Cover visual taken from the fifth 'Fleury fait son cinéma' (Fleury at the Movies) film festival organised by Fondation M6
French group Kids United presents a cheque to Unicef

GROUPE M6
Sciences Po Paris student, Marie Zafimehy, won the third #RTLChallenge Digital Journalism competition

RTL RADIO (FRANCE)
SpotX teamed up with two charities to donate bicycles and helmets to disadvantaged children

RTL HUNGARY
RTL Hungary’s summer camp for employees’ children at its offices in Budapest

VOX
In the final season of the hit series Club der roten Bänder (Red Bracelets), Ruben’s homosexuality causes varied reactions

RTL HUNGARY
RTL Hungary’s summer camp for employees’ children at its offices in Budapest

CR IN ACTION
Our CR trailer showcases major initiatives across our three focus topics:
- editorial independence
- society
- employees

StyleHaul employees volunteered to serve meals at the local charity L.A. Kitchen

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French group Kids United presents a cheque to Unicef

Scan to watch our new CR trailer
RTL Group’s Corporate Responsibility (CR) Report 2017 provides information on the basic principles of the Group’s CR approach, and the most relevant issues and successes during the 2017 financial year. RTL Group will publish a separate Non-financial Statement on RTLGroup.com by 30 June 2018, which will consist of all legally mandated non-financial disclosures and diversity information required by the European Directive 2014/95/EU and by the provisions of the law of 23 July 2016 regarding the publication of non-financial and diversity information in Luxembourg.

This publication portrays RTL Group’s role in society, as well as CR projects and initiatives relevant to our material CR issues, determined in an updated materiality assessment throughout 2017. In three focus topics – editorial independence, society and employees – the report highlights some of the many initiatives of RTL Group’s fully consolidated business units. Publicly listed Groupe M6 – a fully consolidated RTL Group business unit – publishes a separate CR report.
BERT HABETS, CEO of RTL Group, shares his views on the importance of Corporate Responsibility at RTL Group.
Leadership in **CREATIVITY** requires a culture guided by freedom of expression and editorial independence. Ensuring high editorial standards and journalistic independence are at the very heart of RTL Group. In addition, creative talent for our many different businesses in the Total Video universe is important for us. This means recruiting people from a wide variety of backgrounds, including independent thinkers and go-getters. Clearly there is a big overlap between creativity and diversity.

As for **CONSUMERS**, we can only be close to them if we put their wishes and concerns first – issues such as the integrity of our news and protection of children. So, our editors act independently of senior management and free from political or financial influence. And they do their job with responsibility and diligence, as expressed in our Newsroom Guidelines. This is one of our key assets, especially in times of fake news. What’s more, it is important we reflect the diversity of our society and consumer base with great care, both on and off screen. Of course, we can also use our reach and profile to make a difference for people in need – particularly children.

**TECHNOLOGY** is the main driver of change in our sector. But aside from using our technical skills to grow our business, we put technology to work to support our commitment to responsibility. We use it to protect minors, consumers’ personal data, or brand integrity for our advertising clients, or to protect the intellectual property rights of our creatives and partners. Technology is as vital to our integrity as it is to our growth.

With **TALENT**, we will always strive to be the employer or partner of choice – whether for journalists, actors, writers, techies or young video talent. When people apply to work for us, we select on merit. And once someone starts, we ensure they receive fair recognition, treatment and working conditions, alongside opportunities for career development.

Above all, RTL Group is an opinion former and information provider for millions of people. We are aware that this position comes with great responsibility. And by preferring concrete action on CR to theoretical concepts, we manage that responsibility – while providing news and entertainment, and creating business value. In other words: CR done ‘the RTL way’.

You can read all about these principles, with examples from the year, in this report. Noteworthy achievements in 2017 include our vital and expanding process for the verification of user-generated content, the publication of our latest diversity figures, including setting targets for 2025, the updating of our RTL Group Newsroom Guidelines, and our new international trainee programme, aimed at young digital talent.

I hope you enjoy reading about these achievements, and much more, in this report.

