Dear Mrs. Nina Obuljen Koržinek,

Community Media Forum Europe (CMFE) represents networks, national federations, projects and individuals active within the Third Media Sector often called community media, at the European level. We have been made aware by some of our members that despite very positive developments in Croatia, there is a severe lack of funding for the third or not-for-profit media sector. In one very particular funding scheme, the European Social Fund, tenders in Croatia have been repeatedly postponed and access to potential funding was in this way denied to independent media initiatives.

Given that on a European level, the importance of independent and not-for-profit media is recognised in different documents, we kindly but strongly urge you to work towards the recognition and ensure sufficient funding for the Croatian not-for-profit sector. Only last year, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in its Recommendation on media pluralism and transparency of media ownership (2018) most recently invites member states to support the establishment and functioning of minority, regional, local and not-for-profit community media, including by providing financial mechanisms to foster their development.

In your role as the Minister of Culture, we urge you to look into the issue of postponed tenders in relation to the ESF funding and we would be very happy to cooperate with you on the way to a more inclusive and diverse media landscape in Croatia, including public service, commercial and not-for-profit media.

We are looking forward to your answer, with best regards

Judith Purkarthofer,
President of the board of directors of CMFE
Vienna, 22.2.2019
CMFE was founded in 2004 and its mission is to advocate for community media in Europe, and thus raise awareness of the contributions of community media to media pluralism, democratic participation and development. This mission includes efforts to obtain legal recognition of the 3rd sector on a European and national level, secure funding opportunities and entertain dialogues with European bodies, provide links to research and activities that foster support, exchange and cooperation with independent civic media initiatives.

https://www.cmfe.eu

Since 2009 CMFE is an observer with the Steering Committee on the Media and Information Society (CDMSI) of the Council of Europe (formerly CDMC Steering Committee on the Media and new Communications Services). It represents the interest of the Community Media sector in various working groups at the pan-European level, alongside other associations representing the public and the commercial media sectors, as well as media and civil society stakeholders.

The Council of Europe has endorsed Community Media and their role in fostering democratic societies: https://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/community-media