#RTLCARES

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY REPORT 2018
Our CR trailer showcases major initiatives across our three focus topics:

EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE •
SOCIETY •
EMPLOYEES •

GROUPE M6
50 children of Groupe M6 employees discovered the world of TV and radio at the company's second Family Day

BROADBANDTV
In collaboration with Vancouver School District and the City of Vancouver, BroadbandTV launched the educational programme, FuturePLAY

UFA X
WWF Germany and Mesh Collective, the education initiative run by the Divimove label UFA X, teamed up with YouTubers, scientists and young environmental activists to launch the #EarthOvershootDay campaign

RTL LUXEMBOURG
On World Children's Day, RTL Luxembourg worked with Unicef to accompany children during a visit to the Luxembourg Chamber of Deputies

UNITED SCREENS
During United Screens’ annual charity event, Videohjälpen (The Video Help), more than 50 influencers and social media stars streamed live for four days from the company’s Creator Studio in central Stockholm. All money raised was donated to the Red Cross

STYLEHAUL
StyleHaul worked with Cards for Hospitalized Kids to create cards for kids in hospital during the holidays in the USA

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ABOUT OUR REPORT

RTL Group’s Corporate Responsibility (CR) Report 2018 outlines the basic principles of the Group’s CR approach, and covers the key issues, activities and successes of the 2018 financial year. RTL Group will publish a separate Non-financial Report on RTLGroup.com by 30 June 2019. This covers all legally mandated non-financial disclosures and diversity information as required by the European Directive 2014/95/EU, and by the provisions of the July 2016 law regarding the publication of non-financial and diversity information in Luxembourg.

This publication describes RTL Group’s role in society, and gives an account of our CR projects and initiatives as they relate to the material CR issues we identified in an updated materiality assessment in 2017. It focuses on three main areas — editorial independence, society and employees — highlighting some of the many initiatives RTL Group’s fully consolidated business units have been involved with. Groupe M6 is a publicly listed, fully consolidated RTL Group business unit and publishes a separate CR report.

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EMPLOYEES

We have started to define CR performance indicators, based on the outcome of the materiality analysis – and we are gradually introducing these into our reporting. On pages 17, 18 and 29, you’ll see boxes showing relevant performance indicators. Also, in RTL Group’s Non-financial Report 2018, which we will publish in June 2019, we include other matters relating to data protection and privacy, as well as to responsible business conduct. These include integrity and compliance, antitrust compliance, anti-corruption and bribery, and supply chain compliance.

In 2017, we updated our materiality assessment – working with our business units and our majority shareholder, Bertelsmann – to ensure our key CR issues remain relevant. We present the results here. We will continue this updating process with our business units in the years ahead, making sure the most important, current issues feature prominently in our CR strategy. Based on the findings of the materiality analysis, we’re working with Bertelsmann to define CR performance indicators (PIs) for RTL Group, and have included them in this report. Aligning our CR activities to our main business objectives is an important priority.

Our CR Network – which comprises CR representatives from the business units and Corporate Centre – has identified three key business objectives for our CR efforts: audience proximity, employer branding and attractiveness for business partners. In the coming years, we will continue to review whether changing business priorities, market conditions or global trends create the need to add any new objectives.
UNDERSTANDING WHAT’S IMPORTANT TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

The question of which issues are material to CR is an ongoing and evolving process. We continually assess which opportunities, risks and impacts are important to our business and our stakeholders – and review their relative priority, to maximise the value of our CR efforts.

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EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE

With the spread of so-called fake news around the world, audiences need to know they can believe what they see, hear and read. They want honest, ethical reporting, and journalistic integrity is under close scrutiny.

Tens of millions of people rely on our programmes and magazines for local and global news and opinions. They trust the information they gain from RTL Group – and expect the highest standards of responsibility, impartiality and credibility. In short, they expect the truth.

Our audience is at the heart of what we do, which is why we focus on press freedom and editorial independence – it’s the only way to attract the best journalists, uphold our reputation, and avoid legal problems and complaints.

For us, independence means being able to provide news and information without compromising our strong journalistic principles and balanced position. Our local CEOs act as publishers, so they don’t get involved in producing content. Editors-in-chief in each location apply rigorous ethical standards and ensure we follow local guidelines – which gives our journalists the freedom to express a range of opinions, reflecting society’s diversity and democracy.

We work in this way across the business, as stated in our Code of Conduct and Mission Statement. We also have our Newsroom Guidelines on personal rights and privacy, the careful handling of sources (particularly social media sources), and separating editorial and advertising content. These measures help us meet the challenges of a rapidly changing economy and environment – in particular, the rise of fake news and terror threats.

HOW DOES RTL GROUP ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?
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**How Does RTL Group Address These Issues?**

**Editorial Independence**

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**Bursting the Filter Bubbles**

Jutta Bielig

is Head of the Berlin Studio of RTL Television and N-TV, and Head of the Politics Department. Her team is responsible for reporting everything that happens in Berlin – from the government district to the red carpet – for viewers of all of Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland’s news and information shows. We talked to her about her aim to provide viewers with the best possible information.

First of all, what is your day-to-day role as Head of Studio in the German capital?

