April 2023



The CMFE board and all of us CMFE-active send you our

Warmest Spring wishes!



Photo by <u>Dustin Humes</u> on <u>Unsplash</u>

While life around us is awakening after the winter, while we wait for the elements to give us what we need: rainwater to nurture our nature, sun & warmth for love and passion, light for lightness and perspective; we in the community media movement move forward to ensure space for people's voices, perspectives and wisdom; for democratic spaces of expression - to form the communities, the societies, and the lives we long for.

This spring newsletter brings you information and inspiration in our core focus areas as CMFE:

Supporting an enabling environment:

- Internet for Trust initiative news and draft guidelines
- Latest on our struggles to ensure safe work spaces in CM
- Media Freedom under Attack in Europe: 813 instances
- Gender Equality and Media Regulation: recommendations

Securing Visibility of our sector

- Collaboration in Get the Trolls Out (GTTO)
- CMFE collaborating to strengthen public health literacy
- Showcasing women's struggles within Community Media

Supporting Cooperation for Change

- Re:framing Migrants in the European Media
- CM cooperation in Europe a Hungarian perspective

And as usual, we share a number of **Classifieds** information from funding over upcoming events to publications to consider enjoying.

Love and Peace V



Birgitte Jallov

CMFE Newsletter Editor-cum-curator

CMFE Newsletters Archive

Read previous issues here.

Strengthening an enabling environment

While fighting the power of disinformation and fake news

Community media again proves its important role in securing media literacy for people's power to choose



Community media proves time and again in our realities how the proximity, and the familiar: language, focus, interest, location, and culture establish a close connection between our media and our community. Trust in this relationship is important when passing on life-saving information as we have experienced during Covid, as we witness during disasters, and as we prepare to meet the challenges – also of digital platforms. Those of us engaging in the community media ourselves become a part of the media literates, who learn to see through how easily media can distort reality – and unfortunately, we know, that fake news, with its often sensationalist approach travels faster than the truth. We all have a role to play here.

Internet for trust - a human-rights-based approach

At the same time as we mobilize in our communities and our own media platforms, we also need support from legislators who have the possibility to form the enabling environment in which we operate. An interesting series of initiatives at the global level have been organized by UNESCO under the heading: "Internet for Trust".

Launch of 'Internet for trust' guidelines in September

More than 4,300 people participated in a UNESCO Conference, agreeing to advance the guidelines, which will be launched in September. The three-day event marked the latest phase in the global dialogue to develop regulatory solutions for social media to improve the reliability of information and promote human rights online.

Fertile ground for falsehoods: Lies spread faster than facts

"The blurring of boundaries between true and false, the highly-organized denial of scientific facts, the amplification of disinformation and conspiracies – these did not originate on social networks. But, in the absence of regulation, they flourish there much better than the truth," UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay warned in her opening speech.

She urged countries to act together so that information remains a global common good, stating that "only by taking the full measure of this technological revolution can we ensure it does not sacrifice human rights, freedom of expression and democracy."

Maria Ressa, prosecuted journalist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate from the Philippines, said that

"Lies spread faster than facts. For some reason, facts are really boring. Lies – especially when laced with fear, anger, hate, with tribalism – us against them. They spread. It's like throwing a lit match into kindling." She cautioned against tolerating social media algorithms that reward lies, as future generations will inherit a world in which truth has been dangerously devalued. "Without facts, you can't have the truth, without truth, you can't have trust, and we have no shared reality," she said.

Find the draft digital guidelines here:

Draft Guidelines

Search at Radio Dreyeckland:

Free Radio Stations are not sufficiently protected



The search at Radio Dreyeckland in Freiburg was widely found to be an encroachment on the freedom of broadcasting. Volunteer community broadcasters and other journalists felt threatened in their work by the development. (Archive photo 27.08.2017 - Christian Mang/Imago Image from: https://www.freitag.de/autoren...]

In January, the safety of community media broadcasters was again an issue, this time in Germany, where community media are called: Freie Radios, Free Radios. Fabian Ekstedt, the station manager of Radio LORA in Munich and CMFE board member, shared the following in a guest commentary in the digital German medium 'Der Freitag' on January 18, 2023.

