COMMUNITY MEDIA contributions to citizens' participation – Country Summaries

(with reference to data from the Media Pluralism Monitor 2017)

Austria

Country summary	**The first fully licensed community radio stations started in 1998, after more than 10 years of struggles for legal recognition. The formal foundation of the community media sector was delayed compared to other European countries due to the state monopoly in broadcasting that existed at the time. This monopoly was upheld in Austria until 1993, when it was abolished by a judgement by the European Court of Human Rights, which also granted access to the radio waves for community media, in the languages of minority ethnic groups. There are currently 14 community radio stations on air, half of them in rural areas and three community television stations in the cities of Vienna, Linz and Salzburg. With programmes broadcasting in 41 languages on air, the sector is unique for its representation of diversity in Austrian society. All 17 community broadcasters are supported by the national non-commercial broadcasting fund. Community media in Austria perform a wide range of socially relevant functions, which are only partly recognised by the broadcasting law.** **In the MPM, the indicator 'Access to media for local and regional communities and for community media' is ranked at low risk, with 19%, as all 17 community broadcasters are supported by the national non-commercial broadcasting fund.**
CR and CTV landscape	14 community radio stations in rural and urban areas and three community TV stations in urban areas.
Diversity	Community media are spaces for diversity. Broadcasts are produced in 41 languages and in many places, migrant groups were among the first producers to join newly founded community media. Community media projects target women, youth, and less able people in particular, a lot of them with EU or Council of Europe (CoE) funding. Community media activists highlight several strong points of community media, versus commercial social media platforms: a setting for personal exchanges, for reflections, for the improvement of individual and collective competences, a constructive feedback culture, a high degree of tolerance and pluralism. These are all available for listeners, viewers and producers alike and provide a counterbalance to an increasingly narcissistic on-demand society, eager to marginalise unwanted voices, opinions and languages.
Legal recognition and media model	Recognised as private, non-commercial media, community media fall under the private broadcasting law. Independent community media are run by associations (mostly membership-based) and cannot be affiliated to political or religious bodies, according to the Austrian charter of community media.
Funding sources	In 2009, a specific fund for non-commercial broadcasting was established. This fund receives a portion of the national broadcasting fee. In addition, community media receive funding from regions and municipalities. They collect listenership and membership support and apply for European projects. For community media, no on-air advertisement is allowed.

History and context	State monopoly ended in 1993. The first full-time licences for community radio stations were issued in 1998 – after pirate attempts between 1989 and 1992. In contemporary society, Austrian community media represent important platforms of debate and engagement at the local and regional levels. Social inclusion is facilitated by the opportunity to express one's concerns and viewpoints, regardless of cultural, linguistic or socio-economic barriers. Having a voice in discussions on future developments of cities and regions is the first step towards active participation in their implementation and towards strengthening a sense of belonging.
Media pluralism report	The indicator 'Access to media for local and regional communities and for community media' is ranked as being at low risk, with 19%. This is because the law grants regional and local media access to media platforms; access to radio and TV frequencies is regulated via public tendering; subsidies for private radio and television companies are explicitly contingent upon the provision of local/regional programmes; and the public broadcaster operates regional broadcasting studios in all nine federal states, which provide nine regionally broadcast radio programmes and TV newscasts. However, Austrian broadcasting laws still lack a consistent legal recognition of community media as third sector media in terms of function, mode of operation and financing, despite community media performing a wide range of socially relevant functions.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Country summary	**The national media regulation includes the category of 'non-profit radio', which is the only way that community radio stations are recognised in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is a licence for organisations to provide radio services on a non-profit basis, via terrestrial analogue transmission, for the purpose of satisfying particular needs of a specific social group. At the time of writing, there are three licence holders for this category: a humanitarian station, a children's/youth station and a religious station. A few other non-profit radio stations exist, which operate online only. All of them rely on voluntary work and on primarily private donations. Community radio stations are exempt from licence fees, but there is no specific public funding for non-profit community radio stations, and they are not allowed to earn income from advertising or commercial communication. Bosnia and Herzegovina had in the past a more vivid community radio landscape. However, stations such as eFM Radio, which involves mainly students in Sarajevo, were forced to cease operations due to a lack of financial resources. Non-profit radio stations cater to local areas and involve many young volunteers who are mentored by older members. With better legal and economic conditions, community radio stations could play a much more relevant role for local media pluralism and media literacy training programmes.**
CR and CTV landscape	Three community radio stations and several unlicensed ones.
Diversity	The non-profit radio stations target local areas and engage numerous young volunteers who are supported by older members acting as mentors. Community radio stations could provide media literacy training and play a much more relevant role for local media pluralism, but to significantly achieve such objects, legal and economic conditions need to be improved.