As Head of our Berlin Studio, I am responsible for ensuring our team identify relevant topics as early as possible and producing reports of the best possible quality for our shows. I also make sure we have excellent political connections with government and opposition in Berlin. Our 50 or so reporters and editors cover a wide range of subjects for very different shows and target groups – including Guten Morgen Deutschland (Good Morning Germany), Punkt 12 at noon, RTL Aktuell in the early evening, and our midnight show, RTL Nachtjournal.
What are your aims and ideals for journalism?

Absolute objective journalism does not exist. This is a simple truth. Nonetheless, our viewers want us to research and investigate precisely, as they want us to get the facts right and present all aspects of a story. They want us to be fair and don’t want our opinion forced upon them. If we manage all this, we are already very close to good and responsible journalism. But there is something else we must bear in mind. We, as journalists, have our opinions, too. But we have to resist the temptation to describe a world that suits our own judgements and prejudices. We must accept we are not novelists. Journalism is first of all a craft, not an art. We are the eyes and ears of our viewers in places they cannot be or go. We must give them all the information and context they need to come to their own conclusions.

What guidelines or advice do you give your journalists?

Principally, that we do not place ourselves above our viewers. We try to get the answers to the questions our viewers would ask. There is also another point that is very important, although difficult. We offer orientation – that is, an explanation of this increasingly complex world. And of course, we want to both inform and entertain. This means we need to find ways to attract our viewers’ attention to topics that might seem boring, but which are essential to their lives, such as health or education.

How do you encourage neutral reporting and help your journalists to understand the concerns of their audience?

As journalists, we are often from a privileged educational or financial background. We have to make some effort to see things from the perspective of our viewers and their world. At Info Network, for example, we rented a flat in Chemnitz, a town in eastern Germany that’s seen major structural changes in recent years. We encouraged our reporters to spend a week in the flat and live their daily life, inviting people from the neighbourhood in for a drink, and to watch our news coverage with them. They got first-hand responses and discussed our programmes with our viewers face to face. Our colleagues now have real people – and the issues that matter to them – in mind when they report. They can use the viewers’ language and not that of politicians or government officials. We were concerned about how the neighbours might react but, actually, they were really pleased that someone cared about their views. So, lessons learned. Now we are doing the same in another town, too.

“WITH SOCIAL NETWORKS, THE PUBLIC CAN SPLIT INTO A LOT OF FILTER BUBBLES, WHERE THEY HEAR ONLY ONE VIEW. THIS COULD HAVE SEVERE CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR DEMOCRACY.”
How important is traditional mass media in today’s world?

With social networks, the public can split into a lot of filter bubbles, where they hear only one view. This could have severe consequences for our democracy. But one plus one is two all over the world – and no one presents the facts better than professional journalists. So I see providing reliable, trustworthy, independent information for a broad audience as one of the most important responsibilities of the mass media.

How can we encourage the public to look beyond their filter bubbles and the echo chambers of social media?

This is one of the most pressing issues for today’s journalism – and it’s becoming increasingly difficult. I have no sure recipe for success, but a hope based on some very concrete observations. Whenever some important breaking news happens, even the people who normally rely on social networks return to the professionally curated news, selected, compiled and prepared by professionals. The net may be buzzing with rumours and half-baked information, but to find out what’s real, people come to us. And if we then do our job well, I’m convinced we can compete with all the echo chambers and filter bubbles that exist. In the last few months we have seen the ratings of our news programmes rise again, as viewers search for reliable professional information. This makes me proud and encouraged.

What advice do you have for young journalists just starting out?

Stay sceptical and ask yourself whether what you’re hearing is the only story. Many viewers say politics is always the same, and they don’t really care until it affects them. Our job is to attract the attention of the viewer to topics that may appear boring but which are essential to their lives. We have to understand what we’re reporting, and find the right language to present the topic in the context of our viewers’ lives. It can be challenging but it’s important to give people the information they need to draw their own conclusions – especially if you’re covering political news.
Enex is an association of 56 of the world’s leading independent commercial TV news broadcasters and digital producers, with members sharing their news content and news production resources. In 2018, Enex celebrated its 25th anniversary – and its growth over those 25 years underlines the relentless requirement for trusted sources of news. We discussed its work with MARK EVANS, Head of News at Enex.

When breaking news happens, Enex is there, providing more than 40,000 news videos a year and more than 1,500 live sources, contributed primarily from partners’ own coverage. While it always had a form of editorial exchange, it began life as a mechanism for a handful of broadcasters to share the cost of satellite space.

“But the news content exchange is our USP,” explains Mark Evans. “It’s something we can provide that other agencies can’t.” As the use of satellite space declined, Enex moved its focus onto editorial content and has expanded significantly.

Now, from its newsroom in Luxembourg, Enex also sources and verifies third-party content to complement that of its members. “We’ll go out to find news footage in places where we don’t have partners, often important news locations such as parts of the Middle East, Africa and Asia,” says Mark Evans. “We’ve expanded our team in Luxembourg, both in size and skill sets, including a new expert in content discovery and verification. All this adds value to our output while keeping the partners’ content at the heart of the organisation.”