Over to Fabian's guest commentary:

And once again the police are in the editorial offices. Earlier this week, the public prosecutor's office in Karlsruhe searched two of the private apartments of editors and also entered the editorial offices of the colleagues at Radio Dreyeckland (RDL), the free radio in Freiburg, Breisgau. They were accused of having published an article on the station's homepage "that contains a link to an archive of the banned association 'linksunten.indymedia'", as the police headquarters in Freiburg announced.

A confiscation of the studio computers and thus the active endangerment of the station's ability to broadcast, could be prevented thanks to the self-incrimination of an editor. The author of the news article "Investigation closed after Indymedia Linksunten ban for 'formation of criminal organisation'" explained that he wrote this article on his own computer, which was also confiscated.

This news article follows many other of articles dealing with linksunten.indymedia. It went online less than half a year ago, a short text that says exactly what the headline suggests. Like so many other articles on the subject, it is illustrated with a photo showing the text "We are all linksunten.indymedia" as graffiti on a Freiburg house wall. As befits a message centered on a website, it is provided with a link to the archive of that site. Not from the Darknet, not picked up from anywhere, but the same result that everyone who searches for this site on the Internet sees first.

Overall, there is not much difference to articles from large media houses or from public websites. But apparently there must be a big difference, because so far nothing has been read about house searches of editors and editorial offices of other media. They were able to report on the dubious legal classification of linksunten.indymedia as an association with the purpose of banning it, without being accused by the public prosecutor's office of being an "extended arm" of the banned "association".

Attack on all volunteer journalists

Volunteer broadcasters working in free, community radios, enrich the broadcasting landscape with their voices, their research, and their work out of their own will, their own curiosity, and their own sense of responsibility. And they don't do that in any chat groups or on so-called social media for direct feedback in the form of thumbs up or down, but publicly, on the radio. *In good times, their work serves as the best example of freedom from broadcasting and censorship in Germany.* In bad times, they are simply held jointly responsible for the news they report, as is happening in Freiburg.

This is a clear encroachment on the freedom of broadcasting. Editorial offices have been entered, and the authorities have gained insight into work processes and the identity of the employees.

But it is not just an attack on an abstract right to protect the freedom of the media. Rather, it must also be understood as an attempt at intimidation - against the voluntary media workers, who will not let the legal processing of the linksunten.indymedia case falls into oblivion. And against everyone who is active in community media, if not against all journalists.

Because house searches are also to be understood as a punishment. An invasion of privacy. In a digital society, the confiscation of smartphones and computers is a punishment in itself, a deprivation of the digital self. In large

media houses with powerful legal departments and provided work computers and smartphones, this intervention is massive, in independent radio stations it is to be understood as an attack on all honorary journalists.

We are not sufficiently protected!

We Community Media journalists, who mostly work with our personal devices, who sacrifice our spare time voluntarily for better media coverage of society, we all know by now: we are not adequately protected!

So, what should we say to those who come to our radios to participate? Those journalists who have fled censorship and persecution in their countries and dare the first low threshold attempts to connect with the German media landscape in independent radio stations? The people from all social and educational milieus who choose to volunteer on the radio in order to break up the narrowing media focus on controversies with their perspectives? Should we encourage them to take risks themselves?

We won't give up.

We have seen how Free Radios in Hungary fared, and how freedom of broadcasting was and is being restricted in many countries around the world. We know our work is important. Anyone who has a problem with problems being reported is usually the problem themselves.

Therefore, we demand:

- The immediate termination of the investigation that led to the house search
- The immediate return of all confiscated items
- The deletion of all data that has already been copied in the presence of experts to be appointed by the German community media association, BFR
- The full apology from the public prosecutor's office.

Latest news:

As far as CMFE knows, the confiscated items have been returned but the data has been mirrored. Further: On 13.03.2023, RDL's lawyers, with the support of the Society for Civil Liberties, submitted the grounds for the complaints against the searches to the Karlsruhe Regional Court. And RDL is asking for financial support:

"The absurd investigations against us by the police and the public prosecutor's office, unfortunately, cost not only time and nerves but also money. We need some technical replacement, but most of all money to finance our lawyers and further legal help. So we need your support!"

Donation account:

Freundeskreis Radio Dreyeckland e.V.

