MARS – **MEDIA AGAINST RACISM IN SPORT**

Media, Diversity & Racism in Sport

NATIONAL MEDIA ENCOUNTER

Journalism & Media Training & Literacy

FINAL REPORT

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MEDIA animation ASBL
communication & éducation

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1.   **General introduction of the encounter.**

„The idea is that, by using media literacy tools, we can facilitate the development of differentiated training for journalists, including by encouraging media professionals to take a critical look at their own practices" (from the MARS Brussels Report)[1].

The fourth National Media Encounter „*Media, Diversitate si Rasism în Sport – Formare si Educatie in Jurnalism si Media*" was held at the Faculty of Political Sciences, Administration and Communication of the Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca (Romania). The very sentence quoted above stood at the base of the national encounter in Romania where the main focus was to develop teaching strategies for journalism training using media literacy tools (*please see Appendix 1 – MARS Agenda*).

For three days (24th – 26th of May, 2012) media education and journalism trainers as well as journalists tried to understand the extent to which sports coverage in Romania value diversity in all its forms or, on the contrary, promotes a racist discourse in order to finally put forward training strategies for journalism students interested in sports.

2.   **The participants: short description of the participants' background and expertise**

The very challenge of the encounter was to set the circumstances for three distinct categories of participants - media educators, journalism trainers and journalists - to work together, analyze and finally produce teaching strategies and/or tools for initial training in journalism. Around 30 national participants were present along the three days encounter. Editors-in-chief of print, TV, radio and online media (mainly sport newsrooms), freelance journalists, members of media NGOs (ActiveWatch – Media Monitoring Agency, Centre for Independent Journalism, Romanian Centre of Investigative Journalists), journalism and communication lecturers and journalism students at Babes-Bolyai University, one expert from the Institute for Education Sciences in Bucharest, teachers and media education trainers took part in the three days encounter.

Reynald Blion of the Council of Europe (Manager of the MARS Programme) and Patrick Verniers, Media Animation (coordinator of the MARS national encounters) were present along with the MARS international partners, Fabien Wille (Université de Lille) and Stefan Tenner (Community Media Forum Europe – CMFE).

The three main categories of participants were covered in number in a balanced way, with slightly more journalists present. Thus, the reality check of the training propositions made during the creative phase of the working groups was highly present. The two working groups benefitted from the expertise of both practitioners and trainers in media education and journalism.

3.   **The encounter dynamic: short explanation of the dynamic of the encounter and activities**

Even though the three days workshop agenda was extensive and challenging, the participants managed to maintain an active involvement in the working group sessions. The round table set

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[1] MARS Final Report – Cross - Cutting Perspectives, Brussels, October 2011
 http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/mars/Source/Documents/European/Brussels/Report_en.pdf, accessed June 15, 2012.

nicely the context for the analysis phase of the working groups due to the contribution of the four speakers invited by ActiveWatch (Rares Beuran, Babes-Bolyai University, Stefan Candea, freelance journalist and trainer, Marius Lazar, well-known Romanian sociologist, Adrian Szelmenczi, ActiveWatch Antidiscrimination Program).

The training tool proposed by ActiveWatch (*please see Appendix 3*) to be tested on the grounds during the first day was well received in the two working groups and incited to early discussion on methodological issues. The task of the participants was to test and subsequently express their expert opinion on a possible teaching tool that could help journalists understand the value of diversity in their reporting by critically analyze the coverage of a sport event in several online publications.

The composition of the two working groups remained generally the same throughout the three days encounter, with some of the participants attending only in certain specific moments of the workshop. Keeping the same format contributed to the cohesion of the group and to the coherence of the propositions in the creative phase of the workshop. The participants' profile contributed extensively to the way the debates and propositions were made. As compared to previous MARS encounters the profile of this group was slightly dominated by journalists. As a result a great part of the debates on initial journalism training and expression of diversity in media coverage were contextualized to the Romanian media market, its opportunities for the future journalists and the actual decision-making mechanisms in the newsrooms that most of the times impedes expression of diversity for various reasons. Moreover, one major issue that emerged systematically during the discussions of the groups was the state of the curriculum in Journalism Faculties, which had not been adapted to the realities of the media industry so far. The propositions made in the creative phase of the workshop took into consideration all these circumstances along with the state of the art of the sports media nowadays.

Along the round table, the plenary sessions had the role to bring together participants in the two working groups in order to exchange developments of their groups.