In the digital age, verifying external content is vital. It’s something Enex needs to do just once for every piece, saving individual member organisations time and money. “Trust is the most important currency we have,” says Mark Evans. “If our partners can’t trust our material, there’s no value in what we do, we’re not prepared simply to republish material from social media.”

In tightened economic times for newsrooms, Enex can give its members access to a greater range of pictures and sources than they would have on their own. Effectively they have a mini office in each of the other 55 broadcasters that make up the group. This gives them an edge over their competitors from traditional TV and digital news organisations, in quality and efficiency.

“If you’re a member of an international broadcasting organisation like Enex, that brings you deeper and wider content,” says Mark Evans. “You have voices from different parts of the world, that you wouldn’t otherwise have. It allows you to paint on a much broader canvas, with more colours.”

The recent theme of online disinformation has been an increased opportunity for Enex, though separating the truth from the untruths has always been part of the journalistic remit. “In the current climate we have had the opportunity to evolve, and we are helping expand RTL Group’s collaborative verification network, as well as increasing the flow of properly verified content from Enex. One of the roles of our new Editor for User-Generated Content will be to increase the level of training within Enex and the wider RTL Group. This will ensure we have the firepower to continue to bring real benefits to partners in this area of trust, as well as to RTL Group.”
In January 2018, the European Commission set up the High-Level Expert Group (HLEG) on online disinformation. Among its 39 experts was SONJA SCHWETJE, Editor-in-Chief of N-TV. With representatives from civil society, social media platforms, news media organisations and academia, the Group advised the commission on policy initiatives to tackle the fake news problem.

As a member of the RTL Group News Synergy Committee, Sonja has experienced first-hand the major concerns of RTL Group broadcasters’ editors-in-chief and heads of news. Together with Mark Evans, Head of News at Enex, she was responsible for proposing RTL Group’s action on this important issue.

Sonja has been involved in producing the HLEG report, ‘A multi-dimensional approach to disinformation’. She offers straightforward advice: “Don’t leave the news to the algorithms of the social networks. Algorithms are a powerful way of maximising user engagement on digital platforms. However, this also includes promoting conspiracy theories, ever more extreme viewpoints and pure disinformation.”
TRAINING TV AND ONLINE JOURNALISTS

The RTL School of Journalism for TV and Multimedia, established in 2000, is welcoming applications for its 10th cohort, which will start in 2019. The school is adapting to the ever-growing importance of video on online and mobile platforms – and this new emphasis is reflected in its taught modules and practical training. At the same time, RTL Interactive has introduced training for online journalists to the school.

Michael Wulf, Editor-in-Chief of RTL Television and Managing Director of Info Network, outlines the significance of this development: “It’s important that the RTL School of Journalism continues to train young future employees to ask tough questions, carefully process the flood of information and give people a handle on news content – both in our TV formats and on digital platforms.”

RESPONSIBLE MEDIA

With cyber bullying continuing to rise, Bel RTL, Radio Contact and Plug RTL in Belgium teamed up with Ciné Télé Revue as part of the #quedesbonnesondes (#goodvibesonly) initiative. With presenters Jill Vandermeulen, David Antoine and Maria Del Rio as ambassadors, the aim is to spread a more positive attitude across the internet – for example, by encouraging internet users to consider the impact their words can have before posting a comment.

Watch the campaign ad
RESPONSIBLE REPORTING

The 2018 Winter Paralympics marked the 10th anniversary of the project ‘People with Disabilities Report on People with Disabilities’, organised by Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland.

RTL Luxembourg covered the country’s 2018 general elections with special broadcasts and a nationwide tour.

The fourth #RTLChallenge Journalisme Numérique (#RTLChallenge Digital Journalism) prize went to Sciences Po Paris students Camille Schmitt and Marie Sasin.

Antonia Rados, Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland’s Chief Foreign Affairs Reporter, was awarded the Hans Oelschläger Prize, which recognises journalists whose programmes foster a feel for clear German language use.

Bernard de la Villardière (left), M6 presenter and journalist, was the recipient of the 2018 Prix Richelieu, which honours someone dedicated to protecting and preserving the French language.

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Bringing news and views to our audiences is a role with great responsibility. We are well aware of the care we must take as both an opinion former and information provider. In our position as a leading media organisation, we must raise awareness of important social and environmental issues – and we do this through TV and radio reports, magazine programmes and series, and on many digital platforms.

**OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO SOCIETY INCLUDE:**

**INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES**

Our high profile means we can raise funds for, and awareness of, different kinds of worthy causes and charities around the world. We can also alert the public about current and emerging social issues – particularly those that would otherwise go unnoticed, and probably unsupported. This is a contribution to society that only we can make, and so we see it as our duty to make it.

**PROMOTING DIVERSITY**

We design our content to appeal to all audiences, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexual orientation. We have a serious commitment to diverse and inclusive programming, which we underline in our Diversity Statement.

**PROTECTING OUR AUDIENCES**

As a provider of a wide range of entertainment and information programmes, we have a responsibility to safeguard young viewers from unsuitable content. We must also protect and respect intellectual property rights, to help maintain creativity and diversity in the media. Our decentralised business model requires each profit centre to work in the best interests of its media users and customers. For instance, Super RTL once again supported Safer Internet Day, and launched a new app to guarantee kids could watch educational series Toggolino online without encountering unsafe ads. We also continued our support of the Alliance to Better Protect Minors Online, a worldwide organisation of major media and IT companies.

