruggeri presented the story of Elena, now Christian, who, when she was 25 and after being married and giving birth to a daughter, Luana, decided to change sex and to marry Antonella, her best friend in boarding school. In studio Christian together with Antonella goes over his life, his past experiences, his choices through direct testimony and pieces of fiction that show how was his past and what could have happened in his future of woman and mother if he had not taken that decision.

	<p>Jonathan Kashanian, gay winner of Big Brother 5 in 2006 on Canale 5, is now opinion-maker in the programme of Piero Chiambretti “Chiambretti Nights” in second time on Italia 1.</p> <p>Aldo Busi, homosexual, from 2003 presents “Amici Libri”, in which he describes famous literary works. Since 2006 this programme has been broadcast on Saturday morning on Canale 5.</p>
TVN (Poland)	<p>One of TVN’s most popular locally produced series "Magda M" was acknowledged with the "Hiacynt 2007" award in the "media" category for portraying a gay character into the series, who is not depicted in a negative way. The Hiacynt (Hyacinth) award is given by the Equality Foundation for promoting tolerance, equality of rights and fight against discrimination. Positive images of homosexuals are present in 3 of TVN’s current most popular productions: “39 i pół” “Brzydula” and “Na wspólnej”.</p>

5) Age

TVN (Poland)	<p>The largest and the most popular Internet portal in Poland Onet.pl owned by TVN Group launched the <i>przez-pokolenia.pl</i> project which aims at building and enhancing cross generation family bonds, as well as resolving technological barriers between the young and the old. Przez-pokolenia.pl serves as a base upon which young generations may help develop interest in modern means of communication in the elderly. "Historia z myszka" (History with a Mouse), the recent competition conducted within the "przez-pokolenia.pl" project, required contestants to deliver a photo and a related family story. The concept involving young and older family members, resulted in an online gallery of over two thousand posts, and gives an interesting insight into the Polish contemporary history: http://przez-pokolenia.onet.pl/konkurs/galeria .</p>
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Contacts

For any questions you might have, the ACT will be happy to discuss with you. Please contact us:

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