



DIVERSITY MAKES THE MEDIA MORE CREDIBLE

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Yesterday, a flyer from *De Standaard* landed in my mailbox. On it, I read this sentence: "These journalists have lost their jobs." Seven white journalists stare at me from the page. The flyer asks for extra income to help these journalists uncover truths about "major social issues." Those words stuck with me: "major social issues". But as I looked at the faces of the seven journalists introduced on the A4 sheet, I saw perspectives that did not immediately align with mine. Interesting people? Certainly. Diverse? Not at all. And yet, these are the journalists chosen to tackle the major issues of our pluralistic, multicultural, complex society.

Complex social issues are best examined by diverse voices. Truths should be uncovered by a range of perspectives, not a narrow segment of society. I believe in a well-examined, multi-layered truth. I believe that we should question and analyse that truth from different angles. I believe that I do not have all the answers. That there is not just one truth. I believe in the value of different perspectives.

I am originally from Iran. I grew up in Istanbul, studied in Antwerp, and then moved to Brussels. I have lived in Schaerbeek, in Ixelles, and now I live in Molenbeek. My perspective is undeniably different from those seven journalists'. But more importantly, I know dozens of people from different corners of the world – people with different identities, experiences, and insights – who could offer perspectives just as valuable as mine, if not more.

So how can I trust a truth that is not diverse? A truth that has not been tested by a diverse group of people? I believe that diversity would make the media more credible. I believe that better representation of our society would make the media more trustworthy. That diversity might already be a first step toward getting closer to the truth that the newspaper seeks to uncover.





I live in a richly diverse world. I share my city with people from all walks of life – heterosexual, homosexual, transsexual, pansexual, transgenders, cisgenders. My society is colorful, complex and queer.

I want this diversity to be reflected in my newsrooms, newspapers, institutions, schools, theatres, TV programs, and in boardrooms. In films and advertisements. On billboards and on flyers. Even on the flyers of this newspaper.

If your editorial team is not diverse, how can your readership be? Does *De Standaard* only write for a limited segment of our society? Or does it simply not realize it could be speaking to so many more?

In any case, this reader has not given up yet. I will keep reading, hoping to see a bit more color next time.