**LOOKING AFTER THE ENVIRONMENT**

Operating as a media business does not put us at the top of the list of polluters. Nevertheless, we do have an environmental impact, and we want to minimise this, to help conserve the planet’s resources. The main source of our carbon emissions is our energy use, which we have a particular focus on controlling. In addition, we highlight the importance of environmental awareness in our various programmes and formats.
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**OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO SOCIETY INCLUDE:**

1. **MAKING FRIENDS WITH MIGRANTS**  
To mark World Refugee Day on 20 June 2018, RTL Belgium supported the Caritas International campaign, ‘Partager le chemin’ (Share The Journey), which aims to bring Belgians and migrants together. As part of the campaign, Caritas International set up the social experiment, ‘Le goût de l’inconnu’ (The Taste Of The Unknown) where people share a meal with migrants in restaurants. Social spots showing highlights of these meetings were broadcast free on RTL-TVI, on the Caritas International website and on social media.

   ![Scan to see the Partager le chemin ad](image)

   ![Watch the campaign video for #NonAuHarcèlement](image)

2. **RAISING AWARENESS OF SOCIAL ISSUES WITH SOCIAL SPOTS**  
   For the fourth year in a row, Golden Network’s digital channel Rose Carpet supported the fight against harassment – this time by producing the #NonAuHarcèlement (#NoToHarassment) campaign video. The campaign’s slogan is: ‘A photo is personal; sharing it is harassment.’ In France, sharing a person’s sexual images without their consent is punishable by two years in prison and a fine of €60,000. The video drives home this message in a very powerful way.

   ![Watch the campaign video for #NonAuHarcèlement](image)

   ![See the social ad that raises awareness of child poverty](image)

3. **SENSITIVE SUPPORT FOR KIDS**  
   In response to the growing problem of child poverty in Germany, RTL II worked with Munich-based creative agency, Mehappy, to produce a succinct but sensitive social ad. With the clear message that one in every five children in Germany temporarily or permanently lives in poverty, the ad draws attention to the help available from the German Child Welfare Association – which has collaborated with RTL II on the four-part special Armes Deutschland – Deine Kinder (Poor Germany – Your Children) and the documentary Hartz und herzlich (Hartz And Heartfelt). RTL II aired the ad free of charge, and Mehappy designed and produced it for free.

   ![Scan to see the social ad that raises awareness of child poverty](image)
The 23rd RTL-Spendenmarathon raised €8,604,481 for children in need in Germany and around the world. Hosted once again by Wolfram Kons, the 24-hour TV telethon brought total donations to more than €170 million since 1996.

In support for the telethon, musician Joey Kelly and 20 corporate teams set a world record for the longest team relay over an extreme obstacle course. The 24-hour run, which covered a total of 3,435.8 kilometres, raised a total of €516,000. Stars like Sven Hannawald, Florian Hambüchen, the Lochis, Sarah Lombardi and project patron Jasmin Wagner also gave their all for the 2018 event.

The 30th Télévie set yet another record, raising €12,114,560 to help fund cancer research in Belgium and Luxembourg. The 2018 event in Belgium included, among others, different awareness and fundraising campaigns on TV, radio and social networks, a gala dinner, the traditional Télévie play, a two-day sports challenge and more than 600 activities organised by volunteers all around Belgium. And in the Grand Duchy, RTL Luxembourg hosted and broadcast various events around the country, raising donations from Luxembourg alone to €1,674,429. To round off the event, the ‘golden sponsor’, French singer and actor Patrick Bruel, along with RTL-TVI and Bel RTL hosts, staged a grand closing evening.

The winners of the 2018 RTL Commit Award were...
**RTL COMMIT AWARD**

For 2018, the RTL Commit Award was all about commitment in the digital domain, with the motto ‘Online Heroes Wanted! You make the world better’.

In its 11th year, the award was aimed at young people aged between 15 and 29, whose voluntary work has a real impact on digital platforms or who have been particularly successful at promoting a volunteer project on the internet. This included those who initiate projects on blogs, on social media or via apps.

A celebrity jury, headed up by presenter Günther Jauch, gave this year’s Individual Award to 29-year-old Dominique Nardin from Mannheim. In his communities on Facebook, Instagram and Discord, Dominique links up members of professions such as rescue workers, firefighters and doctors, with volunteers from a wide variety of backgrounds. The aim is to encourage more people to take up voluntary work and engage in community projects.

**COMMUNITY INVESTMENT IN 2018**

€17,433,048

Estimated net value of free air time or donated media time given to charities

€3,482,662

Cash donations and budget allocated to corporate foundations or charity initiatives supported internally

€23,064,207

Funds raised for charity during flagship events

### HELPING CHILD FAMILIES SURVIVE

In the Netherlands, **RTL Boulevard**, RTL 4’s magazine show, promoted its fifth annual week of action in support of charity Cordaid. The 2018 theme was child families. Worldwide there are millions of children who have lost their parents to illness, war or natural disaster. The eldest child, often just around 12 years old, has to take care of younger brothers and sisters, sometimes in wretched conditions. Cordaid helps these child families by providing water, food, shelter, medical care, education and protection. **RTL Boulevard**’s call for help attracted almost 100,000 texts, each donating €3 to Cordaid.
In September 2018, Groupe M6 strengthened its commitment to disabled viewers by launching Le 10 Minutes, a new current affairs programme in sign language, broadcast on 6play.

