Training on multi-platform newsroom managing - Report of training sessions

WP4 / T4.2

Gender Equality and Antidiscrimination for Roma

MODULE I- Activating an Inclusive and Equal Newsroom: Managing and Examining Digital Channels

The primary objective of the first lesson for the group of trainers was to provide tools and resources to facilitate the open and inclusive participation of boys and girls in the GEAR project's editorial team, while raising awareness of gender equality issues. Guidelines and training activities were suggested to encourage the involvement of both genders in multimedia editorial tasks, with practical advice on creating a supportive environment, promoting active listening, and equitable distribution of tasks within the group. In addition, learning modules were offered to explore gender roles in advertising, body image biases and the importance of ethical online behaviour and privacy. Trainees were shown tools to conduct discussions with students and manage hands-on activities and case analyses, with the aim of cultivating a deeper understanding of the topics covered and teaching responsible digital presence management.

INTRODUCTORY SECTION

The introductory section offered an overview of the course and discussed strategies and tips for encouraging girls' and boys' participation in multimedia editorial activities. It included guidelines for creating a welcoming and inclusive environment in the editorial team, promoting active listening, addressing girls' concerns, incentivizing idea contribution, and ensuring equal task distribution. Furthermore, it suggested providing leadership opportunities for all, advocating for female representation in leadership roles, promoting open communication, offering constructive feedback, and recognizing the diverse skills among editorial team members. The lesson then focused on six areas of in-depth exploration, corresponding to six training modules available to the trainees. The four three outlined the characteristics of specific teaching methods and the content of activities to be carried out in a training environment.

I)   GENDER ROLES IN ADVERTISING

This area focused on exploring gender roles in advertising. Teachers can use tools that enable students to analyse existing advertising campaigns and identify differences between elements such as colour, music, and tone. Through some specific activities, it is also possible to determine the intended audience of the advertisements. At a basic level, students discuss common gender stereotypes. Trainers are also encouraged to use video materials to enable students to identify differences in advertisements. In advanced level activities, students work in groups to design advertising campaigns targeting the opposite gender, considering techniques and positioning strategies. Discussion topics include differences in marketing to different genders, stereotype reinforcement, and types of advertisements that appeal to both genders.

II)   GENDER STEREOTYPES AND BODY IMAGE

Discussion then turned to gender stereotypes and body image, highlighting the dangers associated with gender biases and the role of social media in perpetuating them. To enable students to analyse gender stereotypes associated with behaviours and expectations, question societal pressures to conform to certain gender roles, and reflect on how these stereotypes can lead to abuse and violence, specific teaching methods and content were presented. Through guided discussions and online browsing, students can examine the effect of media on body image and how beauty standards influence perceptions of self and others. Media content can radically influence perceptions of health and beauty, as well as trigger relevant psychological consequences.

III)   PROMOTING ETHICAL BEHAVIOR ONLINE – MY VIRTUAL LIFE

It is important to teach young people how to manage their privacy and reputation on the Internet. Ethical choices about sharing content can be discussed with students and the impact of one's online activities on personal reputation can be analysed. Students are prompted to learn about privacy settings and tools available on various online platforms to control access to their content. Course participants are informed

about the importance of discussing the moral dilemmas involved in publishing and sharing personal material online. The techniques outlined in this part of the session aim to develop students' understanding of online behaviour, ethical considerations, privacy management, and the consequences of sharing content online without consent. Through the "My Online Portrait" tool, students can identify the platforms where their content has been posted and shared. Then, considering the privacy settings and tools available on the various platforms, students can ask themselves "Who sees what?" and reflect deeply on the impact of sharing content without consent.

IV) THERE'S NO EXCUSE TO FORWARD A SEXT

Continuing the discussion on privacy, the training session then focused on how to discourage the practice of forwarding sexual messages without the original sender's consent. There are several ways to raise awareness among students on this issue, such as adopting a module inclusive of a series of videos. The videos included in the module review common excuses used by young people to justify sharing others' sexual messages, calling them into question:

- Justification of the action: legitimising the behaviour by claiming its adoption is supported for a valid reason, such as retaliation for a wrong suffered. The first video shown challenges this excuse, emphasising that two wrongs do not make a right.
- Denial of harm: minimising the harm caused by sharing sexual content, comparing it to something worse. The second video encourages students to understand that perceived severity can vary from person to person, and that it is always wrong to trigger harmful action towards another person.
- Shifting of responsibility: deflecting blame onto someone else, for example, claiming to be "just the messenger". The third video prompts students to reflect on how to counter this excuse, stressing that anyone who shares a sext contributes to the harm.
- Blaming the victim: attributing blame to the sender of the sexual message instead of taking responsibility for sharing it without authorisation. The final video highlighted the common tendency to blame the sender rather than the person who shared it without consent, prompting students to reflect on their own experiences.

