

Community Radio: A Contribution to the Digital Debate

Proposals of the Community Radio Sector to Members of the European Parliament on Communication Rights in the Digital Environment

Recalling, among others:

- the European Parliament resolution on Community Media in Europe (25 September 2008) which stresses that community media contribute to media pluralism and are an effective means of strengthening cultural and linguistic diversity, social inclusion and local identity.
- the Declaration of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the role of community media in promoting social cohesion and intercultural dialogue (11 February 2009) which stresses that community media serve needs which are not met by public service and commercial media.
- General Comment No 34 of the United Nations Human Rights Committee on Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (12 September 2011), which states that licensing regimes for broadcasting via media with limited capacity, such as audiovisual terrestrial and satellite services should provide for an equitable allocation of access and frequencies between public, commercial and community broadcasters.

Recognising that community radio is now a major part of the broadcasting landscape which engages and reaches many millions of people across Europe and that these media are an essential contributor to freedom of expression and access to information.

Recognising specifically that community radio faces barriers of access to analogue and digital broadcasting that result from technical and spectrum planning, lack of independence of some regulatory bodies, inadequate legislation, economic constraints and lack of recognition of the contribution of this sector to media pluralism.

We call upon the European Union and its Member States:

1. To take account of the community radio sector in all relevant European policies including those relating to media pluralism, information and communication technologies, the digital dividend, and cultural, social and economic affairs.
2. To provide specific legal and regulatory conditions that foster the development of the community radio sector in analogue and digital environments.
3. To ensure the equitable allocation of broadcasting spectrum between public service, commercial and community broadcasting services on analogue and digital platforms.
4. To establish measures to provide public financial support to the sector including to assist community radio services that seek to adapt to digital platforms.
5. To ensure that digital broadcasting technologies and laws allow community radios the right to both own and operate their own transmission systems.
6. To ensure that the representative organizations of the community broadcasting sector at the European level and in each Member State are systematically consulted on all relevant matters of European and Member State policy.



This document has been prepared at an AMARC-Europe initiative, held in Brussels on 8th & 9th May 2012. The following were present: CMFE (Europe), CMA (UK), CMS (UK), SNRL (France), CNRA (France), ReMC (Spain), Radio Tas Tas (Basque Country), CRAOL (Ireland), CraXX (Belgium), Radio Centraal (Belgium), SRMS (Hungary), VFRÖ (Austria), Radiofonia (Poland), NRO (Sweden), BFR (Germany)