Rather than being translated, the weekly programme is presented entirely in sign language, with content designed specifically for a deaf audience. Supported and funded by the Malakoff Médéric Handicap Foundation, Le 10 Minutes is also aimed at people with hearing, who can follow it with the help of subtitles.

The objective is to keep people who are deaf or hard of hearing informed, but also to raise awareness of deaf culture and sign language among those with hearing. Le 10 Minutes covers topics relating to French and international news, society and the deaf community. Deaf presenters and translators, Sophie Scheidt and Olivier Calcada, present the programme.

In 2018, Fremantle teamed up with fellow Bertelsmann companies Penguin Random House and BMG in an initiative to launch This Is Spoke. This new podcast series brings the hottest UK music and literary talent together to share ideas and stories, and to provoke cultural debate. Aimed at Generation Z viewers, aged between 17 and 24, This Is Spoke is a fantastic example of Fremantle creating content that both showcases diverse talent and connects with a more diverse audience.

Showcasing Diverse Talent

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Design for Deaf Viewers

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MEDIA POLICY IN SOCIETY

ENGAGING WITH OUR STAKEHOLDERS

For many years, the Media Advisory Council has worked as an advisory body and discussion forum for Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland, exchanging views with management on programme-related and content-development issues, as well as on the media policy framework and actual policy. The council’s members include numerous representatives from political parties, churches and associations.

At the Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland’s Media Advisory Council meeting in December 2018, an important topic was how regulation of the giant US digital platforms is needed to promote social cohesion.

With no way of imposing fixed rules – for example on the algorithms the US platforms use – diversity and equal opportunities are key concerns. The council raised these when discussing current media policy issues with Professor Wolfgang Schulz, who runs the renowned Hans Bredow Institute for Media Research.

“The impact of digitisation requires clever regulation, especially in the electronic media sector, that focuses specifically on diversity and equal opportunities.”

PROFESSOR CHRISTIAN HÖPPNER
MEDIA ADVISORY COUNCIL CHAIRMAN
**FONDATION M6**

Fondation M6 has been helping ex-prisoners rebuild their lives since 2010. As they settle back into their communities, it supports them in finding work, tackles literacy and education problems, and provides social and cultural activities. The foundation’s 2018 initiatives included the third ‘Au-delà des lignes’ (Beyond the Lines) writing competition in French prisons, and the funds are distributed to a range of projects, including RTL Kinderhäuser (RTL Children’s Homes).

Many other charity events and appeals supporting child aid projects took place throughout 2018. These included: an appeal, with the partner Care, for donations to provide aid for families affected by the civil war in Yemen; a charity gala, organised by TV weather expert Christian Häckl, to raise funds for the fight against the genetic disorder neurofibromatosis; and a social media campaign, supported by frozen food distributor Bofrost, that showed the positive effects of cooking and eating together, while raising money.

**STIFTUNG RTL – WIR HELFEN KINDERN**

‘Stiftung RTL – Wir helfen Kindern’ e.V. (Registered Association) was established in 1996. Since then, it has raised more than €170 million for children in need, in Germany and around the world. Donations come in through the 24-hour TV telethon RTL-Spendenmarathon, and the funds are distributed to a range of projects, including RTL Kinderhäuser (RTL Children’s Homes).

Since 2006, the RTL pomaže djeci (RTL Helps Children) charity fund has supported 250 humanitarian projects, helping over 600,000 sick, disabled and underprivileged children across Croatia. Working with various non-profit organisations, it helps raise money from private and corporate donors, and builds vital facilities, such as rehabilitation centres, schools, kindergartens, libraries and playgrounds. The fund has also provided toys, sports gear, musical instruments and medical equipment. In December 2018, its campaign ‘Budi mi prijatelj’ (‘Be my friend’) raised €250,000, which will finance 10 projects.

**OUR FOUNDATIONS**

**GREEN PRODUCTION AT UFA**

At film and TV production company UFA, helping protect the environment has long been a concern among employees. In 2014, they set up the UFA Green Team, which started by focusing on the issues of mobility and resources, and soon began addressing specific topics, such as local catering, doing away with disposable crockery, water coolers, saving paper, green IT and ecological office supplies.

In March 2018, RTL Hungary organised a day devoted to environmental issues at its headquarters. Several organisations involved with environmental protection and animal rights took part – including WWF, Greenpeace and GreenGo. The day attracted many employees, who welcomed the opportunity to learn more about environmental responsibility and protecting animals.

The awards ceremony for ‘Au-delà des lignes’

Project patron Peter Kloeppel in the classroom of the inclusion school in Buea, Cameroon

One of the 2018 ‘Budi mi prijatelj’ campaign projects supported children in the Clinical Hospital Center Rijeka

Since the beginning of 2017, the team has been a member of the Initiative for Ecological Sustainability in TV and Film Production at the Media and Film Society of Baden-Württemberg. As such, it plays a key role in promoting green production within UFA, and in 2018 it offered a series of events on the topic to all employees during the UFA Creation Day in June.
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Employees

With a diverse audience, we need to be a diverse and creative business. Both diversity and creativity depend on our ability to attract and retain talented people, and to keep them happy, motivated and productive. We want to be the employer of first choice – which means offering outstanding career development opportunities, appropriate recognition and reward, and fair working conditions.

