

We are DIVERSITY. We are (Grassroots) RADIO!

The Grassroots Radio project joins its voice with community radio stations worldwide to celebrate World Radio Day 2020. According to UNESCO: *radio is a powerful medium for celebrating humanity in all its diversity and constitutes a platform for democratic discourse. At the global level, radio remains the most widely consumed medium. This unique ability to reach out the widest audience means radio can shape a society's experience of diversity, stand as an arena for all voices to speak out, be represented and heard. Radio stations should serve diverse communities, offering a wide variety of programs, viewpoints and content, and reflect the diversity of audiences in their organizations and operations.*"

The Internet has helped to bring people together from all over the world, but it has not helped neighborhoods or communities nearly as well. The Grassroots Radio project is piloting solutions for community information platforms and media pluralism, working to lower the barriers to start and sustain a community radio station, create regional and European-wide networks of stations that can pool community-level resources, co-innovate collaborative media services, increase the permeability and impact of those stations through a combination of existing digital and nondigital technologies

The **Grassroots Radio project is diversity**: diversity in the consortium of partners (academic, commercial and non-profit NGO partners), diversity in the approach to new forms of interaction between mobile telephony and traditional radio, diversity in the engagement process of remote communities in **Romania, Ireland and Portugal**. As an ICT-based project, Grassroots Radio is proud to be diverse in the gender balance of consortium members as well, operating within a field – that of ICT – which still suffers from strong gender gaps.

The community radio movement is different from the public and commercial broadcasting sectors, but also diverse within the non-profit sector itself: locally rooted antennas, campus radios, city radios or rural radios, religious radios, socially driven experiences, information or simply entertainment experiences, all this represents the diversity of the sector

According to Chris Csikszentmihalyi, the Grassroots radio project coordinator, "the diversity of the project is especially evident with the **experimental side of the use of new technologies, including the auxiliary use of Text To Speech** technologies, tailored on the needs of local communities and local languages including Romanian, Madeiran Portuguese and Gaelic Irish."

Nowadays independent, local and community-oriented journalism is more and more exposed to political and economic threats and pressure. In this context, community media remain crucial actors and articulation platforms to ensure the participation of diverse communities in public discussion, provide access to local information and give a voice to underrepresented communities.

The Grassroots Radio project consortium wishes our colleagues and friends around the World a happy World Radio Day 2020!

For more information:

Mariacristina Sciannamblo: cristina.sciannamblo@amarceurope.eu

<https://grassrootsradio.eu/>

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The consortium is composed by: ActiveWatch (Romania), MedAlert (Romania), RootIO (Portugal), University College Cork UCC (Ireland), Madeira Interactive Technologies Institute M-ITI (Portugal), Bere Island Projects Group (Ireland), CEREPROC (UK), and AMARC Europe (Belgium)