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Region: Worldwide



[“I’ve never interviewed ordinary people. We use them only in *vox pops*.”](#) This is what an experienced Moroccan radio journalist declared during a Media Diversity Institute training programme a few years ago. The statement which reflects the unfortunate tendency in many countries MDI have worked in - journalists speaking mainly to government officials and report mostly official news - is a title of an article in the October issue of the Journal for Applied Journalism and Media Studies (AJMS), entirely devoted to the issue of inclusive journalism.

“To get journalists to reveal the truth behind complex issues, embrace diversity as a reality and understand and explain cultural differences between communities is not an easy task and can take years of professional experience and training. Yet, in order to strengthen journalism practices and improve coverage of diversity and critical social issues, interviewing so-called “ordinary people is an essential part of the job,” notes MDI executive director Milica Pesic, the author of the article. “To bring responsible journalism into practice, working only with journalists, as the MDI team did in the beginning, is not enough. Journalists have editors, and editors have media owners. Yet, without truly connecting with the communities as sources of stories and facts often not provided by the authorities, and without journalism educators opening up new ways of teaching, diversity-blind journalism is going to dominate both legacy and new media.”

In her paper, Pestic presents concrete and detailed examples of how MDI has worked to promote inclusive journalism in many different countries and regions. She discusses the barriers to change—such as the resistance of many editors and publishers to new ways of doing things—and explains some of the other challenges her organization has confronted in its efforts to promote responsible journalism practices. “We hope that academics and practitioners around the Glob will find the MDI experience useful and applicable. This will be an awarding marking of our twentieth anniversary which comes this year,” says Pestic.

In pulling together this important special issue of the journal, the AJMS associate editor and Journalism Professor at Auckland University, *Dr Verica Rugar*, aimed to encourage a critical dialogue of the press’s ability to challenge hegemonic notions of inequality through a social diversity framework.

“Over the last century journalism’s authority in fast processing of information has moved from the privileged position of reporting life to the more privileged position of reporting life that matters,” she notes in her discussion of the issue in the journal. “Its capacity to separate individual lives from the life of society has enabled it to turn persons into representative of the groups. By forming and un-forming groups and by constructing a sense of who we are in relation to others, the journalistic sector of the media participates in the larger process of inclusion and exclusion.”

Other papers published in the Journal’s October issue include articles on the World Indigenous Television Broadcasting Network (WITBN) consisting of Indigenous broadcasters from around the world, an analysis of content published in a local newspaper in Melbourne on a proposed mosque, as well as a research on diversity in the Egyptian media conducted by Dr Rasha Abdulla, Media Professor at American University in Cairo and MDI consultant on [MDI project in Egypt in 2011-2013](#).