The media literacy issue had been integrated in the discussion with the help of the media education trainers present. The most important issue for the debaters was to figure out how to use media education as empowerment method in the journalists' training for diversity.

At the end of the encounter, Fabien Wille of the University of Lille appreciated the discussions and the working manner as a „*totally different approach from the other national encounters*", „*a big step in building tools*".

3.1.   The main challenges and reflexions

True to the MARS philosophy, the starting point of the national encounter in Romania was to consider anti-discrimination and expression of diversity as an ongoing angle of media coverage, in particular, of sports coverage.

First of all the workshop participants attempted to find answers that subsequently would help them in the creative phase. What do we mean by diversity in sport? What does it mean to promote diversity in sports coverage? Do journalists take into consideration cultural and social differences in their reporting? Does existing journalism training integrate expression of diversity? In what form? Is there any existing media education tools used in journalism training? And finally to which target group should this training package refer to?

According to the participants in Cluj, the respect for diversity in journalistic materials is not only an issue of taking into consideration the multifaceted cultural and social diversity, but also an issue to counteract racist and nationalist discourse.

Expression of diversity in media coverage can be achieved if journalists (1) accept social and cultural differences and report in accordance, (2) counteract racist and nationalistic discourse in journalistic materials, and finally (3) promote diversity through explicit journalistic materials. Sports materials have a great potential in this third final regard. It remains only for the decision-makers in the sports newsroom to be convinced of the benefits of such reporting.

Unfortunately, the examples offered by journalists present in the meeting were not encouraging. The reality in the newsroom is reflected in the coverage. The participants agreed that in Romania, sports media is a monocolour, football-oriented media. Sports media lacks „*niche*" information (like reporting on marathon) and, many times the editorial decisions are taken with "*the myth of the low-quality audience in mind*" (M. Lazar). Sometimes the discourse has a racist and discriminatory touch and some social and cultural groups are poorly represented in terms of both quantity and quality (women, people with disabilities, Roma community, LGBT community etc.). In most of the sports materials, the white heterosexual man and football player dominates. In others, interethnic relations (like the Romanian-Hungarian one) are portrayed in the key of the conflict (title: "*Incredible! Shocking! The Hungarian Hockey players of the national team did not sing the Romanian hymn, but intoned the one of the Secui Region*[2]"). The low quality of the debates on the TV sports channels has been brought into attention as barrier to the expression of diversity.

Participants could not ignore these realities that hence offered one of the specificity of the Romanian encounter.

Following extensive debate on the training target group, the participants decided to focus on the students in journalism. Students, by comparison to professional journalists, are more open to accept new training. It is more efficient to innovate new training methods and intervene in the curriculum than trying to develop an in-service training for professional journalists that generally are not interested in continuous training.

3.2. *The plenary sessions and roundtables summary*

As mentioned above the debates in the roundtable set the framework for the following discussions in the analysis phase of the workshop. The aim of the round table was to put into discussion three main dimensions concerning media, sports and diversity. The idea was to understand, with the help of the journalists present, the extent to which sports media cover diversity and whether newsrooms promote any awareness programs for their journalists to value or explicitly promote diversity in their materials. Secondly, the participants tried to understand the extent to which initial and in-service training for journalists incorporate methodological tools used in media education to tackle diversity issues. All discussions focused on issues with relevance to sports media.

The four speakers brought in their personal and professional expertise to the table. *Marius Lazar*, sociologist, talked about a recent research on interethnic relationship in Transylvania and drew attention to one interesting finding. The relationships among different ethnic groups are much better when the members of the groups live together in close proximity (*direct experience of*

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[2] The Secui Region (ro. *Tinutul Secuiesc*) is situated in the central area of Romania (Harghita and Covasna counties) where the majority population is Hungarian.

living together). And, it seems, they become worse when one group's perception about the other is mediated. The two training outputs developed later in the workshop proposed direct meetings of the journalism students with members of the communities/groups different of their own. The aim of such direct experience would be to learn to accept and respect cultural differences.

For the past year, *Adrian Szelmenczi* (ActiveWatch) followed online sports media and identified at least four instances of chauvinist and anti-Hungarian discourse. In his opinion, the electoral year is one reason for the sports newsrooms to get involved in the political battle indirectly, as the Hungarian administrative and territorial autonomy of a central area in Romania remains a sensitive issue in the Romanian public sphere. He particularly talked about the coverage of CFR Cluj football team, which instigates to racist attitudes among the supporters of the two main football teams in Cluj[3]. Adrian denounced himself as a CFR Cluj supporter himself.

