COLLABORATIVE MEDIA INITIATIVE (CMI)

A Potential Untapped: Media Working Together across the Divide in Cyprus

UNDP

CCMC
Cyprus Community Media Centre

Acknowledgements & Methodology

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Abbreviations & acronyms

AEJ	Association of European Journalists
AIPS	International Sports Press Association
BASIN-SEN	Press Workers Union
BIRN	Balkan Investigative Reporting Network
CCCI	Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry
CCMC	Cyprus Community Media Centre
CFP	Cambridge Foundation for Peace
CMI	Collaborative Media Initiative
CMN	CyprusMediaNet
CNA	Cyprus News Agency
COE	Council of Europe
CSO	civil society organisation
CyBC	Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation
EAK	Cyprus Sports Writers' Association
EFJ	European Federation of Journalists
EU	European Union
FES	Friedrich Ebert Foundation
FWC	Future Worlds Centre
ICT	information and communication technology
IFJ	International Federation of Journalists
KTGB	Turkish Cypriot Journalists Association
KTSYD	Turkish Cypriot Sports Writers Association
KTTO	Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce
MARS	Media Against Racism in Sport
NGO	non-governmental organisation
TAK	Turk Ajansi Kibris
UCJ	Union of Cyprus Journalists
UN	United Nations
UNDP-ACT	United Nations Development Programme – Action for Cooperation and Trust
USIP	United States Institute of Peace

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Executive Summary

> "For me personally it has eliminated different myths as to what exists on the other side of the dividing line"
>
> **Vangelis Vassiliou, Journalist, Politis newspaper**

In an increasingly globalised information environment, with the prevalence of multiple channels of communication, the media play a crucial role in encouraging or reducing the influence of conflict on societies. The ongoing Cyprus Problem places additional barriers to effective communication and information exchange between the island's two main communities. The dominant narrative on the conflict has also had the effect of marginalising voices and opinions that speak of Cyprus in its entirety, as well as issues of relevance to all communities on the island.

The importance of bringing together media professionals in conflict and post-conflict areas has been recognised as a necessary step to promote a culture of trust and understanding between communities. Broadening people's perspectives and opening them up to information and ideas is an important prerequisite to a fully functioning democratic media, as well as fair and accurate information dissemination within and between communities.

The Collaborative Media Initiative (CMI), implemented under the auspices of the Cyprus Community Media Centre (CCMC), has tried to look at the media landscape as one, bringing together a variety of approaches and documenting initiatives and best practice that all aim to bring two distinct systems of media governance closer together.

The creation of a common media platform has the potential to act as a foundation for the integration of the media landscape in Cyprus in the interim period before a solution is achieved. It will require participation and a significant investment, both human and financial, from all stakeholders with an interest in bringing the two communities together.

The case for media collaboration in Cyprus
Over the last 18 months, the activities implemented throughout the CMI have led to the formulation of a set of recommendations to all stakeholders, based on the premise that increased media collaboration in Cyprus can contribute to improving intercommunal trust, cooperation and understanding.

These recommendations fall broadly into three categories:

1. Creating a vision for an integrated media landscape in Cyprus

The Cypriot media landscape should include provisions for the creation of a multilingual and multicultural islandwide broadcaster. Steps can be taken now to support this vision. The example of ARTE TV, established by France and Germany could be utilised as a model of best practice for creating media that can be shared following a period of conflict, and can also help to further integrate a reunited Cyprus with the rest of Europe. This could serve as a platform for a common media institution in a future Cyprus that will foster a sense of ownership amongst all Cypriots. Support from decision makers is a key element to showing Cypriots that positive change can be achieved despite years of division.

2. Encourage media collaboration on a professional basis

Media professionals from both communities stand to benefit from working together. Collaborative work is taking place, but has remained under the radar due to its nature and delicacy in the current political situation. Journalists' organisations, directors, and editors-in-chief should encourage their staff to work with colleagues from the other community and participate in events that concern all Cypriots. International organisations with an interest in supporting this process of integration, including the United Nations, the European Union and the Council of Europe, should also pay attention to work along parameters that encourage solid and sustainable partnerships.

3. Strengthening the links between Media and Democracy in Cyprus

Media is an essential element of a democratic society, where fair and accurate reporting can provide citizens with the necessary tools and access to information required to make informed decisions. For media to fulfil its role, conditions for media pluralism and freedom of expression must be established where a diversity of voices can enrich debate and accurately reflect all segments of the population. Improving the quality of access to media, and in particular new media through the internet, is crucial to strengthening levels of media literacy in Cyprus, and the capabilities of Cypriots to connect with each other. In this process, civil society will have an important role to play in creating a space for dialogue and cooperation. Organisations such as CCMC, with reach into all communities, can play an important and strategic role in this process.

Section I: Media, Cyprus & Conflict

The polarisation of the media landscape in Cyprus is one of the many facets of the division of the island. The opening of crossing points in April 2003, the measures implemented by the European Union (EU) to support the integration of the Turkish Cypriot Community into the EU[1], as well as the ongoing negotiations aimed at a comprehensive resolution of the Cyprus Problem have generally improved the climate for intercommunal interaction at various levels of society. Business cooperation is often cited as the most vibrant area of intercommunal relations[2]. But the media has remained on the periphery of efforts aimed at bringing the two communities closer together.

Media: A problem, or part of the Problem?

Why is this the case? Historically the Cyprus media landscape has always exemplified a high degree of exclusivity to its respective language community, particularly since the introduction of the printing press on the island at the beginning of British colonial rule in 1878. Academic studies of the Cyprus media have emphasised the divisive role it has played on the island. The first newspapers published in the Greek language were a medium of expression for the national aspiration of the island's Greek speakers. They were shortly followed by Turkish-language publications, whose history has been described by one scholar as one of 'reaction'[3], resulting in confrontation between the two presses, centred mainly on ethnicity. This antagonism also strengthened religious and linguistic sensitivity amongst Cypriots, emphasising differences between the two communities. For the first time in Cyprus, this new form of print capitalism was said to have 'established homogeneous groups of communication' and 'in this way the two communities became separate national entities with separate languages and religions'[4].