Overall, the module aims to raise students' awareness of the ethical implications of forwarding sexual messages without consent and to encourage them to take responsibility for their sharing.

V) BODY POSITIVE ADS

This section addressed body image and advertising related to a positive body image. Specifically, the role of the media in promoting unrealistic beauty standards was discussed, along with how some advertising campaigns, such as those by Aerie and Dove, aimed to counter these stereotypes by promoting a positive body image. Participants were provided with tools and images to present to young people, encouraging them to critically evaluate traditional advertisements compared to those promoting a positive body image, discussing the messages conveyed and their impact on consumers. Additionally, campaigns promoting a positive body image targeting both women and men were proposed. Students can be invited to assess the effectiveness of these campaigns and discuss the positive or negative influence they may have on consumer perceptions. By providing a guide on how to actively respond to advertisements promoting unrealistic or harmful beauty standards, students are encouraged to use social media to share criticisms or praise and to engage in promoting more realistic and positive body images.

VI) MANAGING PRIVACY ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

The sixth and final section provided a guide on managing privacy on social networks. It's important to discuss with students how social platforms collect personal data and emphasise the importance for users to read and understand the privacy policies of social platforms, choosing the most appropriate privacy settings. Young people can be given an overview of the main privacy settings on popular platforms like Facebook, Instagram,

and TikTok, for both personal and business accounts. Then, discussions should cover who can see posts, follower approval, comment management, geotagging settings, and other options to protect personal information and manage interaction with other users. Additionally, students should be given advice on protecting personal data, managing sensitive content, and enabling two-factor authentication (2FA). These educational materials provide students with the tools to consciously manage their online privacy and adopt safe practices on social media.

MODULE II- Guide to social media

In the second lesson, the focus was on understanding and effectively using social media, digital platforms designed to connect, communicate, and share content online. During the lesson, the fundamental features of social media were examined, including their multiple uses, impact on society, and global user statistics. Additionally, the specifics of some of the most popular platforms were explored, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and TikTok, analysing their unique functionalities and target audience. Finally, various free tools available to support online work and digital content creation were discussed, offering resources and functionalities that can enhance productivity and creativity across various sectors and disciplines.

I) WHAT IS A SOCIAL MEDIA?

Social media platforms have revolutionized communication and human interaction, serving as versatile digital spaces that transcend geographical and cultural boundaries. They enable the establishment and nurturing of social connections, empowering individuals to share experiences and express themselves creatively. Moreover, these platforms have evolved into comprehensive digital ecosystems, offering diverse services and functionalities ranging from multimedia content publishing to real-time information access and community building. In essence, social media platforms have become integral to our daily lives, shaping how we interact, learn, and work. The operators seamlessly grasped the concept of social media as dynamic and versatile digital platforms that redefine communication and human interaction. Presented with the topic, they effortlessly recognized that these platforms offer more than mere content sharing: they serve as indispensable tools for networking, information dissemination, self-expression, and activism.

II) USES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media serve a myriad of purposes, extending far beyond mere content sharing. They have become integral tools for personal and professional networking, providing platforms for individuals to connect with like-minded peers, experts, and communities across the globe. Through social media, people can cultivate and maintain relationships, whether with friends and family or with colleagues and acquaintances. Beyond personal connections, Social Media platforms serve as vital sources of information, offering real-time updates on news, events, and trends from around the world. Users can access a wealth of knowledge and diverse perspectives, enabling them to stay informed and engaged with current affairs and societal issues. Moreover, Social Media platforms facilitate self-expression and creativity, empowering users to share their thoughts, opinions, and experiences with a global audience. Whether through text, images, videos, or live broadcasts, individuals can showcase their talents, passions, and unique perspectives, fostering dialogue and collaboration within online communities. Additionally, it was discussed how social media play a pivotal role in business and marketing strategies, providing businesses with powerful tools to reach and engage their target audience, promote products or services, and build brand awareness. From small startups to multinational corporations, organizations leverage Social Media platforms to enhance their online presence, connect with customers, and drive sales. Furthermore, it was emphasised how social media serve as platforms for activism and social change, enabling individuals and groups to amplify their voices, raise awareness about important issues, and mobilize support for causes they believe in. Through campaigns, petitions, and grassroots movements, Social Media users can effect tangible change and contribute to