How does RTL Group achieve these aims?

Learning

With talent management as a key strategic goal, we place great emphasis on offering our employees a range of opportunities to improve professionally and develop personally. We run a variety of training and succession-planning programmes, and several of our business units have their own career-mobility initiatives. Learning at RTL Group also includes top-notch training programmes in partnership with Bertelsmann University, and our Digital Trainee Programme Smart Start gives selected candidates a rich mix of experiences and insights to accelerate their career progression.

Diversity

Equal employment opportunities and treatment are mandatory across our organisation, and we don’t allow any form of discrimination against employees or applicants based on their age, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic. In 2017, we signed the Diversity Charter Lëtzebuerg, which goes beyond our 2016 Diversity Statement by ensuring diversity within RTL Group goes much further than our legal and regulatory obligations. In March 2018, we published diversity targets for our general management for the first time. Our aim is for men and women to be equally represented across all management positions. The first step is to increase the proportion of women in top and senior management positions to at least 30 per cent by 2025. More recently, the diversity of our employees was central to the development of our new employer value proposition.

Fair working conditions

Many factors contribute to the working conditions we provide: attractive compensation packages, including salaries, reward plans, profit sharing and company pensions, training and development, pleasant working environments, and wellbeing programmes. We also encourage our local teams to implement their own employee initiatives to meet their specific business needs and satisfy local laws.

Health

Keeping fit and healthy is vital for our employees – and for us as a business. Every year, we develop and maintain initiatives to foster good health and wellbeing in all parts of RTL Group, with a particular focus on ensuring our staff understand how looking after their health is their responsibility.
“INVESTING IN DIGITAL PLATFORMS IS VITAL TO IMPROVE OUR ATTRACTIVENESS TO THE DIGITAL NATIVES”

KAI BRETTMANN
CHAIRMAN OF RTL GROUP’S EUROPEAN WORKS COUNCIL

Improving
How we apply
What we learn

Made up of representatives from RTL Group’s local works councils, the European Works Council (EWC) represents employees’ interests. The local works councils are particularly active in negotiating social contracts with management in times of staff reductions or restructuring. In this respect, the EWC has worked during the past two years on processes in France, Belgium and the Netherlands. In these countries, there is a good legal basis for restructuring processes. Even so, working with the employees concerned, and their representatives, throughout the process is key to a successful resolution.

These instances showed that works councils can be very helpful with their perspective and experience, and can offer to be a partner in the change.

However, as Kai Brettmann, Chairman of the EWC points out, there are no common social partnership standards, valid for all the RTL Group entities, that could complement their national laws. Instead, each business follows its own process. For this reason, the EWC has started working with RTL Group management to create a voluntary framework for change processes, which would be available to help all Group entities deal with larger change projects.

Also in 2018, the EWC negotiated a pilot project with the Corporate Centre in Luxembourg to share the detailed results of the next employee survey, and to cooperate in the follow-up process. This already happens in Germany, but nowhere else across the Group. As Kai Brettmann says, “The goal of the survey is to improve matters for all, so if this trial is a success, we will be able to roll the scheme out across the whole Group, so everyone can benefit.”

Working on RTL Group’s appeal to future employees is something that concerns the EWC and RTL Group management in equal measure. The EWC fully supports the Total Video strategy, and investments in multi-platform networks and ad-tech. “We must act, and accelerate our strategy,” says Kai Brettmann. “Investing in digital platforms is vital to improve our attractiveness to the digital natives who graduate today looking for employment, and who may still regard the RTL brand as part of an old industry.”
Talent management is now a key part of our transformation journey, ‘New Frontiers: re-inventing RTL’s pioneering spirit’. At the RTL Group Management Summit 2018 in Luxembourg, Bert Habets highlighted the importance of having the best employees: “We will initiate an integrated talent management strategy across the Group to address issues such as diversity, by increasing the share of female executives and by recruiting from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, and we will continue to foster and push for new training and trainee programmes.”

Through the RTL Group trainee programme, Smart Start, we aim to attract and retain the best talents, especially in digital disciplines. We’ve also designed the programme to give young talent early opportunities to enter management positions, and to encourage career mobility across our business units.

The first trainees started the programme in autumn 2018. They stayed at our corporate headquarters in Luxembourg until the end of the year – an introductory phase, in which they familiarised themselves with the Group’s strategy and global operations management, helping them learn about our pioneering spirit. Working closely with senior management, they saw first-hand the thrills and challenges of the increasingly fast-paced media environment.

From January 2019, they will build on their experiences and insights as they embark on international rotations in RTL Group business units.

The resulting EVP is “The freedom to create”, which is what RTL Group believes the best people need if they are to do the best job. This means many things: the ability to cooperate within the Group; to take risks; to learn from mistakes. With this EVP, we want to appeal to open-minded, creative people with ambitious goals.
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Participants at the CR Network meeting 2018 received an update on our employer branding project. The discussion focused on the development of an employer value proposition (EVP) that will strengthen RTL Group as an employee and employer brand.