For a brief period at the start of independence from British rule in 1960, the media landscape was unified under the newly-created institutions of the Republic of Cyprus. Unfortunately this proved to be short-lived. From 1963 to the present day both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot media have focused on coverage of events within their own respective communities and mostly from their own communities' interests and perspectives. The events of 1974 have only served to widen this chasm. Since that time Cyprus has witnessed the development of two separate systems of media governance. Greek Cypriot media operates on much larger budgets and is integrated within the European landscape. However, coverage of sensitive issues, such as the Cyprus Problem, is tainted by an 'us' and 'them' approach to reporting.[5]

References

[1] More information is available on the website of the European Commission Representation in Cyprus - http://ec.europa.eu/cyprus/turkish_cypriots/index_en.htm

[2] For further information on economic interaction between the communities visit the website of the Economic Interdependence project - http://www.cpnnet.net/

[3] Bekir Azgin, Turkish Cypriot Media, in H. Von Klaus-Detlev Grothusen, W. Steffani & P. Zervakis (Eds.), Zypern, 1996, p.642

[4] Andreas Sophocleous, The First Cypriot Newspapers and the British Administration, The Global Media Journal: Mediterranean Edition, 1(1), Spring 2006

[5] Christophorou, C. et al (2010) Media Narratives, Politics and the Cyprus Problem, Nicosia, Peace Research Institute Oslo

Turkish Cypriot media exemplifies a heavy reliance on the Turkish market, and has been described as 'working with poor resources and producing news that is aligned to established ideologies'[6]. Media institutions communicate to their audience in two different languages, Greek and Turkish. There currently exists no intercommunal news agency or any sustainable structure for media professionals from each community to exchange information and produce joint content. Instead, there is an overreliance on news provided by agencies both local and international.[7] This trend, a variation of what has been described as 'churnalism'[8], disables and discourages independent and investigative journalistic research and reporting. Infrastructure also impedes effective communication between the two communities. The communications systems are completely separate. As one prominent editor of a Cypriot daily noted, 'how can I work effectively with a counterpart on the other side when I cannot even send [them] a text message?'[9] Freedom of expression is not fully guaranteed in Cyprus. Turkish Cypriot journalists in particular have been subject to threats and attacks. The unresolved murder case of Yeniduzen newspaper journalist Kutlu Adalı in 1996, and most recently the armed attack on Afrika newspaper[10] are examples of the difficulties faced by Turkish Cypriot media. Journalists' access to information is also not assured. As showcased during a recent conference in Nicosia, neither Greek Cypriot nor Turkish Cypriot media professionals have guaranteed access to public information.[11]

There is no doubt that the failure to reach a comprehensive political settlement has exacerbated the difficulties of media integration. The media sector has received a lot of attention, mostly negative, and has been described as a contributing factor in the conflict. The media's ability to shape public opinion has come under close scrutiny in the past, particularly during crucial periods of Cyprus' recent history.[12] In particular, the style of journalism in Cyprus has been described as an 'advocacy' style, where opinion permeates factual reporting of events.

The media polarisation further contributes to the lack of understanding and acceptance between the two communities. Despite a marked improvement in recent years, unbalanced coverage in the mainstream media of issues of common concern to both communities indicates a strong need for innovative action to further integrate the media landscape with the participation of multiple actors, and civil society in particular.

Media as a Solution?
In many parts of the world where conflict has impacted the lives of ordinary citizens, a number of initiatives have attempted to work with the media to promote peacebuilding or conflict resolution. Recent history throws up enough examples of the negative use of media, from the incitement of ethnic hatred across the Rwandan airwaves contributing to genocide in 1994,

[6] Lyndon C. S. Way, How Turkish Cypriot Radio News works against a Cyprus solution: The Opening of the Lokmaci/Ledra Street Crossing, The Global Media Journal: Mediterranean Edition 5 (1/2), Spring/Fall 2010, p.38

[7] Christophorou, C. (2010) Media Narratives, Politics and the Cyprus Problem
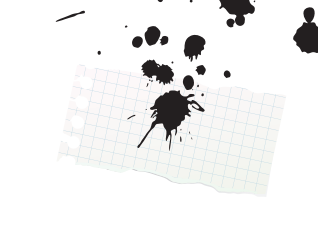
[8] Paul Lewis, Churnalism or news? How PRs have taken over the media, The Guardian, 23 February 2011

[9] Interview with Greek Cypriot editor-in-chief, 2010

[10] EFJ Condemns Attack against Turkish Cypriot journalist, European Federation of Journalists, 7 July 2011

[11] The Right of Access to Information in Cyprus: Report and Recommendations, November 2011

[12] Makarios Droushiotis (2005) The Construction of Reality and the Mass Media, Nicosia, Alfadi Press

to aiding the propaganda machine of Slobodan Milosevic, and fuelling conflict in the Balkans. International donors have identified the field of media as an area where change can be affected due to its influence and reach into local communities.

Media interventions in divided societies have varied depending on the context in which they are implemented, and according to a new report published by the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), can be differentiated according to function, form, and audience.[13] It is also helpful to consider the effectiveness of media interventions according to the phases of a conflict. USIP readily admits that 'there remain huge gaps in our understanding of what works and how to integrate media into conflict management strategies'.[14] Therefore evaluation of the impact of media initiatives has become all the more important.

The recent Arab Spring uprisings since 2010, whereby local activists were able to harness the potential of social media to get their messages out across a variety of online platforms and international news networks, has broadened the complexity of how media can be used to affect positive social change. Communication between people is one of the most important aspects of daily life, be it in the family, community, or societal sphere. In today's world, the ways people communicate are changing rapidly, evidenced in particular by the constantly shifting nature of media. In this changing environment, ensuring accuracy of information is presenting itself as an additional challenge to media professionals worldwide.