Stefan Cândea, freelance investigative journalist and trainer at the Faculty of Journalism in Bucharest, took a pessimist viewpoint of the journalists' status and focused his presentation on the practical issues that hamper expression of diversity in media coverage. His personal experience as trainer and journalist working in newsrooms   helped him reach the following conclusions. In his opinion, journalists do not have the practice to digest and critically evaluate information. Generally, journalists do whatever their editors ask them to; in addition, they do not take part in continuous training to improve their skills and expertise. To this it adds the fact that there is no business model to promote quality press. Those investing in the media institutions in Romania have previously invested in different other fields. Mr. Cândea also criticized the lack of innovative teaching methods in journalism schools that contribute to the weak training of future journalists.

One conclusion that can be drawn is that the institutional culture of both journalism schools and media institutions is one significant obstacle in fair reporting that value diversity.

Attila Szasz, former National Audiovisual Council member and editor-in-chief at one of the local stations of the public radio, intervened during the round table and drew attention to the fact that the culture of sports does not exist in formal education to begin with (for instance, "*how many participants are there in a marathon?*"). Little cultural value is attached to sports in journalism training as a result. He added that in Romania there is lack of media education that would help media consumers develop the skills to filter inaccurate information. As a result the public would know, for instance, that ethnic affiliation has no relevance in sport, according to Mr. Szasz, himself a fervent marathon runner.

Mr. Rares Beuran, University of Babes-Bolyai, focused his brief intervention on the importance of adapting journalists' training with the needs of the media market. He particularly mentioned the integration of innovative teaching methods that could tackle diversity issues as well.

Mircea Toma, president of ActiveWatch, pointed out that journalism schools and media institutions should encourage multiculturalism in communication in order to avoid media messages charged with cultural stereotypes.

In Laura Toma's opinion, the President of The Media Institute for Diversity, the key is to be able to analyze a culture different from yours and to understand cultural differences. When selecting

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[3] CFR Cluj is perceived and portrayed by the media as being the team of Hungarian supporters and U Cluj as the team of the Romanian supporters, even though both teams have members of both ethnic groups in their composition. The owner of CFR Cluj is Hungarian but the team is made up of chiefly foreign players.

the information, the journalist needs to be open-minded from a cultural point of view. But in the newsroom there is little time to reflect.

As a result the round table proved to be an opportunity to a much-needed discussion on the institutional context of journalism and on the status of the sports media coverage that the working groups took into consideration during the training propositions. The subsequent plenary sessions and working group discussions during the analysis phase focused more on identifying previous media education-related programs that could have offered ideas for the creative phase.

4.   **The Outputs (the creative phase)**

A pool of ideas for teaching strategies emerged during the analysis and creative phase of the working groups. Most of them were integrated in the actual training propositions described at points 4.1 and 4.2 but some remained as they were. For instance, the MARS program with its online resources and network developed so far could easily play the role of a resource centre or database for journalists to inform themselves in order to add up to their reporting new elements to promote diversity.

Bearing in mind the realities of sports coverage in Romania and the institutional ones of the journalists' training and practice, the two working groups independently proposed training activities journalisms students with the same aim: develop awareness about social and cultural diversity as added value in sports journalism.

The participants at such a course should learn to identify their own prejudice, stereotypes and taboos through exercises of critical analysis of media messages (content analysis, discourse analysis, case study, role-play etc.) and go beyond their own social and cultural barriers by directly meeting members of the communities and groups they write about during documentation trips (*the unmediated get-to-know*). The result of these actions together should reflect afterwards in the production of the sports materials. As one of the participant said, "*no journalism training can be put apart from media production*". The premise of such training is that the role of *critical observer* of the sports coverage should offer the students the opportunity to understand the consequences of a racist discourse in the society and the advantages of the reporting that value diversity. One working model to follow is: "*you avoid stereotypes; you have the chance to see things that many others cannot see!*"

The two outputs described below keep a general framework in order for any teachers/trainers to be able to adapt to specific training needs and target group.