*Bert Habets*

*CEO of RTL Group*
Based on the outcome of the materiality analysis, we have started to define CR performance indicators, which we are gradually introducing into our reporting. Boxes on pages 19, 20 and 31 of the CR Report 2017 show relevant performance indicators. We include other matters relating to data protection and privacy as well as to responsible business conduct – integrity and compliance, antitrust compliance, anti-corruption and bribery, and supply chain compliance – in RTL Group’s Non-financial Statement 2017, which will be published in June 2018.
Reviewing the issues that are material to CR is an ongoing and evolving process. We aim to understand which opportunities, risks and impacts are important to our business and our stakeholders, and the relative priority of these issues, so we can maximise the value of our CR efforts.

As part of Bertelsmann’s Group-wide CR-related stakeholder dialogue, between July and October 2017, we interviewed representatives of stakeholder groups relevant for RTL Group – the first time we have used structured interviews of external stakeholders. The aim was to obtain an outside perspective on the relevance of 20 pre-selected CR topics, and to gauge how our efforts and achievements in this area are perceived. For us, this meant 19 interviews across audience members, employees, creatives, community and charities.

We also updated our matrix internally. The issues have been re-evaluated at our CR Council, and with our business units. In October 2017, around 20 Corporate Responsibility representatives from across the Group met in Luxembourg for the third RTL Group CR Network Meeting, where the results of the materiality exercises were presented.

As a business, we work continually to align our CR activities to our main business objectives. The CR Network identified three key business objectives for RTL Group’s CR efforts: audience proximity, employer branding and attractiveness for business partners. In the years ahead, we will regularly reassess whether we need to add any new issues to reflect changing business priorities, market conditions or global trends.
EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE

In a diverse, democratic society, audiences expect honest and ethical reporting. But with the emergence of so-called fake news around the world, journalistic integrity is in the spotlight.

Every day, tens of millions of people turn to RTL Group’s news programmes and magazines for local and global news and views. Along with politicians and regulators, they trust RTL Group to keep them informed – responsibly, impartially, credibly and truthfully.

Our audience means everything to us and is at the heart of what we do. That’s why we focus on press freedom and high standards: to attract talented journalists, maintain our reputation, and minimise complaints and legal issues.

How does RTL Group address these issues?

RTL Group upholds editorial and journalistic independence

Our independence means we can share news and information without compromising our strong journalistic principles and balance. Since our local CEOs act as publishers, they don’t interfere with our production of content. Each local editor-in-chief is responsible for following local guidelines and applying rigorous ethical standards. This ensures diversity of opinion through journalistic freedom, aiming to reflect society’s diversity and democracy.

This principle is seen in action across the company, and is stated explicitly in our Code of Conduct and Mission Statement. In 2017, we also updated the Newsroom Guidelines on personal rights and privacy, the careful handling of sources (particularly social media sources), and the clear separation of editorial and advertising content. Several RTL Group companies also staged the Group’s first-ever user-generated content (UGC) verification workshop. These steps ensure we can deal effectively with the challenges of a rapidly changing economy and environment – especially in times of fake news and terror threats.
“THE TRUTH IS OUR CURRENCY”

SIMON HOF, Executive Producer Extra at Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland, talks about the user-generated content (UGC) verification team.

A small initiative for verifying the authenticity of news content, that started within the Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland content management team, has become a Group-wide collaboration due to its success. The UGC verification team was founded in the Content Management of Info Network, a team of information specialists who prepare approximately seven hours of live content a day for RTL Television, N-TV and Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland’s other news programmes.

Simon Hof, Executive Producer Extra at RTL Television and responsible for the team explains: “In the days before every phone was a camera and a source of news, content was produced only by ourselves, our professional partners or news agencies, and verification of video and photo material wasn’t such a challenge. Now, in the era of social media, fake and alternative news, we must be much more careful.”

The importance was highlighted in summer 2016, after a major shooting incident in Munich. The team received 21 related UGC videos and photos. But a volunteer on the team – an expert in verification techniques – ascertained that 13 of these were fake. From that moment, the verification process became a must.

At first, the team trained colleagues from different departments and Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland companies in Cologne in the verification process, which you can see in the chart on the next two pages. Then came the idea of collaboration across RTL Group. Andreas Greuel, an expert in all the tools and techniques of the process, travels around the Group to provide the training in a series of one-day workshops. Anyone with an interest can attend, such as journalists and information specialists from TV, radio and online, and they are then co-opted into the growing team on the wider verification mailing list.

“When there is a major disaster or trending news from around the world it’s very useful to have a wide international network,” says Simon Hof, “What’s more, we only have to verify once and share the results, so it’s more efficient.”