The media may not be completely at fault for the Cyprus Problem, nor is it in a position to resolve it. However, academic researchers and conflict resolution practitioners recognise that the media can be an important tool for combating stereotypes and encouraging trust and understanding.

A Middle Way: Media Collaboration
In June 2010 the Collaborative Media Initiative (CMI), implemented under the auspices of the Cyprus Community Media Centre (CCMC) was launched in order to understand what really works in the pursuit of greater integration of the media environment, and to work towards the creation of a common media platform for Cyprus.

A Potential Untapped: Media Working Together Across the Divide in Cyprus aims to highlight the importance and potential of media collaboration in Cyprus. Concentrating efforts on fostering collaboration and information exchange among media professionals will ultimately improve the ability of individual citizens to make informed decisions and build a more comprehensive picture of the reality in Cyprus.

[13] Amelia Arsenault et al (2011) Evaluating Media Interventions in Conflict Countries, Washington, USIP, p.5

[14] USIP operates a programme dedicated to conflict and the role of the media - http://www.usip.org/programs/centers/media-conflict-and-peacebuilding

Section II: The State of Media Collaboration in Cyprus

When discussing media collaboration it is helpful to outline the levels at which this collaboration takes place. The most obvious absence of dialogue on media collaboration or integration is at the political level, including the current negotiations for a resolution to the Cyprus Problem. A Technical Committee, set up in 2008 by the representatives of the two leaders and tasked with discussing issues related to broadcasting frequencies, has not yielded any results at the time of writing. According to an interview with a high-ranking Greek Cypriot official, the media landscape is not being discussed as an agenda item at the leadership level, nor did it form part of the Annan Plan negotiations in 2004.[15] This is an indication of a lack of foresight about how to sustain and promote a unified media landscape in a post-conflict Cyprus, despite the fact that there is an identifiable need for common institutions in the future that can foster ownership and participation e.g. a press and information office composed of Cypriots from all communities, and a common media regulatory body.[16]

Collaboration at the Institutional Level

At present there is very little interaction at the institutional level between media outlets across the divide. Relationships have tended to be of an adversarial nature, including, amongst other, interference in terrestrial signalling. Interviews with key figures in the Cypriot media landscape have revealed that, despite a willingness to collaborate on the exchange of content, there is a lack of human and financial resources associated with overcoming the language barriers.[17]

Problems exist between the journalists' organisations. The Union of Cyprus Journalists (UCJ) and the Turkish Cypriot Union of Press Workers (BASIN-SEN) have been at loggerheads at the General Assembly of the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) over the weighting of Cyprus' three votes in the assembly. Since the admission of BASIN-SEN in 2004, a sudden rise in the number of registered members shifted the voting in favour of the Turkish Cypriot organisation (2:1).[18] The current arrangement foresees that in the case where the two organisations agree, the three votes are counted, while in cases of disagreement the third vote is lost.

> 'I believe that I express the views of our Turkish Cypriot colleagues at BASIN-SEN ... that the two unions should speak with one voice. That is our aim'.

Androula Georgiadou, former General Secretary UCJ, IFJ Mediterranean Meeting 2010

Prior to the opening of the crossing points in 2003, UCJ had strongly supported Turkish Cypriot journalists who had been victims of censorship and violence.[19] Despite a breakthrough achieved in 2008 with the signing of a protocol demanding unrestricted travel and access to news sources for journalists from both communities, relations are at a standstill. It remains however 'the first ever formal example of institutional cooperation between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot journalist associations in modern times.'[20] Most recently delegations from the UCJ and the Turkish Cypriot Journalists' Association (KTGB) have initiated contact with the aim of establishing some form of collaboration. Proposals for collaboration are currently at a preliminary stage.

[15] Interview with Greek Cypriot official, 9 July 2010

[16] Minutes from CMI Workshop, 'Media in a Federal Cyprus', 24 June 2011

[17] Interview with Greek Cypriot Editor-in-Chief, 23 August 2010; Interview with Turkish Cypriot Editor-in-Chief, 12 August 2010

[18] Interview with member of the Union of Cyprus Journalists

[19] Interview with Turkish Cypriot editor-in-chief, 5 August 2010

[20] Hasan Kahvecioglu, Cyprus: Part Two (Extract from February 2008 Update), p.3

A more positive relationship exists between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot Sports Writers Associations (EAK and KTSYD). The two organisations hold meetings at regular intervals[21], and following the latest meeting in May 2011, agreed to continue meeting to improve their collaboration, and to strengthen relationships with their counterparts in Greece and Turkey. They also established two committees to work on separate applications to the International Sports Press Association (AIPS).

News Production and Programming

In general the media in each community focus on the issues that affect their respective audience, or market. The majority of newspapers include a section on news from the other community, but this is generally centred on the negotiations at the political level. The media also generally tends to report stories that depict the other community in a negative light, presenting news tainted with a generalisation about the situation on either side of the Green Line.