***Testing of two training activity proposed in the workshop*.** In the last day of the encounter, immediately after the creative phase, each group had the task to choose and test one of the training activities proposed in their package with the participants of the second group. The first exercise was a role-play meant to help participants become aware of the undeserved etiquettes they associate to others. The aim of the second test was to help the participants understand the taboos and the stereotypes that sport commentators usually use. In this second case, the participants had to comment a video fragment from a football match using imposed words that were stereotyping the footballers and the event in general. [Here](#) you can see several photos taken during the testing of the first exercise.

Reflection on the tests. It was difficult for the participants of the two tests to learn something new, as they were already aware about the premises of the two exercises. However they played their roles and in the end decided that the two exercises have the potential to spring the

students' critical thinking in order to understand the importance of accepting and expressing diversity.

4.1. Fair-Play in the Newsroom (training package, first output)

Key-words: sports journalism/diversity/summer school/media literacy methodology

Target group: journalism students / professional journalists (optional) 20 participants

Duration: 10 days summer school

Aim: Develop awareness about social and cultural diversity as added value in sports reporting

The Summer School Format:
The agenda of the summer school will be organized into the steps of production of a journalistic material (a magazine/blog/video material) or of a pitch of the final product. The participants will choose the topic of the journalistic material that has to be subsumed to sports and diversity. However, the focus of the training activities will be on the process of understanding the values of social and cultural diversity and the advantages of using diversity in the editorial decisions and reporting.

Objectives:
1)   To identify potential barriers in the coverage of diversity in sports:
- Perceptive barriers – stereotypes
- Cultural barriers – prejudice, taboos
- Cognitive barriers – ignorance etc.
- Emotional barriers
- Social barriers
- Methodological barriers
- Organizational barriers

2)   To critically analyze sports media messages in order to identify stereotypes, prejudice and discriminatory behaviour.

3)   To evaluate and critically refer to the prejudice brought to public information by ignoring diversity in the coverage of sport events.

Content:

In the preparation phase of the summer school, the trainers and organizers will set the place, will document and have meetings in the area, set the list of invited speakers etc.

1) Introduction into the thematic of the summer school (identification and awareness of stereotypes (3 days)

(Example of exercises)
- Imposed words
Objective: (to identify and become aware of own stereotypes and prejudice)
Activity: the use of a list of imposed words and phrases denominating clichés, stereotypes, prejudice to comment an audio/video material of a sport event (30 min)

Meetings with journalists/ members of various communities (according to the context and training needs)

2) Critical analysis of media messages (content analysis / discourse analysis / *agenda-setting* analysis / argumentative deconstruction / analysis of the analysis)

- Role-play (working activity in sub-groups).
Activity: One group creates a press material with stereotypes content and the other analyzes it from the point of view of the presence of stereotypes.

- Media monitoring and analysis
Objective: identification of topics, cultural, ethnic, professional identities etc. and sports covered
Activity: The media monitoring and analysis of information materials in print media/online media/TV in order to identify the agenda setting.
Debate on the findings.

3) Field trip (3 days)
Objective: the unmediated get-to-know of social, cultural and political relationships (the choice of the group/community will be made in the preparation phase of the summer school - e.g. Roma community, the Hungarian players of the Romanian national hockey team, football fans etc.)
(Activity in working groups)

The field documentation will serve to the production of the media material and it will be made with journalistic methods and techniques.

4) (*Optional*) Participation in a sport event (e.g. the hockey team in Miercurea-Ciuc that recently has been accused by the sports media in Romania of not singing the Romanian hymn; majority of players are members of the Hungarian community).

5) Media production (final material) (4 days)
Magazine/pitch
Audiovisual material
Thematic: choice of the participants

Methods to be employed:
-         Case study (presentation of the case, questions, critical thinking exercise)
-         Participant observation
-         Brainstorming
-         Round table
-         Critical analysis of the media message (content analysis / discourse analysis / *agenda-setting* analysis / argumentative deconstruction / analysis of the analysis)
-         Structural Observation Card
-         Analysis Card
-         Monitoring Card

Test exercise: Imposed Words
- Watch the filmed material (5-10 minutes);
- Choose two commentators out of your group;
- Comment the filmed fragment from the football match Germany-Brazil using the imposed words and phrases in the list attached: (*Ro*) *seriozitate / sărăcie / disciplină / carnaval / perseverentă / favelas / precizie / atletici / muncitori / fantezie / tăvălug / anost / pată de culoare / masină de fotbal / talentati / panzere / samba / tehnici / diversitate / fair-play / organizati.*

4.2. **Fair Reporting** (second output)

Encouraging innovative methods of media production…

METHOD employed: the deconstruction and reconstruction of different journalistic approaches of discrimination and diversity for the theoretic part and media production (show-case journalism) using skills for multimedia and online use in the practice stage.