building a more equitable and just society. In essence, social media have evolved into multifaceted tools that empower individuals, businesses, and communities to connect, communicate, and collaborate in unprecedented ways, shaping the fabric of our digital society. The operators, demonstrating a deep understanding of the concept, exhibited great interest in the topic as it was presented to them. They recognized that social media platforms serve as essential tools for networking, information sharing, self-expression, and activism, going beyond mere content sharing.

III)   THE SPECIFIC FEATURES OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Each Social Media platform boasts its own unique features and caters to distinct audiences, so this topic was discussed in detail with the operators. For instance, Facebook serves as a versatile platform for connecting with friends and family, participating in groups, and engaging with online communities. Detailed instructions on creating and managing Facebook pages were also provided. Instagram, conversely, is primarily centered around the sharing of photos and videos, offering users a plethora of tools to enhance visual content. Similarly, guidance on establishing and managing Instagram profiles was included. Twitter stands out as a prominent source of real-time news and information, allowing users to express thoughts and opinions succinctly through short messages. The lesson also covered strategies for setting up and managing Twitter accounts effectively. LinkedIn, recognized as a professional networking platform, facilitates job searching and industry networking, with insights provided on crafting and maintaining professional profiles. Lastly, TikTok has gained popularity among younger demographics due to its entertaining and creative atmosphere, enabling users to produce and share short video content. Instructions on creating and managing TikTok profiles were also included to ensure comprehensive understanding.

IV)   FREE WORK SUPPORT TOOLS

In addition to social media, there are numerous free tools that support online work and digital content creation. These tools were shown to the operators to give them some practical understanding on how to create material for social platforms. Pexels and Unsplash offer a vast collection of free visual resources, including high-quality photos and videos, which can be used in a variety of creative projects. These platforms allow users to explore a wide range of categories, from landscape images to portraits, to find the most suitable visual resources for their needs. Color Picker and Color Palette Generator are useful tools for selecting and creating harmonious color combinations for design projects, allowing designers to explore various options and color schemes to achieve visually appealing results. With the help of these free tools, the operators can enrich their projects with high-quality visual content and create visually captivating designs that capture the audience's attention.

MODULE III- The Approach to Roma Youth Culture: Insights and Content

The third module aimed to provide a deep dive into the multifaceted aspects of Roma culture, offering valuable insights for professionals engaging with Roma youth. The module encompassed a broad spectrum of topics, including music, social networks, art, and fashion, with the overarching goal of establishing a web radio station and disseminating its content effectively. Naomi Suffer, a TikTok influencer within the Italian Roma community, collaborated closely in shaping the contents of the module, ensuring authenticity and relevance to the Roma youth experience. This training session of the GEAR project aimed at equipping professionals with innovative strategies to guide editorial decisions, create compelling content, and navigate online feedback channels adeptly.

I)   ROMA CULTURE OVERVIEW

The Roma community is characterized by its rich diversity, comprising numerous subgroups, each with its own distinct cultural traditions and practices. Despite this diversity, common threads unite Roma communities

worldwide, including a deep reverence for family ties and a profound respect for elders as custodians of cultural heritage. While the concept of inheritance may vary within Roma culture, the tradition of oral storytelling serves as a vital conduit for preserving historical narratives, folklore, and linguistic traditions. Music occupies a central place in Roma culture, transcending geographical boundaries and serving as a universal language that fosters connection and solidarity among disparate Roma communities. Participants in the training session were introduced to Roma musicians such as Django Reinhardt and Esma Redžepova, who have left an indelible mark on global music by blending traditional Roma melodies with contemporary influences to create timeless compositions that resonate across generations.