> "While the Cyprus problem continues, can't we Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot members of the press come to an understanding and create a common language?"
> **Sami Ozuslu**, Journalist, SIM TV

However, there are some important examples of media that have successfully married two different language audiences. Beginning in 2003, **Radio Potamia** was considered a unique example of media produced for both communities, where 'the programming of news, education, music, local cultural programs and announcements of events, births, deaths and marriages is broadcast equally in Greek and Turkish'. Director Kyriakos Kikas named the goal of the station as to "reflecting a spirit of mutual respect rather than mere co-existence'. Indeed it has been reported that the application for the broadcast license from the Cyprus Radio and Television Authority asserts that the station will 'bring back the good old days'.[22]

Probably the most well-known joint programme is **BIZ/Emeis**, first aired in March 2004 by the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (CyBC). Described as 'the most visible collaboration between journalists from both sides'[23], the programme continues to the present day, and shares intercommunal airtime on CyBC 2 with **Under the Same Sky**. The programme has been criticised for its unwillingness to tackle 'harder' issues, as well as with regards to its relevance and appeal to both communities, given its relationship to CyBC.[24] However, according to one of the programme directors, in an effort to sidestep the sensitivities associated with loaded political terminology, BIZ focuses on the human aspects of the Cyprus Problem.[25]

A less well-known example of collaboration is **Cyprus Dialogue**, a weekly newspaper which included articles in Turkish, Greek and English and was printed (2004-2008). Its editor, Reşat Akar, now editor-in-chief of Kıbrıs newspaper, worked with Greek Cypriot journalists Loukas Charalambous and Alekkos Konstantinides. In a 2005 article in the New York Times, it was reported that Cyprus Dialogue did not receive any grants from international agencies, but relied on advertising, mainly from Turkish Cypriot businesses.[26] The newspaper ceased publication in 2008, shelving plans to open an

office in the southern part of the island. A similar attempt by another Turkish Cypriot newspaper also failed after running into difficulties with the rental of space.[27] At present, two Turkish Cypriot journalists publish regular columns in **Politis** newspaper. Şener Levent, editor-in-chief of Afrika newspaper has a daily column, while investigative journalist Sevgül Uludağ publishes in Politis every Sunday. Turkish Cypriot daily Havadis newspaper hosted articles from journalist and author Makarios Droushiotis for a short period in 2010.

The internet remains an underutilised forum for media and information exchange. Civil society engaged in cross-community issues has been the sector that has used social media to promote dialogue and debate on issues of common concern. However, the first example of the use of the internet for common news dissemination can be traced to 2004 - an initiative established under the title of **Cyprus MediaNet (CMN)**. CMN was created at a time when the two communities were brought back into contact after years of physical separation, identifying an inability of Cypriots to read real-time translations of each other's press in their own language. The main idea of the project was therefore 'to pluralise the debate in civil society by giving members of each community access to the media of the other', and sought 'to contribute to a sustainable peace on Cyprus by encouraging the development of an informed, active, dynamic civil society that can access, evaluate, and respond to a pluralised print media'.

The website took news from both communities and translated selected items into three languages (Greek, English and Turkish). Teams were set up in each community, made up of one reader and four translators. The press was monitored on a daily basis; articles were selected and translated, and uploaded to the website.[28] In an interview to journalism.co.uk, the project's manager pointed out that there was 'a real gap in following the fears, concerns, aspirations and desires of the other.' He also noted that 'the number of bilingual citizens is virtually non-existent. With circumstances being as they were on the island before the launch of CMN, namely the inability of either community to cross the Green Line, the development of a printed bilingual newspaper that would cover daily events was not an option.' Although none of the newspapers were paid for the material reproduced on the site, all of them were consulted when it was launched.[29]

[21] KTSYD-EAK Meeting, KTSYD homepage

[22] Gary Gumpert and Susan Drucker, The Radio Village of Potamia, Cyprus, Greek News, 14 October 2003

[23] J. Alex Tarquinio, 'We' tries to unite Cyprus on the news', New York Times, 29 August 2005

[24] Nikolaos Stelgias, The first bicommunal radio station that closed before it was established, Kathimerini, 27 July 2010

[25] Interview with BIZ/Emeis staff member, 28 July 2010

[26] Tarquinio, 'We' tries to unite Cyprus on the news'

[27] Interview with Turkish Cypriot editor-in-chief, 13 August 2010

[28] UNDP/UNOPS Bi-Communal Development Programme, Cyprus MediaNet – Website for Translated News Articles

[29] Colin Meak, Online News Bridges Cypriot Divide', journalism.co.uk, 26 May 2004

A Case of Best Practice:Anahtar Media: For those on the Same Wavelength

"We hoped that one day this programme would enter mainstream programming. To see it form the basis for a collaboration between two radio stations gives us extra pleasure that our efforts have paid off".

Yiannis Laouris, Director, Future Worlds Center

In 2005, the first bicommunal, bilingual radio programme went on air on the Turkish Cypriot radio station Radyo Mayıs, under the title of **Talk of the Island**.[30] The programme, broadcast live every Saturday, aimed at fostering 'understanding, communication and respect between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots by examining the similarities and differences between the two communities through issues that affect them both'. The programme also featured a unique call-in option for those listeners who wished to contribute to the discussion, thus serving as a forum for the promotion of intercommunal dialogue.

Supported initially by HasNa[31], a charitable foundation based in Washington DC, the success of the programme led to additional support in 2006 received from the United States Institute for Peace (USIP). The funding received from USIP enabled the installation of high-technology radio and phone lines in order for the initiative to operate radio lines on both sides of the divide. Radio Pyrgos, a radio station based in the Paphos region rebroadcast the programme for a short period. Once independent from external funding, the programme continued in the format of Talk of the Island Youth, which ceased in July 2010.

Efforts to find a permanent Greek Cypriot partner station bore fruit in 2008, when Radio Astra adapted the format of the programme and began broadcasting **Cypriots Come Let's Talk**. Since then the programme has become fully integrated within the schedule of the station, and its success lies in that it has received steady advertising with a yearly increase in listenership ratings.[32]

'This programme is unique, based on the feedback that we receive from the audience. It fills a gap in the relationship and communication between the two communities.'

Neophytos Neophytou, Assistant Director, Radio Astra

In a step that brought the initiative full circle, Radio Astra and Radyo Mayıs, with the support of CCMC, tabled an application to the Economic Interdependence Business Grants Programme, implemented jointly by the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) and the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce (KTTO). The proposal envisaged the creation of a new media partnership, **Anahtar Media**, a new entity that would incorporate additional activities under the umbrella of the partnership. The grant enabled the two stations to procure a mobile broadcasting unit, thus enabling the production team to broadcast live on-location programmes simultaneously on two frequencies. The first broadcast took place at the Home for Cooperation in Nicosia's buffer zone to mark the conclusion of the CMI Conference on 24 June 2011.

