



COMMUNITY MEDIA FORUM EUROPE

To: Mr. Pat Rabbitte TD
Minister for Communications, Energy & Natural Resources
29 – 31 Adelaide Road
Dublin 2
Ireland

Subject: **Funding of Dublin Community Television (DCTV)**

Brussels, 14 January 2014

Dear Minister Rabbitte,

Community Media Forum Europe (CMFE) represents networks, national federations and projects active within the Third Media Sector sector. It supports community media in maintaining a clearly distinct identity alongside the national public service sector and private commercial media, at a moment when freedom of expression and free access to information are increasingly endangered by the consequences of concentration in the media field.

The CMFE Board has been following with concern the plight of Dublin Community Television (DCTV), one of our Irish members. DCTV is in a critical position, having let go all the staff and closed the premises. We believe this is primarily because of the inadequate model of funding for community media in Ireland. To our knowledge DCTV was not looking for any increase in funding, but just that the fund would be distributed in a consistent manner that would allow for planning and stability.

Similar amounts of funding are available for community media in other EU countries, but these models allow for more sustainable distribution. Denmark, Austria and France, for example, with different source funding, are models which the Irish Sound and Vision could look to. Denmark in particular has recently announced 38 concessions for non-commercial local television in 8 regional DTT (digital terrestrial television) areas (Mux 1). The new amendments in the Danish media law set stronger terms of local programme content and local NGO ownership. It is funding non-commercial local television with 3,9 million Euro via the TV license fee.

Such models have long been proposed by community media organizations to the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland.

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We would also like to point to the European Parliament resolution of 25 September 2008 on Community Media in Europe (2008/2011(INI)) (2010/C 8 E/14) which states that:

Community media are an important means of empowering citizens and encouraging them to become actively involved in civic society; whereas they enrich social debate, representing a means of internal pluralism of ideas; and whereas concentration of ownership presents a threat to in-depth media coverage of issues of local interest for all groups within the community;

Stresses that community media help to strengthen media pluralism, as they provide additional perspectives on issues that lie at the heart of a given community;

Calls on Member States to support community media more actively in order to ensure media pluralism, provided that such support is not to the detriment of public media.

CMFE urges the Ministry to work with DCTV and Community Media in Ireland so that in the current time of changes to Irish broadcast legislation these issues are taken into consideration and DCTV and community media are supported in a sustainable manner.

Yours sincerely,



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Vice-President CMFE

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Founded in 2004, CMFE links various members of the Third Media Sector at the European level. The "Third Media Sector" is made up of non profit-making media serving a local community and has as such a clearly distinct identity alongside the national public service sector and private commercial media. The CMFE is a common platform for networks, national federations and projects active within this sector. It has an observer status with the Steering Committee on the Media and Information Society (CDMSI) of the Council of Europe and is part of the CoE International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGO) Conference. Currently, CMFE has 118 members (of which 27 are National Federations) from 26 European countries. According to the CMFE 2012 mapping a total of 2237 community radio stations and 521 community television stations are active across Europe.

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