II) THE ROMANI MUSIC TRADITION

The Romani musical style is the result of a myriad of influences, ranging from traditional folk melodies to innovative contemporary compositions. Renowned for their improvisational skills and emotive performances, Romani musicians have made significant contributions to a wide range of musical genres, including jazz, flamenco, and classical music. Artists like Goran Bregović have adeptly blended traditional Romani sounds with elements of rock and pop, captivating audiences worldwide with their eclectic musical styles. It has been explained how Romani musicians often push their artistic boundaries, infusing traditional melodies with modern instrumentation and production techniques to create dynamic compositions that defy genres. Beyond its role as a form of entertainment, Romani music serves as a powerful tool for cultural preservation, identity assertion, and resistance against stereotypes and discrimination. Through their music, Romani artists seek to promote greater understanding and appreciation of Romani culture while challenging negative stereotypes and promoting social cohesion.

III) OTHER TYPES OF CREATIVE CONTENT

After showing various contemporary Romani artists to the participating operators, emphasis was placed on other thematic areas in which representatives of Romani culture excel. In addition to music, Romani artists express themselves through various creative mediums, including visual arts, literature, and performance art. There are artists (during the session, reference was made to Bruno Morelli) who use their talents to raise awareness about Romani culture and advocate for social change, effectively using their platforms to challenge stereotypes and promote inclusivity. Through storytelling, visual expression, and performance, Romani artists amplify their voices and assert their presence within the cultural landscape, challenging mainstream narratives and reclaiming agency over their representation. Social media platforms offer a powerful tool for Romani activists and artists to connect with a global audience, facilitating cultural exchange and collective action. By sharing their stories and lived experiences, Romani individuals aim to combat discrimination, promote cultural pride, and foster greater understanding and acceptance within society.

IV) ROMA CULTURE ON SOCIAL NETWORKS

Social networks play a pivotal role in connecting Roma communities and facilitating cultural exchange, providing platforms for Roma individuals to celebrate their identity and share their experiences with a global audience. The practitioners were shown the digital pages of some of the most famous Roma influencers and/or activists. Roma influencers on platforms like TikTok leverage their online presence to challenge stereotypes, celebrate Roma culture, and inspire pride within the community. Despite facing criticism and negativity, these influencers serve as powerful advocates for Roma rights and visibility, using their platforms to amplify marginalized voices and advocate for social justice. Effective management of online communities is essential to navigate challenges and foster positive engagement, ensuring that Roma voices are heard and respected in digital spaces. It was explained that, by promoting cultural awareness and understanding, Roma influencers contribute to greater social cohesion and acceptance, paving the way for a more inclusive and equitable society.

V)   ROMA-INSPIRED FASHION

Roma-inspired fashion has emerged as a global phenomenon, with designers drawing inspiration from Roma culture to create innovative and culturally resonant designs. From traditional garments to contemporary streetwear, Roma fashion reflects a rich tapestry of heritage, identity, and artistic expression. Designers like Noell Maggini and Sara Cetti were presented to the participants. These professionals infuse their creations with elements of Roma culture, promoting cultural appreciation and empowerment while challenging stereotypes and misconceptions. Through fashion, Roma individuals assert their identity and reclaim agency over their representation, challenging dominant narratives and fostering greater acceptance and inclusivity within the fashion industry and society at large.

CONCLUSION

The exploration of Roma culture and creativity within the framework of the GEAR project underscores the richness, diversity, and resilience of Romani heritage. Through music, art, social media, and fashion, Roma individuals assert their identity, challenge stereotypes, and promote cultural understanding and acceptance. These creative expressions serve as powerful tools for cultural preservation, identity assertion, and resistance against discrimination, fostering greater social cohesion and solidarity within Roma communities and society at large. As professionals engage with Roma youth, embracing and celebrating Roma culture is essential for creating inclusive spaces, fostering positive social change, and building bridges of understanding and empathy across cultural divides. By amplifying Roma voices and narratives, the editorial team of the project can work to promote a more just, equitable, and inclusive society for all.

MODULE IV- Let's build a Radio!

The fourth and final training module introduced the methods of building and managing a web radio station, with a particular focus on community engagement and creating original content. The provided content offered participants a comprehensive roadmap on the world of web radios, also providing information on specific online and offline applications functional to building a platform. Specifically, the topics covered were as follows:

I)   THE ESSENCE OF THE RADIO

Radio is a platform suitable for expressing fervour and enthusiasm, capable of hosting meaningful conversations on various aspects of life; it is a medium to be used to spread artistic expression and innovation, which has the power to evoke emotions in listeners.

II)   PLANNING YOUR FUTURE RADIO: WILL YOUR RADIO BE A COMMUNITY RADIO?