The initiative has also received recognition of its contribution to promoting intercommunal relations and was awarded the Kutlu Adalı Press Award for bilingual broadcasting in January 2012. The Award was set up in memory of the murdered journalist Kutlu Adalı, who was assassinated in front of his home in 1996, and are awarded every year by BASIN-SEN in recognition of media professionals working towards peace in Cyprus.[30]

"This is the first time BASIN-SEN has awarded a bicommunal programme. We should encourage more bicommunal cooperation between journalists and explore ways to allow journalists to be able to exchange information daily across the divide. There is a lot of misinformation about both communities reported in the media and if there was more cooperation between journalists, this could be prevented."

Osman Kalfaoğlu, Journalist, Yeniduzen Newspaper

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[30] The website http://www.talkoftheisland.org/ details all the activities from the project

[31] HasNa promotes cross-cultural understanding and economic empowerment in culturally divided areas and encourages individuals and communities to work together toward peaceful coexistence - http://www.hasna.org/programs/communication-programs.html#citz

[32] Interview with Greek Cypriot News Director, 12 November 2011

[33] Tuning in to Peace: Bilingual Radio Program in Cyprus Initiated by HasNa Wins Award, 26 January 2012, http://hasnainc.wordpress.com/2012/01/26/tuning-in-to-peace-bilingual-radio-program-in-cyprus-initiated-by-hasna-wins-award/

Journalists' Training & Workshops

Some practitioners have favoured an approach to promoting collaboration in a workshop setting. In 1998, Brian McNair outlined what he called 'the social determinants of journalism'[34], which included the existence of a professional working culture, the absence of political and economic pressures and source tactics, as factors which might negatively impact an individual's ability to transfer knowledge into their everyday work environment. Indeed, practitioners have questioned the problematic nature of attributing progress to short-length training interventions.[35]

Nonetheless, bringing media professionals together in a workshop environment is generally considered an effective way to offer individuals a neutral space for the exchange of ideas and for bridging divides. However, such initiatives lack the monitoring and sustainability necessary to maintain contacts and networks created in the workshop environment. With the advance in social media technologies, the immediacy of networking on sites such as Facebook now offer the possibility for sustaining connections and furthering the exchange of ideas and opinions.

In Cyprus, three initiatives are highlighted as promoting collaboration in a workshop environment:

The Embassy of the United States in Cyprus[36] supported a series of **journalism symposia** from 2006 to 2008. Held in Nicosia, Athens and Istanbul, the events were attended by journalists from Cyprus, Greece and Turkey and addressed issues of mutual concern, such as objectivity when covering conflict and the representation of Cyprus in the media. In 2007 the Embassy also organised a workshop for Cypriot journalists, run by Carol Daniel Kasbari, then the Coordinator of the UNESCO-sponsored Israeli-Palestinian Media Forum. A follow-up workshop, planned to take place in 2008, did not materialise.

In 2008, the United Nations Development Programme – Action for Cooperation and Trust (UNDP-ACT), in partnership with the Thomson Foundation, organised a Young **Journalists Peer Learning Programme** for Cypriot journalists with up to 5 years experience. The programme attracted more than 30 media professionals from all sectors of the media landscape.[37]

The **Friedrich Ebert Foundation** (FES) has also been supporting a series of closed-door meetings between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot journalists. According to two participants, these meetings have offered a space for the expression of opinions that would be impossible to convey through the mass media, including the possibility of creating a conflict-sensitive glossary which is acceptable to both communities.[38]

[34] McNair, B. (1998) The Sociology of Journalism. London: Arnold

[35] P. 152 Terzis

[36] The Bicommunal Support Programme was responsible for organising the journalists' symposia

[37] Hisscocks, P. (2008) Final Report: Young Journalists Peer Learning Programme (Cyprus). Nicosia: UNDP-ACT & Thomson Foundation internal document

[38] Interview with Turkish Cypriot participant, 23 June 2010; Interview with Greek Cypriot participant, 28 June 2010

Best Practice: Media Against Racism in Sport

In January 2012, CCMC hosted a media production workshop in the framework of the MARS – Media Against Racism in Sport programme. Supported by the Council of Europe (COE) and the European Union (EU), the programme aims at integrating the principles of non-discrimination and diversity as ongoing angles of media coverage. Building upon standards set by COE bodies on media pluralism, and as an outcome of the COE's 2008-10 antidiscrimination Campaign, MARS also aims to encourage innovative modes of media production that can be reproduced in all media sectors.

In pursuit of these aims, the programme offers media professionals (journalism students and trainers, journalists, media managers, etc.) the opportunity to participate in various activities, and in particular national media encounters to explore the possibilities of media professionals working collaboratively and producing inclusive media content. With additional support from the Community Media Forum Europe (CMFE), a total of 19 media professionals participated in the four-day event, including print and radio journalists, bloggers and civil society activists.

The concept of the MARS programme is an innovative approach to encouraging diverse media content. Especially in the context of Cyprus, where a plurality of voices is not reflected in the media, the MARS approach fits within the concept of media collaboration that the CMI has been encouraging. All reports produced during the workshop demonstrated that a collaborative approach to media can have a positive impact on incorporating diversity in the production process.

> "Racism in sport – and in all aspects of life – needs to be addressed from the route. Journalists have a responsibility to help promote diversity and respect for different cultures and points of view."

John Leonidou, Journalist, The Cyprus Weekly

The MARS website – www.coe.int/mars - has more information on the background and activities taking place in the framework of the project, and contains all the media products during the four-day workshop in Nicosia. A Facebook group entitled 'European Journalists for Diversity' aims to sustain the participation of media professionals in the Council of Europe's efforts to counter discrimination and racism in the media.