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┌──────────┐
│    1.    │         a. CLEARINGHOUSE
│  (WHAT)  │ ──→        (Online Resources)
│  ONLINE  │                                        ──→  ISSUES
└──────────┘ ──→     b. FRAMEWORK
             ──→     c. LIST OF MEDIA TEXTS          ──→  SOLUTIONS
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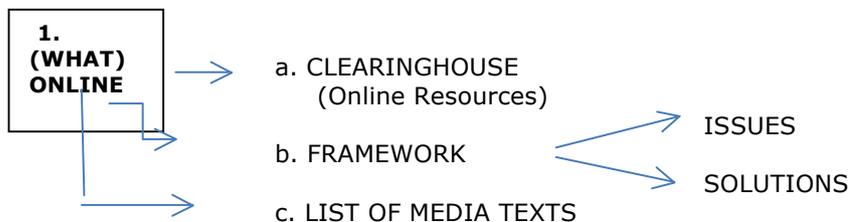
1. a.   CLEARINGHOUSE.

The **first step** is the creation of an online resource platform (Clearinghouse) on the thematic of the course (diversity, discrimination, sports journalism) to be consulted and used by students, journalists, professors during the course
(e.g. http://www.hrea.org/index.php?base_id=101&language_id=1)

The online resource centre will be updated on a regular basis and it will contain training materials or links to various articles to be studied as case studies, students' results etc. It may also contain a *blog* for the use of the training participants. Additionally, the online resource centre may be used as working platform for all course formats – intensive course (1 day) / during a 1 month semester course.

1.b. FRAMEWORK.

The resource centre will list the Issues and Solutions (why fair reporting is needed // why we, as journalists, should not discriminate, why we should encourage diversity in reporting etc.)

1.c. READING LIST.

It contains texts to be read and used as study cases along the course (for instance, for 13 meetings within one semester, the students will have to read & debate 13 reading packages). The reading packages contain 3 types of texts:
> 1) Theory (various chapters, studies, white papers – see *Appendix 4*_Media Bias and
> http://www.amazon.com/Open-Closed-Mind-Investigations-Personality/dp/0465095054),
> 2) Fiction article (…)
> 3) Positive example (see *Appendix 5* for illustration).

One or two moderators (journalist and a NGO member) will facilitate several debates with the students based on the reading activity. The reading can be a daily or weekly activity depending on the format of the course. The texts to be read should be awarded articles or chosen from distinguished media and should cover different dimensions of discrimination: ethnic, gender, social etc.

Second part of the course is practical. Trip to the city or the region where the course will be held. Creation of multimedia materials and articles.

In the **third part of the course** the journalistic products will be registered in a contest that will be evaluated by a jury of well-known professionals. The contest should offer prizes to professional journalists (money) and other type of prizes to students (publication of their journalistic materials etc.). A *yearly Challenge contest* could be open for registration. It may have two stages: (1) Grants for documentation and production of journalistic materials and (2) Awarding best stories of various formats (print, multimedia, TV, radio, photo etc.).

2. (WHAT)

10 TEXTS (for Debate)   Prizes   Ethnic
                               Personal   Gender
                                               Social
                                               Conflict

PRACTICE   Print

                  Multimedia

                  TV/photo

COMPETITION ($)   Prestige
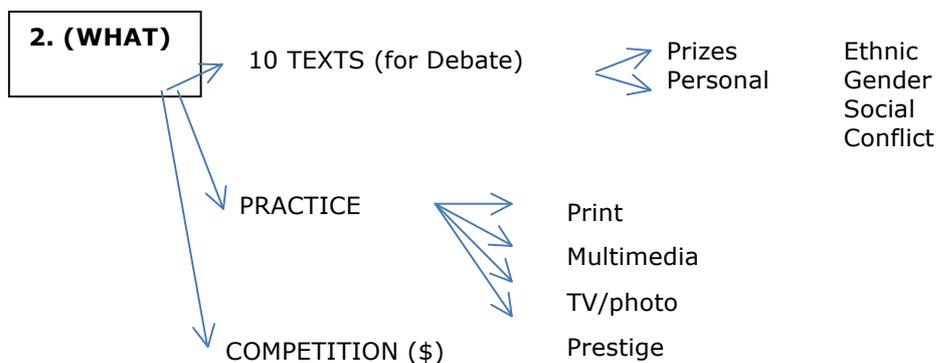
Course Duration