AN EMPLOYER BRAND BASED ON CREATIVE FREEDOM

DEVELOPING FUTURE DIGITAL TALENT

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SPOTTING DESERVING STUDENTS

Greenhouse Scholars is an educational charity in the US that supports students who have overcome great challenges in their lives. Each year, it receives hundreds of applications, but can only fund a small proportion. In 2018, a team from SpotX, RTL Group’s advanced video ad-serving platform, volunteered to help with the selection process, reviewing applications and discussing which applicants should move on to the final interview round.

The 14th edition of the Télévie Challenge was the first at RTL Group’s new headquarters, RTL City.

TÉLÉVIE CHALLENGE

The 14th Télévie Challenge Luxembourg saw 400 RTL Group staff members pedaling for eight hours on indoor bikes to raise money for cancer research. In total, they covered 6,602 kilometres, resulting in a donation of €55,000 to the non-profit Télévie association.

FAIR WORKING CONDITIONS

SPOTTING DESERVING STUDENTS

SpotX employees participated in a volunteering event with Greenhouse Scholars.
DIVERSITY

SUCCESS BUILT ON MUTUAL TRUST

NICOLIN LILLHAGE is Branded Content Director at United Screens, the Nordics’ leading online video network. Since joining the company at its start in 2013, she has built up, coached, and now leads four teams. We talked to her about diversity in the workplace.

At a young start-up like United Screens, is gender diversity treated differently than in a large business?

Respect for diversity has always been a given at United Screens. Having two founders as great leaders – one male and one female – pretty much set the norm. Like many new start-ups, especially in Sweden, we have a modern outlook and a workplace with zero tolerance of discrimination. Around 60 per cent of the team are female and 40 per cent are male, and this developed quite naturally, through picking the right person for the right position. I’d say a flat organisation like ours seems to be better at reaping the rewards of diversity, as individual team members feel not only encouraged to come up with ideas, but also to implement the ideas themselves.

Tell us about the resultant workplace culture at United Screens.

Essentially, we’ve built a workplace based on trust, with people from many different types of background, from different nationalities and religions to different levels of education – and it’s the latter that provides a wide range of creativity and problem-solving ideas.

We all work well together towards a joint goal. Since joining United Screens I’ve been on maternity leave twice, during which time I was able to stay in touch just a few hours each week, to keep me involved in projects. Now I’m back full time, the company is flexible with my working hours, and I’ve been able to create a work–life balance as a mum.

When I joined, there were just seven of us. There are now 55 people in the Swedish office, plus 10 covering offices in Norway, Finland and Denmark. Helping team members grow in their positions through job rotations is something we are proud of. One of my female colleagues has now become acting country manager in Denmark.

Does the workplace outlook have an impact on the creative output?

Yes, the outlook extends to our network of several hundred creators, where there is a wide range of nationalities, interests and audiences. The diversity brings a broader perspective. Our own diversity is also important in helping us build trusting personal and working relationships with our wide range of external stakeholders, whether creators, clients or others. This creates more diverse content, which ultimately attracts a wider and larger audience, and ensures we continue to grow.
BE AS YOU ARE, AT UFA

MARKUS SCHROTH is Head of Human Resources at UFA Show & Factual, based in Cologne. The Fremantle company produces popular TV entertainment shows, both for RTL Group and other major channels. He’s one of 100 ‘Out’ LGBTIQ executives in Germany – nominees are selected by an independent jury – the idea is to be seen as a proud role model, and prove that LGBTIQ executives can be visible, safe and successful in business. We asked him about his work, and his views on diversity.

What do equality and diversity mean to you?

It means freedom. Freedom to be as you’d like to be. For me it’s important that everyone is able to express themselves without hiding his, her or its true self. I’m very happy to work in an industry, especially at UFA, where everybody has the freedom to be who they are.

How is UFA Show & Factual set up to promote and ensure diversity, from your perspective as an HR professional?

UFA Show & Factual is committed to promoting diversity and equal opportunities. It’s actually the diversity of our employees that opens up new, innovative and creative ideas and solutions. Our strength lies in never excluding any potential employee. We give everyone a fair chance for each job available. Creativity in our work stems from knowing that everyone has an equal opportunity. It is obvious by looking at our personnel that we value diversity. Our CEO is a woman, and our employees are split about 60 per cent female and 40 per cent male.

You’ve been involved with Bertelsmann’s be.queer network, and set up a similar UFA team. Can you tell us more?

Be.queer is an LGBTIQ network, and the only employee network that we’ve started from the ground up. It works across Bertelsmann and its divisions.

We started at UFA in July 2017. Many studies show that an LGBTIQ-friendly corporate culture strengthens employee satisfaction, motivation and loyalty. Besides, for LGBTIQ people, there are often situations that heterosexual employees don’t have to think about, such as business trips to countries where people face the threat of harassment. We have monthly calls where we discuss subjects such as this, and activities relating to the LGBTIQ community. We offer support to colleagues and try to learn from experiences at other companies. We also sponsored a float in the gay pride parade in Cologne to give diversity more visibility, and to demonstrate our support for equal opportunities at work.