Section III: The CMI Conference

Sharing Experiences and Paving the way for the future in Cyprus

On 23 and 24 June 2011, media stakeholders from Cyprus and overseas gathered at the Home for Cooperation in Nicosia's Buffer Zone to discuss a number of issues related to media collaboration in Cyprus. After an opening by the United Nations Special Representative in Cyprus Ms Lisa Buttenheim, two members of the CMI Working Group addressed participants on the aims and objectives of the CMI and the conference.

Two sessions made up the first day. The first session, **What, How and Why? The role of media in merging audiences and addressing language differences**, addressed issues relating to how media can have a positive effect on bridging divides between communities. Three presentations, followed by question-and-answer sessions, focused on specific examples in three different fields of media:

1 - The case of ARTE TV, a bilingual, multicultural television channel established by a treaty signed between Germany and France in October 1990 (Mr Jean-François Pellier, Head of External Relations, ARTE TV) Mr Pellier introduced ARTE TV as an initiative made possible by two crucial factors: (a) the political will of the two countries to enlarge their audiovisual landscape; and (b) their wish to launch an ambitious project through Franco-German cooperation.

2 - The possibilities offered by the Internet in bridging the digital divide between communities (Dr Dimitra Milioni, Cyprus University of Technology). Dr Milioni offered important food for thought with regards to the culture of online media consumption of young Cypriots, as well as the challenges and opportunities presented by the Internet in bridging the online divide between young Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. According to the research, young Turkish Cypriots lag behind in terms of breadth of access and time spent online. However, Turkish-Cypriots make more frequent use of the Internet for communicating, creating and sharing content.

3 - The potential of community media as a 'third sector' to promote inter-cultural dialogue and social change (Mr Salvatore Scifo, Secretary, Community Media Forum Europe (CMFE), pointing out that Cyprus is one of the few countries in Europe where community media has not been recognised as a legitimate sector in the media landscape.

The second session, **Recognising challenges and building bridges: Journalists' collaboration in conflict zones,** was focused on the work of the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) in bringing together journalists and reporters from across the region to work together. In her presentation, Gordana Igric, the network's director, addressed the challenges of breaking down the barriers of communication, and facilitating contact between journalists in the period immediately after the cessation of hostilities. The network has also served to address a need for increasing skills among journalists, which in turn affected the reliability of reporting.

Session three, entitled **Federal Media Governance in Europe: Examples from Germany, Belgium, and Bosnia Herzegovina**, introduced a concept that remains severely underdeveloped in Cyprus, namely the need for dialogue on federal media governance in a future reunited Cyprus. **Broadcasting within the 'Cultural Sovereignty' of the German Lander and the process of reunification**, delivered by Dr Holger Briel from the University of Nicosia recounted the historical development of media in Germany. The experience of Nazi Germany has resulted in the establishment of fierce media independence at the state (Lander) level. According to Dr Briel, in general the federal media structure has worked well in Germany, however he questioned the approach adopted in the aftermath of reunification of the country, where the East German media was absorbed into the Western federal system of media governance.

Dr Nico Carpentier from Loughborough University addressed participants on **The Great Divide: Media Policies and Practices in the federal state of Belgium**. His presentation of the Belgian media landscape highlighted the pros and cons of a federal media governance system. In particular, he focused on public broadcasting, noting that Belgium started out with common broadcasting entity in 1930, and in 1960 centrifugal forces split the media landscape. From the outset he cautioned against viewing the Belgian example as a model system for federal media governance. Using examples of the difference in media coverage of events, and how these can often lead to sharp divisions, Dr Carpentier pointed out the dangers of not being involved with the media of the 'other', which creates a lack of understanding and trust, similar to that displayed in Cyprus, albeit under different circumstances. It could lead to, as he noted, 'one community only having a partial grasp on the overall reality of a country.'

The final presentation focused on Bosnia Herzegovina - **Balancing Rights and Responsibilities in Public Broadcasting: The Case of 60 Minutes – FTV, a Sarajevo-based broadcaster** – delivered by Dusan Babic, a media consultant from Mediacentar. Mr Babic started his presentation by noting that in the Dayton Peace Accords of 1995 the media was only mentioned in one line. Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has in effect three public broadcasters, BHRT which broadcasts countrywide, and broadcasters for the two federal entities, RTFBiH and RTRS. In the commercial media, one encounters problems as broadcasters are used as the mouthpieces for various political parties and interest groups. This often leads to populist and 'double-standard' reporting, as well as concentration of the media market. Other conflicts which persist in the media include the inability of journalists' organisations to cooperate effectively. For example, the Union of Independent Journalists of the Republika Srpska at the end of 2010 withdrew from the umbrella Journalists Association of BiH. Mr Babic also mentioned that some aspects of the federal media governance system have a more positive impact on Bosnia's media landscape. The Communications Regulatory Agency (RAK) was established in 1998 to issue licenses and impose sanctions on broadcasters. A Freedom of Information Act has also been passed. However, substantial and functional links to civil society are not in place which would improve the democratic governance of the media system in BiH.

Section IV: The Community Media Forum Europe (CMFE) Conference

The 'Third Way' as a model for media diversity in Cyprus

On 17-19 November 2011, CCMC hosted the first Annual CMFE Conference. Discussions revolved around the growing recognition of the sector within the European media landscape, as well as ways to strengthen links between practitioners.

A special Plenary Session was dedicated to a discussion on what community media could mean in the Cypriot context, an issue of direct relevance to media collaboration.

Towards an Enabling Environment for Community Media in Cyprus featured presentations from locally and internationally-based academics and practitioners debating the merits of community media for Cyprus, and in particular how it can play a role in bridging the gap between the two communities.