The team works on an average of one task a day, but the workflow is growing as people around the Group recognise the importance of verification.

Michael Wulf, Managing Director of Info Network and Chief Editor of RTL Television, says: “Thanks to the excellent work of the team, we will continue to reach our high journalistic standards. Especially in times of fake news, we want to provide our viewers with the best possible information and direction.”

Of course, nothing has changed in the most important role in journalism, checking facts, it’s the old rules in a new world. “It may take more time to verify than before the days of publicly generated content, but that’s a price we must pay to remain trustworthy. After all, the truth is our currency,” says Simon Hof.
HOW WE ENSURE OUR CONTENT IS GENUINE

The following flowchart visualises how the user-generated content verification process works:

1. There is breaking news of a major event. Journalists search for material including photos and videos.

2. They find content on Twitter and other social media platforms.

3. They alert the joint UGC verification team, sending them the links.

4. The links are sent to the virtual UGC verification team members who are on an email list.

Learn more about the UGC verification process
5. The virtual team checks the content using various tools and methods:

- **a.** A reverse search on the content could find the same images but may be from older sources than the recent incident – a clue that it may be fake.

- **b.** Research into the uploader or other accounts of theirs will offer signs of whether that person can be trusted, or has a habit of disseminating fake news, or is even a genuine person rather than a bot.

- **c.** Getting in touch with the uploader over the platform they are using.

- **d.** Going into the content itself to check metadata – such as the GPS location or camera type.

- **e.** Checking information in the content matches the known real-life data for the location, such as weather, positions of buildings, language, people, Google Maps views.

- **f.** Checking other sources of the same incident.

6. The team responds to the journalist with everything they have found, and their recommendation about verification of the information.

7. The final say about using or qualifying the information lies with the head of the newsroom.

- **a.** Trusted material – we can broadcast.

- **b.** Fake news – we don’t broadcast.

- **c.** Not completely sure – we may broadcast with an explanation or qualification.
The medical drama *Centraal Medisch Centrum* combines branded fiction with raising awareness of serious health conditions.

In October 2016, RTL Nederland’s RTL 4 and video platform Videoland aired *Centraal Medisch Centrum* (CMC), a new medical drama combining branded fiction with activation advertising to raise public awareness of serious health conditions. Due to CMC’s success, in 2017 RTL Nederland decided to commission a second season.

Each episode is dedicated to one of seven health charities: the Dutch Kidney Foundation, Alzheimer Nederland, the Dutch Heart Foundation, the Mental Health Fund, the Hearing Foundation, the Lung Foundation, and the Dutch Digestive Foundation. Advertisements aired during the show direct viewers to an online health test.

Sponsored by Vrienden Loterij and produced by Talpa Fiction, CMC aims to save lives. “It’s very special that we can use drama to inform people about important health issues,” says Steven Rijkhoff, Business Manager Creative Unit at RTL Nederland. “In fact, it’s the first time a commercial broadcaster like RTL Nederland has used a drama series to direct viewers to check their health in this way.”

CMC was launched after calls to bring back popular 80s medical drama, *Medisch Centrum West*. “We changed the name and actors, and rebranded the show with a new hospital and storylines,” Steven Rijkhoff adds.
Set at the fictional Centraal Medisch Centrum hospital, the medical drama series features a star-studded cast, and weaves characters’ personal and professional struggles with realistic medical cases. “All the medical stories are real, which I think makes the message much stronger than fictional storylines,” says Steven Rijkhoff.

“We all know someone who has had a heart attack, cancer, or another disease. But we also know many people don’t like going to the doctor. Being able to do an online test breaks that barrier, and they can then seek help from there.”

The profiled charities saw significant increases in web traffic after the episodes aired. Both the Heart Foundation and Alzheimer Nederland saw a 1,000 per cent increase in unique visitors, while Mind Blue measured a 1,200 per cent rise. There were 30,000 tests for COPD (a lung disease that affects breathing) taken on the Longfonds (Lung Foundation) website – up from 3,500 per week – and 7,000 referrals to doctors. “There’s no doubt we got the Dutch people to act on important health topics. We hope we saved actual lives,” Steven Rijkhoff adds. Wesley Visseren, Creative at RTL Nederland, credits CMC’s success to “a good story, real medical cases, a great production team and high production values.”