Stichwort: Pressefreiheit

IBAN: **DE04** 6809 0000 0009 320 202

813 media freedom violations in EU Member States and candidate countries in 2022

Media Freedom under Attack

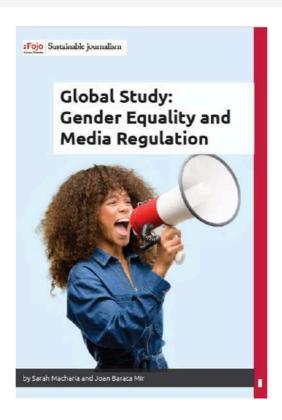


Italy: Thorough investigation required after arson attack on car of journalist Rossella Puccio (Photo: Ansa from: https://www.mfrr.eu/italy-thorough-investigation-required-after-arson-attack-on-car-of-journalist-rossella-puccio/)

The Europe-wide media freedom monitoring mechanism: the Media Freedom Rapid Response (MFRR) early February published the latest edition of the MFRR Monitoring Report with the mechanism's biannual analysis of all media freedom violations registered on Mapping Media Freedom. Throughout 2022, their partners recorded and verified 813 media freedom violations in EU Member States and candidate countries.

To help digest that daunting and complex figure, they shared an interview with their Monitoring Officer, <u>Neus Vidal</u>, about the report's findings as they relate to the war in Ukraine, the rise in online attacks, and abuses of the legal system to silence journalists. Keep reading to hear insights from the report's coordinator or click <u>here</u> to read it in full.

"... gender equality in freedom of expression remains a distant goal."



The FOJO study on gender equality and media regulation opens with this mind-boggling quote, and the study seeks to begin to identify ways forward.

Over the years, it has become evident that freedom of expression and gender equality are linked. They are both fundamental for the development of democratic societies. Currently, we see both threats and gains concerning free speech and gender equality. There is a lack of knowledge on what has been done and what measures might work to safeguard freedom of expression and gender equality. While western countries have more extensive mapping and monitoring, such information is still missing in many Global South nations.

By tradition, legislation is seen as limiting to media freedom and freedom of speech. On the other hand, legislation has been key to contribute to gender equality in society. Media regulation may hinder or expand gender equality in freedom of expression. Is it possible to regulate so that more voices are heard and for more people, men and women to take part in public debate? How may societies expand freedom of expression without the cost of silencing voices?

This report is initiated by Fojo Media Institute in order to contribute to the understanding of the situation regarding gender equality in freedom of expression. It offers a global overview of legislations and policies with more in-

depth studies of five Fojo partner countries; Armenia, Bangladesh, Rwanda, Somalia and Zimbabwe.

The basic question has been: What kind of regulation and self-regulation on gender equality in the media exist, what are the good practices?

Read all the findings and the recommendations here:

Way forward!

Improving the Visibility of CM

Did you miss this?

New CMFE Report: Public Health Literacy through community media



This report was carried out within the framework of the project **European Excellence Exchange in Journalism (E3J)**, a partnership among five European Press Freedom organizations. Recognizing that community media in many communities' lives represent a trusted and valuable source of information, this thematic report aims to strengthen and support community media in reflecting and contributing to more public health awareness and debate. The report includes findings from four countries in Europe with different framework conditions for the work of community media, but also for communication culture and health awareness in general: Austria, Denmark, Ireland, and Spain.

Findings:

- When it comes to public health issues, there is a great need for more trustworthy information, social awareness, and space for debate – this is true for all countries studied.
- Concern was found as to the unequal levels of health literacy in society, often closely linked to uneven levels of science literacy and media and information literacy, but also dependent on available resources and social position in society.
- Community Media are relevant spaces for local or regional communication, trusted by the communities. This potential often cannot be fully developed due to limited resources. This fact prevents
 Community Media often to play an even more powerful role in informing communities about public health issues and becoming stronger health literacy platforms.

Community media are giving a voice to those segments of the communities with fewer opportunities to bring up their issues in mainstream media. Ensuring access for people with a wide fan of public health challenges and taking part in public debate about their health issues carries a high potential for raising awareness of public health and for encouraging more civic participation.