In the first presentation Vaia Doudaki (Cyprus University of Technology) and Nico Carpentier (Loughborough University) discussed the topic of **Community Media for Peace-Building, Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation**, presenting in essence a roadmap for developing a bi-community radio station for the Nicosia area. They expressed the view that there are similar media needs for both communities in Cyprus, adding that there is a focus on rhetoric rather than experience; an element of dialogue that does not encourage reconciliation. In other words, the media adopts a conflict-centred approach to reporting. On the contrary, community media intends to foster dialogue and reconciliation, to give voice to marginalised communities and to offer more diverse and alternative representation. In the presenters' view, the solution is a bi-community radio based in Nicosia which would provide familiarity, immediacy, and would also be relatively inexpensive to set up and produce.

Mashoed Bailie, Editor of the Global Media Journal: The Mediterranean Edition, spoke about **Conflict or Cooperation? Alternatives to the Ethnocentrism in the Cypriot Press**. In his presentation, Dr Bailie moved along similar lines at the first presentation pointing out that there is a 'them and us' view in a highly politicised and 'enmeshed' media landscape, which excludes other communities within society. Statistically, according to Dr Bailie, about 50% of the population is excluded from the debate, the vast majority of journalists being male and their sources also male. In this environment of multiple 'Cyprus Problems' Dr Bailie supports the view that the transformation to peace will be the same for both sides, and that community media has an important part to play in that transformation.

In the third presentation Bérangère Blondeau, founding board member of the International Children's Film Festival Cyprus, discussed **Community Media and**

the Preservation of Cultural Heritage with a focus on the Cyprus Artefacts Treasure project. The project brought together children, archaeologists and educators from both communities to create a joint historical dialogue on a common heritage, a number of ancient figurines discovered in the early 1930s. The success of the project has engendered more interest, and all the parents unanimously requested that their children should 'go on and work together.'

John W. Higgins (University of San Francisco) presented on **Best Practices: The CCMC and U.S. Public Access Television** giving a historical review of the development of public access television and also of CCMC. He also highlighted the challenges faced by community media, as the Internet has created a loss of a geographic community that can meet face to face. This has been used as a rationale for funding cuts, and the mass media is no longer willing to pay to support community media. He admitted that community media in Cyprus, and CCMC in particular will be faced with a similar challenge of sustainability when the support from UNDP no longer exists.

In the final presentation Christos Barboutis (University of Athens) addressed **Aspects of Interdisciplinary Media Research: The Case of CM in Cyprus**. After comparing the normative standards on community media in Germany, France, Italy, USA, and Cyprus, Mr Barboutis examined broadcasting pluralism in content and media literacy. He concluded that 'community media need not be the leftovers of the two other media (public and commercial)' but rather it needs to adopt a proactive stance and demonstrate diversity. He added that there are axioms that should be implemented in Cyprus, namely: a) the adoption of legal rules of recognition, tertiary rules, and rules of contact and conduct; b) the imposition of a legal or formal freedom of expression; and c) ensuring the universality of content and obligations.

Section V: Conclusion and Recommendations

"When collaborating with a Turkish Cypriot journalist it would be possible not only to fact-check more effectively, but to open up new fields of inquiry and to connect the issues that concern Cypriots from a new, island-wide perspective that contributes to the development of a pan-Cypriot awareness and the start of a dialogue of substance between the two societies."

Giorgos Kakouris, journalist, Politis newspaper

Communication processes are vital to the democratic functioning of society. They are central to the dissemination of information to their audiences, and assist in the creation of a healthy and vibrant civil society. The growth of information and communications technologies (ICTs) in the last two decades has transformed the ways in which people communicate and share information, with a profound impact on the dynamics of social, political and economic life. The revolution in communications, the spread of the Internet, and the proliferation of alternative media platforms offers increased opportunities for media professionals to share information and knowledge, improving not only their professional output but also the access to information for the general public.

In Cyprus there has been a positive trend with regards to media collaboration across the divide since the opening of crossing points in April 2003. The volume of content exchanged, the number of reports on issues affecting the other community, as well as the number of personal relationships has all increased significantly. However, significant challenges still remain. The persistence of the Cyprus Problem, with inter-connected issues of legality of structures continues to stifle effective collaboration. Most attempts at collaboration remain hidden below the surface and non-formalised. Collaboration at the institutional level remains low. On the whole, the media remains a field where the interests of each community are reflected separately. There is little in-depth reporting by journalists covering issues across the divide. The inability of the journalists' organisations to form a workable relationship constitutes an additional obstacle to promoting genuine cross-community media collaboration.

The following recommendations are based on research, dialogue, good practices and opportunities that the CMI has identified for improving collaboration in the field of media. They are addressed to specific media stakeholders in Cyprus who are in a position to affect positive change.

All Stakeholders

Embrace the potential of media collaboration and encourage dialogue
Media collaboration is taking place, but it is not in the mainstream. It is important that these efforts continue, and dialogue and participation should be encouraged and discussion platforms expanded to include colleagues and peers from across the EU. Increased and effective collaboration between media stakeholders has the potential to enrich understanding and broaden perspectives on issues which affect all Cypriots.

Recognise the importance of language
All too often relegated in importance, the ability to communicate freely is a key component of building trust and cooperation. Media professionals are necessarily fluent in their native language so as to carry out their job professionally. The language discrepancy in Cyprus means that reliable translation and interpretation are key ingredients, and resources should be spared to encourage such efforts.

Take head of research
Research presented at the CMI Conference revealed some interesting statistics on media usage online of young Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. In particular, the low percentages of those who 'believe that the internet can increase influence on government' (GC 13%, TC 27%); the modest proportion of those who believe that 'people should be free to criticize their government (GC 53%, TC 40%); and the startling percentage of those who 'never engage in intercommunal discussion offline or online (GC 91-97%, TC 69-78%).[39] These results are not only indicative of a media culture but also of the level of interaction between youth in the two communities. Failure to address these statistics will hinder positive efforts at reconciliation between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.