- flexible, intensive 1 day / 1 month semester
- Location: university / newsroom

Target group - Journalists /editors / journalism students

4. (WHERE)

ONLINE

OFFLINE   Universit
                 y
                 N

5. (WHY)   Interest
                      Resume
                      Editors
                      Trend
                      Diploma
                      Electronic badge –
                      with the name of
                      trainer mentioned

6. (WHO)

- Two trainers – journalist and NGO members,
- To be paid for development of course materials and the reading packages
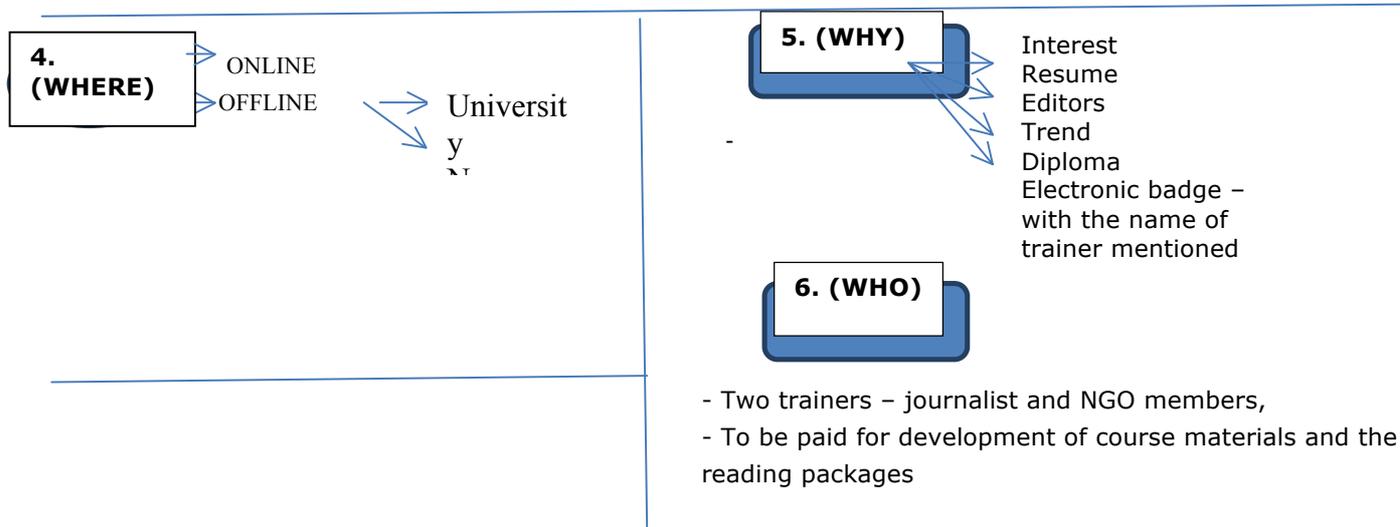
The course may be held online, recorded or disseminated.

Participants' Motivation: for their personal resume, interest in the topic, he/she may be interested to become known to the people in the jury committee, electronic diploma from well-known professionals that can be integrated in the LinkedIn profile or other online professional platforms, because the participant was sent by their editors-in-chief.

Wrapping-up of the course: FAIR REPORTING. It is a course to learn multimedia techniques but also to understand fair reporting and produce journalistic materials according.

Content

       Case study analysis

       Debate on text (+) & (-) examples
       2a. Identify stereotypes

Free debate
Assign task

2b. Technical issues (reporting etc.)

       Specific requests
       Use of sources, pro&cons

       Field research
       Step by step investigation   -> film
                                     -> record
       Media products presentation
       Analysis   - on products
                       - Re-read the examples

       Assessment – follow up

Types of exercises at level 1-12 (according to Human Rights Education model and issues identified):

1) ROLE PLAY -> "the author of the article reads its text in front of the victim about he/she reports"

2) To write a news story on the basis of existing data -> the results can be analyzed from the stereotypes point of view

3) Who are the greatest journalists
   - National
   - International
   + Background
   => Alternative – put an etiquette // recognize the character

4) Generating alternative qualities to other sport people (free association)

5) Match Review between two teams (monocolor vs. multicolor)

6) ROLE switching

6.   Conclusions and next steps on Romanian perspective

In the row of the previous MARS encounters, the National Media Encounter in Romania added up to the development of journalism training tools with media literacy methodology. The training propositions took into consideration the local realities of the institutional culture of journalism faculties and media institutions as well as the status of the media coverage of diversity, particularly in sports coverage.