“The combination of branded fiction and activation ads worked well all round. Ratings were extremely high, Vrienden Loterij got a lot of brand awareness, and the charities were all very happy with the results.” CMC has proven so popular, a second season began in January 2018, and there are already talks of a third.
The RTL School of Journalism for TV and Multimedia, established in 2000, is a successful accredited training centre created by RTL Television. It prepares students for the fast-moving, highly competitive world of TV journalism. Its graduates move on to work for Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland, as well as other broadcasters, TV production and media companies.

In two separate Innolabs in 2017, students from the school competed to develop digital apps. To create their prototypes, four teams collaborated with software developers, graphic designers and product managers from Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland. They adopted the ‘design thinking approach’ used in Silicon Valley to test ideas and tailor products to users’ preferences.

In the first Innolab, a judging panel of senior staff from across Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland crowned ‘ELSA’ the winning app. ELSA allows users to peruse news on various topics, within a specific timeframe. The ‘Newsvoice’ app was crowned the winner of the second Innolab, for its ability to display news hotspots geographically.

Sustainability has become a media hot topic. And in 2017, our journalism trainees got a ‘behind the scenes’ taste of the issue in a workshop staged by RTL Group and econsense network members. ‘Journalism and PR – a Case Study: Communicating Sustainability’ involved an intensive discussion on sustainability and crisis communication, challenging the young journalists to learn more about this important subject.
M6’s Zone Interdite presenter Ophélie Meunier welcomes guests involved with various topics such as transgender people.

RTL Television Chief Anchorman Peter Kloeppel and RTL Television journalist Roberta Bieling interviewing Chancellor Angela Merkel before the German elections in August 2017.

Manon Labat is the winner of the first Prix MoJo launched by Groupe M6.

In RTL TVI’s Face cachée, Julie Denayer and her undercover team investigate a number of controversial and taboo environments.

RTL Television’s Team Wallraf – Reporter Undercover journalist Günter Wallraf and his team investigate social grievances.
We are both an opinion former and information provider, so sharing news and views with our audiences comes with great responsibility. As a leading media organisation, RTL Group is in prime position to highlight pressing social and environmental issues – which we do through TV and radio reports, magazine programmes, and series, as well as on many digital platforms.

Our responsibilities to society include:

**COMMUNITY INVESTMENT**

With our high profile, we are able to raise funds for, and awareness of, worthy causes, charities and challenges around the world. We are also well positioned to alert the public about pressing social issues – especially those that are otherwise unreported or underfunded. We see this contribution to society as our duty as responsible citizens.

**DIVERSITY**

We produce quality content that speaks to all audiences, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexual orientation. Our Diversity Statement reinforces our commitment to diverse and inclusive programming.

**CONTENT RESPONSIBILITY**

We offer an exciting array of entertainment and information programmes for all audiences. As such, we have a responsibility to protect young viewers from unsuitable content. We also have a duty to protect and respect intellectual property rights, to secure a creative and diverse media landscape. In line with our decentralised business model, each profit centre is expected to safeguard its media users and customers. For instance, IP Deutschland and Super RTL presented at the 2017 Kindervelen symposium on how children use media and see the world. Both companies also support the Alliance to Better Protect Minors Online.

**ENVIRONMENT**

As a media company, we aren’t big polluters or fossil fuel producers. However, we are committed to conserving the world’s resources – and reducing our environmental footprint. We are especially focused on our energy use, as it’s the main source of our carbon emissions.
2017 saw the 10th anniversary of FragFinn, the most popular search engine for kids in Germany. Chaired by children’s channel Super RTL, the non-profit association aims to create a secure place for children to surf the internet without seeing harmful content. It reflects RTL Group’s commitment to protecting children online.

A 12-part FragFinn TV series was launched at the anniversary event in Berlin. “We can look back with pride on ten successful years,” says Managing Director of Super RTL, Claude Schmit. “Thanks to the commitment shown by many well-known companies, FragFinn has come a very long way in that time, and it will continue to shape and promote media competence among children in the future.”
The 29th Télévie raised a record €11,027,650 to help researchers find cures for cancers. The 2017 campaign launch featured the unveiling of a new logo. Fundraisers included, among others, a gala dinner at the Train World railway museum, held in the old Schaerbeek station, the traditional and very successful Télévie play, performed by RTL-TVI and Bel RTL presenters and reporters, and the “Spray Against Cancer” event, an exhibition and sale of urban art for cancer research. There was also a new dance marathon, which saw RTL-TVI journalist Caroline Fontenoy and RTBF presenter Jean-Louis Lahaye dance for 10 hours straight.