Scope the Landscape and Identify Measureable Aims
As noted by George Terzis (2008), an academic and practitioner of media collaboration, 'the importance of an efficient and well-prepared feasibility study before the project is planned could not be stressed enough, as the results of the feasibility studies save[d] time and money and avoid[ed] having to learn through mistakes.'[40] This study has shown that coherence with past efforts and sustainability are key components of devising any initiative aimed at facilitating media collaboration. To this end, it is important that the aims of any initiative are quantifiable, and an effective monitoring and evaluation system be set in place to ensure relevance with and future worth.

[39] Presentation by Dr Dimitra Milioni at the CMI Conference, 23 June 2011

[40] Terzis (2008). P. 149

Bring the Media into the negotiations

Consider the media within the context of a comprehensive solution to the Cyprus Problem. In particular, appropriate mechanisms that will enable the convergence of the two systems of media governance, within the context of a reunified Cyprus in the EU must be considered now.

Establish an Advisory Committee on Media

This can best be achieved through the creation of a specialised Advisory Committee tasked with working on media policy and the legislative framework for media within a reunified Cyprus. The composition of the Committee should reflect the diversity and pluralism of the Cyprus media landscape, and should encourage the involvement of women and civil society organisations active in the field of media.

Work towards establishing a common Public Service Broadcaster
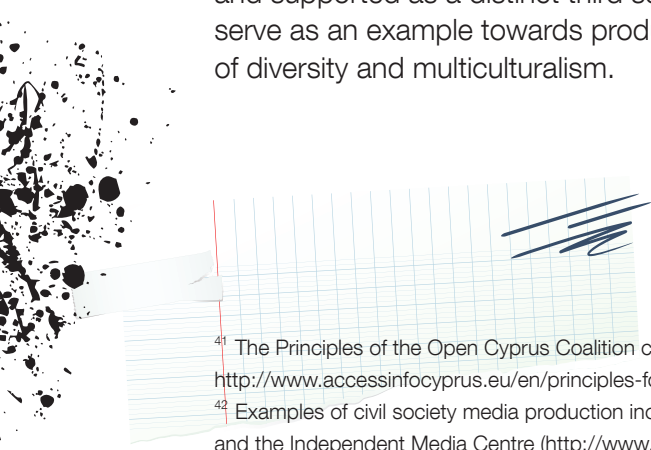
Public service broadcasting has been a problematic element of post-conflict societies in other parts of the world. The example of post-Dayton Bosnia Herzegovina indicates that creating a broadcaster which fulfils a public service remit relevant to all communities is imperative towards establishing social cohesion, mutual trust and understanding. ARTE TV is a shining example of how media can help tackle difficult issues of the past while maintaining a broader outlook and focus.

Improve provisions for Access to Information

The Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents (2009) is the only comprehensive document which outlines best practice for offering access to journalists and the public to official documents. In line with the principles set out by the Open Cyprus Coalition, all steps should be taken to improve access to official documentation for both Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot journalists.[41]

Recognise Community Media as a third sector

Community media, the so-called 'third way' of broadcasting, has been recognised by important European institutions as having the necessary ingredients to promote social cohesion and intercultural dialogue. Community media should be recognised and supported as a distinct third sector in the Cyprus media landscape, as it can serve as an example towards producing content that respects the principles of diversity and multiculturalism.

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[41] The Principles of the Open Cyprus Coalition can be found on the website of Access to Information Cyprus: http://www.accessinfocyprus.eu/en/principles-for-an-open-cyprus.html

[42] Examples of civil society media production include the Peace Exchange Blog (http://peacexchange.wordpress.com/) and the Independent Media Centre (http://www.medyamerkezi.org/)

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Media

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Journalists' Organisations

Set aside their disputes in international fora

Disagreements at the international level must not interfere with the possibilities of creating interdependence between journalists across the divide in Cyprus. In a volatile economic climate, the journalistic profession requires all the support it can get. New platforms and social media are also redefining what it means to be a journalist. Therefore it is important that they redefine their relationship along professional lines, focusing on strengthening the profession in Cyprus. This will highlight the commonalities associated with being a journalist, improve mechanisms for the exchange of information, and enable the creation of a common vision for the future.

Chief Editors and News Directors

Bring the other community into the mainstream

Existing and future media programming and reporting should afford greater space to human interest stories from the other community, as well as opinion/commentary articles from journalists across the divide. The media can do a great deal towards improving the image of the other community, and facilitate an improved dialogue in various formats. Increased exposure of the 'other' in a positive light has the potential to strengthen trust between the two communities.

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Make Media Collaboration a Strategic Priority

As a follow-up to the CMI, CCMC should incorporate media collaboration into its core activities, aiming to become 'a first point of call' for journalists, media professionals, and academics who wish to cooperate with colleagues based in the other community. This field of work has thus far lacked a 'home' and CCMC has the potential to perform that role.

Offer support to media collaboration initiatives

CCMC should continue to support media collaboration initiatives, offering, inter alia, assistance in project proposal writing, facilitation of meetings, financial incentives for collaborative media projects, similar to that offered to the Anahtar Media partnership.

Promote the work of civil society as a resource to media

Civil society is vital for the functioning of a democratic society, raising issues of social concern and sensitising the wider population. A deeper engagement with the media from both communities will aid and promote cross-community work, offering valuable content for media production and showing that issues of common concern transcend boundaries.[42]

Offer membership and create a first common contacts database

Journalists in Cyprus are becoming specialised in their field of reporting, such as environmental, health-related issues, international relations or local government. A database containing contact details and areas of expertise of media professionals across the island would enable journalists to identify colleagues who would be in a position to help them with their work in a similar field. CCMC should also offer membership to media professionals from across the island further strengthening CCMC as a space where people can work together on common projects.

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