At one point some participants raised the idea that the training tools proposed to promote diversity in journalistic materials are not realistic and they will not be used "*we are training for something that will not be used*". The main reason for this statement was the reality that media owners and editors look for audience, low quality, easy-to-get information and as a result stereotyped content. Expression of diversity would mean to change all these parameters. But this particular comment did not discourage the contributors in the workshop. It determined them to propose training tools that are practical, innovative, and attractive so that they can be easily integrated into curriculum or any specific training course. As one of the participants rightly said: "*real need provides for good solutions*".

One main idea developed along the discussions was that the trainers should take into consideration the education for diversity among the public itself along with the training for journalists. This should be consideration mainly for the school environment but not only. ActiveWatch is dedicated to promotion of media education in Romania and one of its aims is the introduction of media education in the core curriculum.

During the final session, Patrick Verniers appreciated the outputs as „*valuable production*" but he drew attention to the challenge to find good leverage effects of such training. The outputs can be very well used within in-service training provided journalists are open and available to learn and media owners open to contribute.

ActiveWatch and Romanian Centre for Investigative Journalism (CRJI) are looking into the possibility to fund the summer school and develop the Clearinghouse-type resource centre on this issue. The methodological tools of the two independent outputs can be easily combined together in the form of a new training project.

In addition, the members of the Journalism Faculty at Babes-Bolyai University showed interest in the outputs developed in Cluj and hopefully they will find the means and ways to integrate some of the teaching methods in their courses. ActiveWatch will follow-up with them in this sense.

In addition, ActiveWatch will disseminate the outputs in the main university centres in the country and try to convince professors/lecturers of the added value of such training for journalism students.

The MARS Brussels Report mentioned the „*lack of in-service training courses in Europe specializing in sports journalism*". This is one direction that ActiveWatch and CRJI investigate in order to propose the online resource centre course.

Media, Diversity & Sport - Key Figures!

In Europe, only a quarter of news subjects are women, even though they account for over half of the European population (GMMP, 2010)! While immigrants represent around 10% of the EU population (*Eurostat, 2011*) migrants and ethnic minorities represent less than 5% of the main actors in the news in Europe (*Ter Wal, 2004*). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people represent roughly 6% of the population of the United Kingdom but account for less than 1% of the population seen on TV. 20% of the British population is disabled but less than 1% is represented in British TV (*CDN 2009-10 Progress Report*).

Through the sources they use, the subjects they select and the treatment they choose, the media influence the agenda (what to think about) and public perception (how to think) of contemporary debates. This is why the Council of Europe considers truly inclusive information - where everyone can participate as witnesses, players, producers etc. - to be crucial for social cohesion and democratic participation. But today, too many people are still excluded from public debates!

The MARS - Media Against Racism in Sport – EU / CoE joint programme chooses to focus, though not exclusively, on sport because it is considered as an important area for building social cohesion as it is also a major sector of investment in the media industry. However, sport media coverage does not reflect social and cultural diversity and does not ensure equity for all. Only 5% of press articles cover cultural and social aspects of sport; 40% of all sport articles refer to only one source and 20 % refer to no sources at all; female athletes have four times more chances to be covered by a female journalist rather than a male one but less than 5% of sport news and stories are made by female journalists (Play the Game, 2005)!

Building upon standards set by various Council of Europe bodies on media pluralism, expression of diversity and non discrimination and the outcome of the 2008-10 CoE's antidiscrimination Campaign, the MARS – Media Against Racism in Sport – EU / CoE joint programme aims at considering non discrimination and expression of diversity as an ongoing angle of media coverage.

Through this approach applied to sport coverage, MARS wants to encourage innovative modes of media content production that could be reproduced in all media sectors and used by any form of media coverage. By stimulating media cross-practices in the field of training, ethics and production, MARS aims at implementing an inclusive and intercultural approach to media content production. To achieve these outcomes, the MARS programme offers media professionals (journalism students and trainers, journalists, media managers, etc.) to participate in National and European Media Encounters and Media Work Exchanges conceived as first steps towards a European media network against racism and for intercultural dialogue.

More – www.coe.int/mars !