



Open Channels for Europe!



Bundesverband Offene Kanäle e.V.

**15th Annual Convention of Open Channels
September 11th – 14th, 2008
Berlin**

**Open Channels and Intercultural Dialogue
European Year of Intercultural Dialogue**



What is the conference about?

The European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 was launched in Ljubljana on January 8th, 2008 by the Commission President José Manuel Barroso and the Slovene Prime Minister Janez Janša. This event was the first of a multitude of activities across Europe which will emphasise strengthening relations between nationalities, and promoting through dialogue of mutual understanding, tolerance, solidarity and a sense of common destiny among EU citizens from all walks of life.

The 2008 Berlin conference will explore how we can support intercultural dialogue by the use of existing and emerging open media. Focusing on digital media the conference participants will present key ideas and concepts and good practise examples of where the media can contribute to the development of a shared open space across cultures and nations. Together we will discuss where we as the organising associations can contribute to a more democratic Europe.

What are the main aims of the conference?

The conference will

- look into the role of open media (radio, television, internet) to create a European public sphere for intercultural dialogue
- explore media literacy as a prerequisite for successful intercultural dialogue in the media
- celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Federation of German Open Channels

What is the background of the conference?

In 1997 the Bundesverband Offene Kanäle (Federation of German Open Channels) held an international conference focusing on "Open Channels for Europe!". More than 100 participants from 14 European and non-European countries discussed the possibilities of utilizing open media for intensifying the direct dialogue among citizens across boundaries in Europe.

The media landscape has changed fundamentally during the last years. Citizens are broadcasting their radio and TV programmes on the internet. The internet connects the traditional media radio and TV and is a new media by itself. It creates emerging platforms for presentation and dialogue through its possibilities to interact. Until recently this development was hardly imaginable and is constantly opening up new potential for open media.

The Enlargement of the European Union and globalisation in general have led to increased communication between cultures and languages in and outside Europe. Intercultural competence is becoming more and more the fundamental key competence for a positive social and economic development.

Open media can play a decisive role in this process. They integrate citizens as individuals and thus directly have an impact on the development of civil societies. The specific authenticity of the dialogue among citizens having different cultural backgrounds fosters the development of a common European identity that is open to the world and is based upon the common values of respect of human dignity, freedom and equal rights.

Who is it for?

The conference is not only for media producers and educators from local and open channel initiatives from Germany and across Europe but also for visionaries, leaders, policy makers, researchers and activists who are working towards a broader valuing of a diverse European Community. We especially welcome young media makers to participate.

What does it offer?

The event offers a platform to develop a joint vision about the use of new and open media. In addition to keynote sessions, talks, workshops and discussions there will be ample opportunities for networking on an informal level. In a special workshop interested participants will be trained how to use a TV studio for a live coverage on intercultural topics. The conference will also offer the development of an interactive multimedia based online platform to stimulate discussion prior to the conference, and continuing the conversation after the meeting - building an intercultural and sustainable European community.

The conference languages will be English and German.

If you are interested to join us in the preparation or would like be part of the development of the meeting then please subscribe to our email community:
openchannels2008-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

If you want to receive our newsletter with the latest information about the conference:
info@open-channels.org

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