After a brief introduction to the essence of a radio, participants were explained that precisely determining the characteristics of the platform involves a team-building activity where members work collectively to select elements related to music, sounds, content, graphics, and planning marketing campaigns. The key aspects to define include:

- Radio Typology: the type or category of radio station, such as talk radio, music radio, news radio, etc. Such definition helps establish what the station will primarily focus on.
- Editorial Line: overall editorial direction and stance of the radio station. It includes the topics to be addressed, the tone of the content, and the station's perspective on various issues.
- Music Genres: determination of the types of music to be played on the station. Different platforms use different music genres, whether it's pop, rock, classical, jazz, etc.
- Sound Design: overall audio aesthetic of the station, including things like jingles, sound effects, transitions, and overall production quality.

- Speaker Style: how radio hosts or presenters interact with the audience. It includes factors like tone of voice, personality, and presentation style, which contribute to the overall character of the station.

By defining these key aspects, a radio station can establish its unique identity and direction, attracting and retaining listeners who appreciate the creative offerings and its style.

III) STARTING THE JOURNEY

The activity of a radio station starts with the formation of work groups, comprising editorial teams, speakers, technical/music teams, and social network experts. Each team has distinct responsibilities. Participants were then informed in detail about the reference figures present in a professional web radio:

- Editorial Director: oversees the overall editorial direction of the station. They are responsible for defining the publishing strategy, identifying key topics, and ensuring consistency between the messages conveyed by the station.
- Content Producers: responsible for creating and curating content for the station. They may develop story ideas, conduct interviews, and write scripts for radio segments or programs.
- Content Editors: responsible for reviewing and refining content before it goes on air. They ensure accuracy, adherence to the station's editorial guidelines, and overall quality of the content.
- Social Media Managers: responsible for managing the station's social media pages, including posting content, engaging listeners, and promoting shows and events.

Speakers Team:

- Radio Hosts/Presenters: members of staff who host programs, introduce programming segments, and interact with listeners. They may have expertise in specific topics and are responsible for entertaining and informing the audience.
- Interviewers: conduct interviews with guests, experts, or individuals relevant to the station's content. They prepare questions, guide the conversation, and ensure engaging and informative exchanges.
- Voiceover Artists: provide voiceovers for the station's promotions, advertisements, and other audio materials. With their vocal talent, they contribute to the station's branding and overall atmosphere.

Technical/Music Team:

- Technical Director: oversees the technical aspects of the station's operations, including equipment maintenance and troubleshooting.
- Music Directors/Programmers: select and organize the station's music playlist. They consider audience preferences, trends, and the station's overall music strategy when curating playlists.
- Sound Engineers: responsible for the audio quality of broadcasts, ensuring optimal audio levels and clarity. They may also collaborate on sound design elements such as jingles and transitions.

IV) WORKFLOW FOR CREATING RADIO SHOWS

Once information about the work team of a web radio was provided, participants were informed about the characteristics of the workflow in a radio environment. This flow involves collaboration between various teams to produce and broadcast radio programs without interruptions. The importance of the radio script was then highlighted, suggesting keeping the text simple, concise, and suitable for oral delivery to ensure effective communication with listeners. The characteristics of radio elements such as jingles, advertisements, music, talk segments, and news were then outlined, along with the creation of tailored playlists for speakers.

V) TRAINING EXERCISES

In the final part of the training session, participants were suggested some training exercises, using tools like Audacity and BR Logic (the radio platform used in the GEAR project) to record, edit, and create podcast content. The exercises include:

- Basic editing practice: importing raw audio files into Audacity or BR Logic and using basic editing techniques to create a coherent narration or conversation.

- Voiceover recording: recording voiceovers for podcast intros, outros, or segments using Audacity or BR Logic. The focus of the exercise is particularly on techniques related to microphone positioning, speech clarity, and maintaining optimal audio levels.
- Music integration: learning how to integrate background music or sound effects into podcast episodes using Audacity or BR Logic.
- Podcast scripting: writing and recording scripted podcast segments using Audacity or BR Logic. The exercise focuses mainly on delivery, pace, and engaging storytelling to effectively communicate a message to listeners.
- Interview simulation: conducting and editing interview-style podcast segments. The exercise is based on using Audacity or BR Logic to record fictitious interviews, editing the recordings to highlight key points, and maintaining high listener engagement.
- Exporting and publishing: exporting finished podcast episodes from Audacity or BR Logic in the appropriate file format and quality settings.