RTL-Spendenmarathon

In Germany, the 22nd RTL-Spendenmarathon raised €9,188,527 for children in need. Hosted once again by Wolfram Kons, the 24-hour TV telethon brought total donations to more than €161 million since 1996.

“This will enable us to open no fewer than three new RTL Children’s Homes in Germany over the coming year. We feel it’s important that socially disadvantaged children and young people have such centres to go to all over the country,” says Anke Schäferkordt, CEO of Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland and Chairwoman of the ‘Stiftung RTL – Wir helfen Kindern’.
RTL COMMIT AWARDS

In its 10th year, the 2017 RTL Commit Awards honoured young, courageous citizens making a difference in society and actively shaping democracy.

A celebrity jury crowned 21-year-old law student Marek Fink the Individual Award winner, for his efforts to combat bullying in schools. Local organisation I Love Tegel received the Groups/Association Award for its initiatives to improve Berlin life – from advocating wheelchair-friendly streets, to saving an indoor market. The Public’s Award, decided from almost 10,000 online votes, was given to the Eine-Welt-AG (One World Working Group) from Erkelenz. Its projects include a charity concert to aid street children.

The winners of the Commit Awards 2017 with soap actress Valea Scalabrino, former German President Christian Wulff and RTL Television Chief Anchorman Peter Kloeppel

Community investment in 2017

€17,311,568
Estimated net value of free air time or donated media time given to charities

€4,727,830
Cash donations and budget allocated to corporate foundations or charity initiatives supported internally

€21,014,005
Funds raised for charity during flagship events

CHILDHOOD GUARDIANS

RTL Croatia signed on to Unicef’s Childhood Guardians programme, which aims to protect the country’s most vulnerable children. As part of the agreement, the charity will support the production of content for children’s channel RTL Kockica, as well as training journalists, editors and producers in children’s rights and the media.

“Television, as an influential medium, affects children in many ways. Our channel RTL Kockica already has a broad offer for children, both entertaining and educational, but we also want to raise awareness among adults about the importance of information children receive in their earliest years,” says Henning Tewes, CEO of RTL Croatia.

Henning Tewes, CEO of RTL Croatia, and Valentina Otmačić, Head of Unicef’s Office for Croatia
The launch of the 2016/17 TV season saw Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland further expand its programming for hearing-impaired viewers, following on from its initial subtitling drive in 2015. RTL Television’s daily series Gute Zeiten, schlechte Zeiten (Good Times, Bad Times) is one example of Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland’s barrier-free programmes.

Complementing its accessibility, Gute Zeiten, schlechte Zeiten (GZSZ) has always covered socially relevant issues, including themes such as drugs and bulimia. In 2017, the series dealt with the controversial issues of suicide and euthanasia with the death of Till, who suffers from a fictional incurable nerve disease.

In October 2017, RTL Nederland joined Women Inc., the Dutch Public Broadcasting Agency (NPO), and Vice Benelux to launch the Beeldvorming in de Media (Image-Forming in the Media) coalition. Over the next two years, it will launch several pilot initiatives to promote inclusiveness and diversity.

“Our first major step will be the rollout of an ‘unconscious bias’ training course for our employees and creatives. The road to success will involve raising awareness, engaging in a dialogue, making mistakes, learning, and – above all – never giving up,” says Kim Koppenol, Corporate Communications & Brand Strategy Manager at RTL Nederland.

Women Inc.’s Limited View campaign invited the general public to share examples of stereotyping via #BeperktZicht (LimitedView).

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ENGAGING WITH OUR STAKEHOLDERS

The Media Advisory Council offers valuable advice to Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland management, paying special attention to plurality and diversity of opinion on its channels. Chaired by Professor Christian Höppner, the council includes representatives from political parties, churches, associations and cultural organisations.

The rise in so-called fake news and hate posts shared on social media was the focus of one of Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland’s 2017 Media Advisory Council meetings. A second meeting focused on data protection and e-privacy.

“The only way to combat excessive behaviour on social networks is for all social institutions and groups – including the media – to stand shoulder to shoulder on this issue.”