Recommendations:

Community media can become key actors in health promotion and empowering people to increase their control over and improve their health. They are by their design and structure an important link between public health guidance and the community. Community media are acting locally and use horizontal structures of production. They allow people to create their own means of cultural expression, news, information, and dialogue. Concrete actions should include:

- The production of live, magazine-format programs, dealing with public health in all its variety and diversity should be based on the involvement of or interviews with experts and 'experts on consequences' who live with the challenges.
- Involving and cooperating with medical, psychological, and social
 professionals, in general, could also open the way for new partnerships
 with connected or responsible institutions. This should include
 engagement with local associations, networks, action groups, or the
 like to do portraits of these groupings to ease community engagement.
- The production of human-interest stories, and personal portraits, where people who have gone through a health challenge describe it, talk about ways of living with it and the path to recovery can serve as good practice.
- Community Media should not limit their activities to programs but also carry out community mobilization and information-sharing events, workshops, or other interventions in public spaces, physically, and onsite.
- The production of short science information programs, e.g. five minutes at a certain time every day, could be a helpful and effective form of public service announcements which might be realized also in different languages.

Download / Read the full report:



Community media in Get the Trolls Out!

As the cooperation between CMFE and the Get the Trolls Out project! (GTTO) by the Media Diversity Institute (MDI) continues, we are supporting community media productions focusing on inter-religious dialogue, inclusion and empowerment of religious minorities, anti-discrimination, and countering faith-based hate and disinformation. The shows bring different perspectives and stories than those available in the mainstream and highlight solutions or positive experiences.

You can access all productions <u>here</u>. The podcasts are also available on the MDI podcast pages on <u>Anchor</u> and <u>Spotify</u>.

Most recently, we talked about:

- The challenges faced by female politicians and the hate they receive as outspoken Muslim women in a <u>conversation between We Belong and</u> Sawsan Chebli
- Countering and preventing hate toward religious communities
- Countering and monitoring hate on social media, Public Service
 <u>Media</u>, and <u>political ads</u> in Hungary with two productions by Őrkutyák
 (Watchdogs) on Civil Radio and EPER Radio.

You can follow GTTO and sign up for regular updates here: https://getthetrollsout.org.

Women on the Global Community Airwaves



On March 8, EMPOWERHOUSE launched a podcast series: 'Women on the Global Community Airwaves' bringing you stories from women working to advance women's and the community's lives through community media around the world. The stories are brought to you by Birgitte Jallov, who has worked in this area for a lifetime from within EMPOWERHOUSE.

In many realities, women's voices are among those least heard and women are often not respected with equal access to their human rights. Women in community radio are working to change these narratives and realities. They ensure that women's voices and stories share their life and realities in the public, increasing respect and space.

Impact assessments of community media on different continents and in different realities have shown that when community media break the silence, unhealthy traditions change. It takes some time, but it happens. One of the most prominent impacts found when working in communities everywhere is, that violence against women and children has decreased and that women have begun to have a more active, visible, and respected role in the community.

In this podcast series, the community radio women will, themselves, identify and document their experiences with community media as platforms and channels for empowering women and increasing women's role in the concrete communities and in a consequence thereof, in society in general. And the podcasts seek answers to why and how – or why not?

Action for Coop. and Change

"I prefer radio to TV because the pictures are better"

Community Media Cooperation in the EU



The above quote stems from Alistair Cooke, a British-American writer, journalist, and radio broadcaster, quoted by Gábor Géczi, who is the editor of Civil Radio based in Budapest, Hungary. We have on earlier occasions in this CMFE newsletter shared the challenges of community media in Hungary, and we have supported the protests, written to the Hungarian government suggesting that they talk with colleagues from other European countries, where community media are considered important actors in a democracy. It did not help. Not-for-profit community media are still being forced off the air. Civil Radio has, like many others, refused to stop – and now continues online.

The Power of European Community Media Cooperation and Collaboration

It is, however, not this struggle that Gábor writes about hereunder, it is about the power of trans-European collaboration, where the community media cross borders, and where *the lovely pictures of community radio* become European and real.

"As far as I remember," Gábor writes, "Civil Radio has been participating in EU projects since 2005. In the spring of that year, in collaboration with the non-profit organization COSPE, based in Florence, Italy, we produced five 20-minute radio programs in Hungary and five in Italy, on agreed topics, touching on various areas of multi-cultural co-existence, and involving NGOs, minorities and representatives of other institutions on our Community Media platforms."

