

## **Call for concrete support for community media**

Following the recent adoption of two important policy documents at the European level, the motion on Community Media in Europe adopted by the Parliament and the adoption of the Declaration on Community Media by the Council of Europe, community media practitioners and political representatives alike demanded more concrete actions for the sector at both the continental as well as at the domestic level.

During the two-day workshop "Community Media and European Policy", held in Halle on 13-14 March, participants from 14 countries reviewed current trends of the sector in Europe, highlighting some of the immediate actions occurring as a result of the adoption of these decisions.

“What must follow now,” according to CMFE President Pieter de Wit “are concrete measures to develop and strengthen recognition and sustainability of community media at the national levels, as well as representation for community media in Brussels. Community media should have also a stronger voice in media policy decision-making processes, as well as in European debates in other areas of policy, including but not limited to media pluralism, social cohesion, intercultural dialogue, digitalization, and media literacy.”

As part of the workshop, a plenary session was convened on Friday evening. Invited speakers were Minister of State Sachsen-Anhalt Rainer Robra, German representative in the Steering Committee for Mass Media and Communication (CDMC) at the Council of Europe Bernhard Möwes, and MEPs Elizabeth Schroedter (Green Party) and Dr. Horst Schnellhardt (CDU). The speakers broadly agreed that community media need to be strengthened. The speakers also agreed that community media advocates should be given status in Brussels, and that community media should be involved in European political decision-making processes.

An important contributor in this process of work on the declarations was the Community Media Forum Europe (CMFE) which as a group of experts provides expertise and experience from the sector and participates the the European debates on media and democracy.