PROFESSOR CHRISTIAN HÖPPNER, Media Advisory Council Chairman
Since 2010, Fondation M6 has supported prisoners as they re-join their communities and rebuild their lives. Its work centres on three areas: helping people get back to work, addressing illiteracy and access to education, and re-socialisation through cultural activities. The foundation’s 2017 initiatives included the second ‘Au-delà des lignes’ (Beyond the Lines) writing competition in French prisons, and the fifth ‘Fleury fait son cinéma’ (Fleury at the Movies) festival.

RTL pomaže djeci

2017 marked the 10th anniversary of the RTL pomaže djeci (RTL Helps Children) charity fund, and in less than three hours, the anniversary Budi mi prijatelj (Be my Friend) show raised €300,000. Croatia’s most recognised humanitarian association has financed 202 projects, raising over €2 million for more than half a million sick, disabled and underprivileged children. It helps non-profit organisations raise funds from private and corporate donors, as well as build rehabilitation centres, schools, kindergartens, libraries and playgrounds. It has also procured toys, as well as sport, music and medical equipment.
REPORTING GREENER

In Brussels, news travels fast and traffic crawls. To stay ahead of the action, RTL Info journalists and camera crew can now use electric-powered cargo bikes. Customised with flight cases, the bikes allow a two-person crew to get to locations swiftly and safely with all their essential gear in tow.

PRODUCING GREENER

Autumn 2017 saw UFA Serial Drama in Cologne ramp up its Unter Uns green production efforts. All employees and visitors now use re-usable coffee cups, sustainably produced thermos flasks, with organic fair trade coffee and organic milk from more sustainable coffee machines. Plastic water bottles are replaced with systems that purify and chill tap water, while props drivers use an e-cargo bike for carrying smaller loads. In front of the cameras of Unter Uns, the characters drink from re-usable coffee cups, the Weigel bakery uses a hybrid vehicle, and the outdoor set in Schillerallee features an electric charging point as a prop.

TOGETHER AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE

RTL Radio (France) staged the second ‘Journée des solutions’ (Solutions Day), to coincide with the United Nations Climate Change conference 2017 in Bonn.

The station partnered with Fondation pour la Nature et l’Homme (Foundation for Nature and Man) and La Croix newspaper, presenting all-day coverage of positive climate change initiatives.

OUR TARGET: WE PLAN TO REDUCE OUR CARBON EMISSIONS BY 20% UNTIL 2025 WITH THE MILESTONE OF A 10% REDUCTION BY 2020. (BASELINE 2016)
EMPLOYEES

With a diverse audience, we need to be a diverse business. In striving to be a first-choice employer, we do everything possible to provide our people with fair recognition, treatment and opportunities. That also means attracting and retaining top talent, to keep our company competitive and our people happy, motivated and productive. With fair working conditions across the Group, our creative culture can flourish.

How does RTL Group address these issues?

LEARNING

We offer staff an array of opportunities to enhance their professional and personal lives. There are talent management and succession planning programmes, while many of our business units run their own internal mobility initiatives. We also offer training in partnership with Bertelsmann University, while our new international trainee programme will place candidates on several work rotations, with on-the-job learning and exposure to leaders across the Group.

DIVERSITY

We ensure equal employment opportunities and treatment, and we do not tolerate any form of discrimination against employees or applicants based on their age, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic. In 2017, RTL Group signed the Diversity Charter Lëtzebuerg. With more than 150 signatories, it extends our 2016 Diversity Statement in promoting diversity beyond our legal and regulatory obligations.

2017 also saw Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland implement its first-ever inclusion agreement, which highlights our commitment to helping employees with disabilities tailor work to their personal needs.

FAIR WORKING CONDITIONS

There are many ways we provide fair working conditions, including financial incentives such as attractive salaries, reward systems, profit sharing, and company pensions. We also offer training and development, desirable working environments, and wellbeing programmes. In addition, our local teams are free to implement their own initiatives to meet their business needs, in line with local laws. Following our 2016 Employee Survey, we identified career development and movement throughout the Group as key action points.

HEALTH

With healthy and fit staff, we can grow as a healthy and fit company. In 2017, we unveiled new initiatives to promote health and wellbeing across the Group – and help employees take charge of their own health.
The European Works Council (EWC) consists of representatives from RTL Group’s local works councils in the EU. It represents employees’ interests, particularly in dialogue with the Group’s senior management. Kai Brettmann has been its Chairman since 2001, and in 2017, he was re-elected for another four-year period. In his time with RTL Group, he has witnessed a great deal of change. But the media and entertainment industry is now changing faster than ever: “Against the background of digital transformation, social dialogue between employee representatives and management is more important than ever,” says Kai Brettmann.