EU projects secure funding - which brings friendships and insight

Gábor continues: "In the 18 years that have passed since then, Civil Rádió has participated in many EU projects. The main reason, why we are still "forced" to look for the opportunity to participate in EU projects, is primarily related to the financial situation of Civil Rádió as a not-for-profit radio. Considering the fact that we work with almost 100% volunteer staff and the domestic funding for tenders is shrinking, we are forced to rely on the necessary, but reliable income from EU projects."

"Of course," he adds, "in addition to the "pressure", such cooperation and EU projects have many advantages. I mention only a few here:

- · getting to know other EU member states
- getting to know non-profit radio stations operating in other EU countries, including their work and their employees
- exchanging our experiences
- participation in program exchange programs
- presenting the work of Civil Radio in other EU countries, etc."

Gábor explains that: "In most cases, Ákos Cserháti, Civil Radio's managing director, and myself as radio show producer and member of Civil Radio Board, participate in the majority of the EU projects, however, we have involved and continue to involve other colleagues from Civil Rádio in joint project jobs on countless occasions. The goal is to see the benefits of these collaborations for as many people as possible. In this way, we got acquainted with the community radio activists and broadcasters of Austrian, English, Finnish, French, Irish, Luxembourgish, German, Italian, Polish, Serbian, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, and Swiss not-for-profit radio stations and their activities."

Powerful long-term cooperation – and hopes for all to join and benefit

Gábor winds up his reflections on the power of European Collaboration: "During the many years of international work I consider the *Danube Streamwaves* cooperation and program exchange an exemplary one, which has been taking place since 2015 at the initiative of Radio Free FM in Ulm, Germany, and in which non-profit radio stations from three other countries along the Danube river participate (Radio Fro, Linz/Austria; Oradio, Novi Sad/Serbia and Civil Rádió, Budapest/Hungary)." The Danube Streamwaves connects community radios: civil society-organized broadcasters in the Danube region deal with the effects of digital disruption. In international working groups, we develop strategies on how to respond to social and technical changes. Civil Radio turns 30 in 2024 and wishes to continue these partnerships.

The community media collaboration, opening perspectives, understanding, and friendships, Gábor stressed that "The EU membership has many advantages that Hungary have not had before. Most of them can be found on the following website:

https://european-union.europa.eu/priorities-and-actions/achievements en Hungary voted in April 2003 and accession finally took place on May 1, 2004, together with Cyprus, the Czech Republic, and Estonia, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Slovakia and Slovenia. In 2007, Bulgaria and Romania also joined the EU."

Gábor concludes his story, "I consider it important to see that - presumably thanks to the rigid radio structures and systems in those countries - (much to my regret) none of the former socialist states in Europe, which became EU

members a long time ago, participate in EU radio projects (with rare exceptions like Slovenia, Poland, and Serbia). I find this all the sadder because, for my part, I would extend the cooperation of non-profit radio stations to the exchange of experiences between continents. It is really worth it!"

Re:framing Migrants in the European Media

CMFE has joined the consortium of the <u>Re:framing Migrants in the European Media</u> pilot project in developing a follow-up application for the continuation of the project. We hope to have more news soon! Meanwhile, you can follow the current edition, co-funded by the European Union and led by the European Cultural Foundation, which supports the development of a European public sphere, inclusive of the perspectives of refugees and migrants.

https://reframingmigrants.eu

All that you did not know you might be missing...

CLASSIFIEDS

Events

Intercultural Policy and Practice



This Week's Community Media Discussion:

Intercultural Policy and Practice

Tuesday from 6pm

Sign-Up at https://patreon.com/decenteredmedia

Rob Watson shares on his 'Decentered – Media for Positive Development and Change' [https://decentered.co.uk/commu...]

Ongoing Community Media Discussion, right now about Intercultural Policy and Practice. They write:

"This week in our community media discussion, we are continuing our conversation about community cohesion, and the role that community media plays in promoting an intercultural social experience. We will be talking about how community media needs a renewed focus in public policy terms so that as advocates we can change society for the better by expanding media diversity, inclusivity..."

Funding

Funding opportunities



The Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD) every week shares updates on funding opportunities. The most recent can be found here, where you are also able to sign up for regular updates:

Funding ops

Calls

Global Youth & News Media Prize

The 2023 edition of the News/Media Literacy Award wishes to honor front-line teachers and news media organizations active in the quest to help students understand the "why" of press freedom.