As well as equality among employees, what about on-screen representation of people?

As we produce shows and factual entertainment we work with real people on screen and we want them to come as they are. To be able to create entertaining and appealing productions, we depend on a diverse talent base, naturally. For example, when casting for Deutschland sucht den Superstar (Idols) we had 55 different nationalities performing. And we choose our celebrity jury on Das Supertalent (Got Talent) for its diversity. We recognise that diversity is our strongest competitive advantage. Our UFA CEO, Nico Hofmann, is also actively promoting more diversity both in front of and behind the camera, by calling for greater recognition of sexual orientation and identities in our day-to-day work.
DOING THE RIGHT THING

OLIVER RAWLINS is Group Director of Communications and Marketing at Fremantle. He is also the sponsor for Corporate Responsibility on Fremantle’s Global Operating Board. We talked to him about diversity at Fremantle, and how this is rooted in the broader context of Corporate Responsibility.

Our global Creative Responsibility programme is designed to help us coordinate and build on the great work we’re already doing, and to harness this culture of creativity and diversity across all our offices and brands. There’s also a sense that the media business is traditionally rather exclusive and based in expensive, major cities. We want to make Fremantle a more inclusive employer, a place where anybody can come to work and really make an impact, wherever they live. We have many great initiatives around the world, all different.

What does Corporate Responsibility mean for people at Fremantle?

Over the past year or two, we’ve undertaken two big pieces of work on this. The Board has looked at how we want Fremantle to be defined as a business, including in regard to our social responsibility. At the same time, I’ve been leading a project to find out what being a responsible business means to our colleagues around the world. The results have shown that it was about making them feel connected, proud and motivated, and about doing the right thing. Two things became very clear: first, this really matters to our workforce and, for a company of our size and scope, a meaningful Corporate Responsibility agenda is a must-have for anyone thinking of joining and staying. Secondly, this doesn’t just apply to who we hire and work with, but also to the shows we make.

So there’s a responsibility to the audience, too?

It’s all interlinked. This was the work the Board was doing. Our content has significant societal impact. It has the ability to inspire and to question. But great ideas and bold thinking can come from anywhere, which is why we want Fremantle to be a place where innovative ideas flourish and untold stories find a voice. We want to be the place that all creatives can call home, regardless of who they are or where they come from. So rather than a Corporate Responsibility agenda, we like to think of it as Creative Responsibility. Our creative output is where Fremantle can have the most impact and make the biggest difference.

Tell us more about the Creative Responsibility programme.

Fremantle has offices in over 30 countries, and we want to recognise and encourage the fact that every one of those offices is going to be different. But by creating some kind of global framework, however loose, we can have everybody pulling in the same direction.

Can you tell us about some of these initiatives?

At UFA in Germany, for example, we have the First Steps awards every year, providing financial support and mentoring to talented creatives entering the industry, many from under-represented backgrounds. In the USA, we are in our second year of the Academy Gold programme, offering paid internships with mentoring to early-stage professionals from under-served communities. Also the Creative Associates programme, which acts as a career jump-start for content creators. In Australia, we’re one of the very few production companies to offer internships to university students. Our global drama team is sponsoring the Women’s Prize for Fiction, which supports our ambition to champion women’s creativity. And in the UK, we’ve started a pilot project called Access All Areas to encourage diverse creative talent from underprivileged areas of the UK to consider a career in TV. We’ve already run workshops in three regional towns, delivered by 23 volunteer colleagues to 100 attendees, with a view to offering paid placements in London and a year’s mentoring from one of our senior team. Both the workshops and the placements provide a great launchpad for anyone looking to start working in TV.

All of this is not just about making sure we’re seen as an open employer. It’s also about making sure the people behind the cameras – and in the shows themselves – reflect the diversity of our audience as well as the diversity of Fremantle.
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2018: 20%

1  Top management generally includes the members of the Executive Committee, the CEOs of the business units
and their direct Management Board Members, and the Executive Vice Presidents of RTL Group’s Corporate Centre
2  Senior management generally includes the Managing Directors of the businesses inside the business units,
the heads of the business units’ departments, and the Senior Vice Presidents of RTL Group’s Corporate Centre
3  RTL Group’s management includes top management and senior management

40*

AVERAGE

EMPLOYEE AGE

* Rounding differences may occur; headcount of permanent employees as at 31 December 2018

EMPLOYEES AT

RTL GROUP

10,809*

(10,266)**

* Average of FTEs of fully consolidated undertakings
** Headcount of permanent employees as at 31 December 2018

EMPLOYEE AGE*

* Rounding differences may occur; headcount of permanent employees as at 31 December 2018

EMPLOYEE LENGTH OF SERVICE*

* Headcount of permanent employees as at 31 December 2018

NATIONALITIES*

* Rounding differences may occur; headcount of permanent employees as at 31 December 2018

OUR EMPLOYEES ARE*

* Rounding differences may occur; headcount of permanent employees as at 31 December 2018

OUR EMPLOYEES

ARE FROM MORE THAN

57 COUNTRIES WORLDWIDE

* Headcount of permanent employees as at 31 December 2018.