Importantly in 2017, the EWC and RTL Group extended the voluntary agreement which grants the EWC certain rights of information and consultation. The new agreement runs from 2018 to 2022, and includes an option to renegotiate the content – the EWC has until the start of 2019 to take up this option.

“We are fortunate to be able to continue our social dialogue at European level. But in the local entities the picture is sometimes different,” says Kai Brettmann. “In the next few years we would like to bring the same standards to all RTL Group entities. We recognise our competition is global, and collaboration across the Group is vital for all of us.”

This theme of common standards continued in discussions about the Employee Survey. In several entities the participation of the works councils is very different, and the aim of the EWC is to standardise this process for the next survey in 2019.

In 2017, the biggest local issues with impact on employees were the bringing together of TV and radio activities in France under one roof, and the proposed restructuring of RTL Belgium in the face of new advertising competition. Together with French works council colleagues, the EWC worked with RTL Group management to mediate the process in France. Job cuts in Belgium are the hardest in the unit’s 30-year history, but works council representatives are collaborating well with management to negotiate an appropriate social plan.
The new trainee programme was developed in close cooperation with business unit HR Directors Members of the Ignition Board

A new RTL Group trainee programme aims to help attract and retain the best talent, especially in the digital sphere – RTL Group’s third strategic pillar. It is also designed to promote young talent to management positions early, and foster career mobility across our business units.

Aside from on-the-job learning and gaining comprehensive inside knowledge of the workings of a leading media company, three to five participants will also develop their own network within the Group, including senior leaders. The hosting business units will benefit from skilled graduates working on specific projects, as well as sharing of knowledge and best-practices from the rotational system. On completion, it is hoped all talents will stay within RTL Group.

FremantleMedia’s Operating Board, and CEO Cécile Frot-Coutaz, chose 13 ambitious employees to form an Ignition Board. Over an 18-month term, members collaborate to offer creative, innovative and bold approaches to help shape the future of the company.

The board first met in London in February 2017 for IGNITE, a two-day session to strategise with the Operating Board, and learn teamwork tips from business coach, Ruth Sack. Members then regrouped in April 2017 to define their mission statement.

“One of the first targets we identified was to give fresh perspectives on how to help make FremantleMedia become the place that creatives want to call home, in line with our new company purpose,” says Ignition Board member Michelle Foreman.

The new trainee programme was developed in close cooperation with business unit HR Directors

Employees Help Shape the Future

Learning

A Pipeline of Future Talent
Since 2017, Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland colleagues can join the Moving Pause by intranet webcast.

TÉLÉVIE CHALLENGE

In the 13th Télēvie Challenge, 400 RTL Group staff members cycled for eight hours on indoor bikes to raise funds for cancer and leukaemia research. They covered 7,176 kilometres, raising €5.00 for every kilometre and a total of €55,000 for the non-profit association.

BREAK IN ACTION

To counteract the health effects of prolonged sitting and inactivity, Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland launched Moving Pause, a new wellbeing programme that combines low-intensity balancing exercises to reduce stress. Every lunch hour, four 15-minute sessions are held at the in-house fitness centre, and streamed on an intranet webcast to employees at 23 locations.

Since 2017, Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland colleagues can join the Moving Pause by intranet webcast.
What role does diversity play in your area of responsibility?
Our team is very diverse with two French people, one Luxembourger, one American, three Germans and an Austrian. We also work with core business units around the world, which is where we really experience different cultures and ways of working, reacting and communicating. One of our roles within the strategy team is to get those people working together. That’s where we see a lot of the richness and strength of the Group: when different people with the same shared vision start talking and exchanging views on how to achieve it together.

Does being a mother change the way you work?
Having less time can help you focus and be more productive. I’m also way more patient now with my kids, my husband and the people I work with. Parenting skills can be helpful at work: you become a better listener, and learn how to interpret what people say and why, to guide them in the direction you want. I also learn skills at work that I can apply at home.