"Too often and in too many countries news/media literacy instruction skips the part about the need for journalism and the high price some pay to do that job," said Dr. Aralynn Abare McMane, the director of Global Youth & News Media. "This year, we want to work toward correcting some of that by recognizing those on the front lines who make sure those lessons are taught well."

That's why educators and news organizations will be honored with a special Press Freedom Teaching Award in the 2023 edition of the Global Youth & News Media Prize.

The award will recognize excellence in making sure that students develop a thorough understanding of the crucial role of journalism in society and of the sometimes deadly risks for people who do this work. This award will serve as the news/literacy category for this year's prize.

The deadline is May 1, all information on how to enter is here:

Link

Publications

"Gender Ideology" narratives: A threat to human rights



Istanbul demonstration, 1 July 2021. The banner says: "We are not giving up on the Istanbul Convention, it is not over for us"

Photo credit: Istanbul Convention Campaign Group Archive.

"Gender ideology" narratives have a negative impact on rights related to gender and sexuality!

The UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls has emphasized the obligation of states to "counter the narratives around gender ideology used by conservative lobbies to misinform and undermine the advancement of women's rights and gender equality." It also recommends that States "actively push back against conservative religious and racialized political ideologies that undermine gender equality" and "oppose misinformation and religious positions that subvert the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls."

Read more

Report on Integrating Ethnic Content into Public Service Broadcasting



In February the Centre for Law and Democracy, founded and led by the CMFE Expert group member Toby Mendel, Today, launched a report on Integrating Ethnic Content into Public Service Broadcasting, as part of its wider work focusing on Myanmar. While Myanmar is far away from Europe, some of the core reflections and advice on how to properly and effectively integrate ethnic content into broadcasting, can also inspire us in the European Community Media environment.

The report outlines the key international standards governing public service broadcasting (PSB), and then focuses on how these broadcasters can and should reflect the ethnic diversity of the societies they serve. A final section looks at other ways of promoting ethnic content within the overall broadcasting environment.

"The public broadcasting system in Myanmar never reflected the very rich and diverse ethnic makeup of the country," said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. "While moving forward on this issue is not possible now, following the February 2021 military coup, it is important to start building awareness of what will be needed when Myanmar transitions back to democracy."

CLD is working to build understanding among pro-democracy Myanmar actors about international standards on freedom of expression, as well as the institutional structures which are needed to support an environment of respect for this fundamental right. A genuine public service broadcasting system which, among other things, gives voice to and serves the information needs of all groups in society is a key part of this. Our dedicated webpage for Myanmar resources is available here.

The report is available in English here

Podcast series: Are you already following:

Women on the Global Community

Airwaves



Are you already following the podcast series from our part of the media landscape?

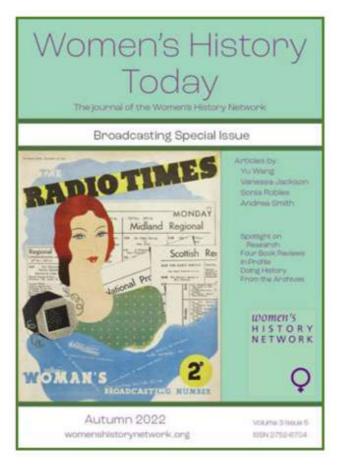
Since March 8 this year EMPOWERHOUSE and Birgitte Jallov have been populating podcast platforms with half-hour episodes, where women from around the world – including Europe – share their stories about how women work in community media and what it means for the producers, the listeners, and the women resource persons. At the same time, you get to have a peek into the situation of community media in that country.

You can also get the podcast series on Spotify, Spreaker, Apple Podcast, and so on.

Come join us!

A Contribution to the History of Women in Community Radio in Europe.

Women on the Air



BBC turned 100 years in November 2022. On that occasion, the journal 'Women's History Today' prepared a special issue on Women and Broadcasting. Within the 'Doing History' section of this journal, the process of getting the first ever directory of women in community radio in Europe together was featured – at a time with no internet, no online search facilities: Then trains were the communication channel left... Curious? Click the button for access to the article: 'Women on the Air': A Contribution to the History of Women in Community Radio in Europe.

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