What advice would you give for balancing work and family?
You need to find your own balance, and avoid looking at what others are doing. It’s a constant balancing act that’s always changing. You’ll end up very disappointed and frustrated if you find balance and then expect it to last! It’s better to live day-to-day and set the bar a bit lower. You also need to ask for help – not only because you can’t do everything by yourself all the time, but because it makes life easier for everyone, family included.

How has the Group helped you find that balance?
I’m very lucky to have a flexible schedule, so I can step in for my kids when I need to. I feel comfortable doing that because the men in the company talk openly about their families, and will take time off to take care of their kids. The Group also supported me in working remotely when my husband had an 18-month assignment in Brussels.
Why did you write the book, and what did you get out of it?
I felt happier having written it – it lifted a burden. The boys and girls who were killed had simply gone dancing in a place they thought was safe. Such bars and nightclubs are like sanctuaries for many gay people who grew up in fear. Places like that have been incredibly important in my life. I wanted to write that tragic event into a broader story, where in the space of 50 years, homosexuality has switched from being persecuted to securing equal rights status.

Have you suffered discrimination?
I have always known I was in a minority, and would have to cope with unfriendly situations – for any minority there is this fear. But equal rights is a major development, as people are now more open and understanding, and we should be collectively proud of this.

Do companies need to do more to combat homophobia?
I can only speak for RTL, where I have never felt any discrimination or lack of opportunity – maybe only some lack of awareness on occasions. Some gay people are still reluctant to talk about it, and I understand that, but it’s probably easier now to be openly gay than from a minority race or religion. But overall, I’m optimistic that we’ve come a long way in a short time and for LGBT issues, things are still moving in the right direction.
What does inclusion mean to you?
It means giving everyone a fair chance to show what they can do and to do it. In the area of disability, it means no one will ever not get a job because of their disability, it will depend on their merit and suitability for the role. We see the person, not the disability.

How is the company set up for including people with disabilities?
Disabled people are a major consideration in various corporate agreements. In June 2017, we started our inclusion agreement, adapted from the Bertelsmann document, which covers how we treat people, and the various related rules and procedures. In any case, German law has application procedures for people with disabilities. In addition, the Cologne offices are built to a modern barrier-free design, with ramps, lifts, automatic doors, and disabled parking bays close to the entrance. Any colleagues with mobility issues can use personal state-financed electric scooters in the new building, with the parking and recharging infrastructure financed by Mediengruppe RTL Deutschland.

What are the limitations?
There are plenty of options for designing the workplace around someone’s disability. Most of the jobs in Cologne are office or studio-based, so there are very few physical restrictions, but because of the type of work there may be challenges for those with mental or visual impairments. The appointment of someone has to make sense for both parties.

How does it work in practice, daily?
The agreement we signed in May 2017 doesn’t actually change a lot – it’s simply a written confirmation of what we are doing anyway, which we believe is the right thing to do. We offer an extremely varied range of roles – many of them of interest to disabled colleagues and applicants. One of our recent apprentices is in a wheelchair – a situation that will have no effect on his potential for development with us.
**Headcount of permanent employees as at 31 December 2017**

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*Headcount of permanent employees as at 31 December 2017*

**Employees’ age***

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*Average of FTEs of fully-consolidated undertakings*

**Employees’ length of service***

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**Our employees are***

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<tr>
<td>460</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>711</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Average of FTEs of fully-consolidated undertakings*

**Nationalities***

- Germany (31%)
- France (24%)
- Netherlands (8%)
- Belgium (7%)
- United States (6%)
- United Kingdom (5%)
- Hungary (5%)
- Luxembourg (3%)
- Croatia (3%)
- Others (8%)

**Our diversity targets**

By 2025, we aim to increase our percentage of female leadership to:

- 30% in our management. (2017: 22%)

**Management by gender***

- Our top management is:
  - 24% female
  - 76% male
- Our senior management is:
  - 20% female
  - 80% male
- Our management is:
  - 22% female
  - 78% male

*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.

*Headcount of permanent employees as at 31 December 2017. (According to Canadian labour law, BroadbandTV Corporation (CAN) may not report the nationalities (Heads (P) = 200))

*Our employees are from more than* 57 countries worldwide

*Rounding differences may occur; headcount of permanent employees as at 31 December 2017*

*Our diversity targets*

*Rounding differences may occur; headcount of permanent employees as at 31 December 2017*
Cover visual taken from the fifth ‘Fleury fait son cinéma’ (Fleury at the Movies) film festival organised by Fondation M6