Legal recognition and media model	The national media regulation includes the category of a licence for non-profit radio, specifically as a licence for the provision of radio services via terrestrial analogue transmission for non-profit organisations, with the purpose of satisfying specific needs of a certain social group on a non-profit basis. This is the only way in which community radio stations are recognised in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Communications Regulatory Agency wishes to encourage the creation of these media by exempting them from paying the registration fee when applying for frequencies, an exemption that does not apply to other media. The rules for non-profit media define technical and programme conditions of the licence and impose limitations upon programme content, since programmes cannot include any commercial communication. Regulatory compliance rules are applied in the same way as for other licence holders.
Funding sources	Donations and citizens' contributions, projects and NGOs. Some funds are allocated to media at the state level, but these allocations, which are supposedly guided by non-partisan interests, follow a process that lacks transparency.
History and context	BiH has a tradition of successful community media, the first of which was the popular eFM Radio in Sarajevo, which has employed numerous students over the years. However, since they were unable to survive in market conditions, they lost their frequency and can nowadays be listened to only as a playlist on the Internet.
Media pluralism report	BiH is not part of the MPM. However, it would be reasonable to assume that some of the concerns present in the evaluation of Serbia might also be valid in Bosnia and Herzegovina. While licences are granted, there is little to no funding in place to ensure effective operations, which hinders access, especially for marginalised groups.

France

Country summary	**France has a long history of community radio stations, most of which went on air in 1981. Today, there are about 700 community radio stations and their number has increased in recent years, especially facilitated by the emergence of digital broadcasting; note that new radio stations that broadcast digitally operate mainly in urban areas. By comparison, the local community television sector is not quite so developed in France.The question of the ageing of the population and the care of the elderly is a very prominent issue in France and several community radio stations are active in engaging with this issue, either by operating within retirement homes or by involving elderly people. With reference to the presence of young people in community radio, projects are numerous and in some instances, date back to the 1980s. These activities are most often related to popular educational approaches and, with regards to school environments, linked to project pedagogies. Radio has a role to promote learning, but it also creates social links for vulnerable people, people with social and professional difficulties. With regards to elderly people, the projects are newer but, because of the ageing of the population, their number is increasing. This research has also found the near non-existence of local community television in France. In the context of diversity, intercultural and intergenerational diversity has been discussed more often; it would perhaps also be relevant to consider gender diversity in the future. With the evolution and accessibility of technology for individuals, radio is now turning to audio content creation, for which the approach becomes more general, and includes both cultural and specifically artistic content. Community radio stations are**

	supported by a national fund dispensed by the Ministry of Culture (Fonds de soutien à l'expression radiophonique) and this is complemented by other public subsidies from regional and city authorities. According to the MPM 2017, the indicator 'Access to media for local and regional communities and for community media' scores at very low risk, with 6%.
CR and CTV landscape	More than 700 community radio stations but only a few community TV stations.
Diversity	12 languages are represented in bilingual or even monolingual community radio stations – seven regional languages (Basque, Breton, Catalan, Corsican, Creole, Aranese Gascon and Occitan) and five foreign languages (English, Armenian, Chinese, Spanish and Flemish). Programmes in other languages that are broadcast more routinely, to cater to different communities, are in languages such as in Arabic, Armenian, Berber, etc.
Legal recognition and media model	Community radio stations consist of four types: the regional community radio stations, the radio stations of immigrant communities, the activist radio stations engaged in social action and the radio stations serving the vulnerable, such as people with disabilities. Some French community radio stations are not established as 'community' (termed 'associative' in France) radio stations but as commercial, private radio stations. This is the case, for instance, with Radio Orient, Beur FM, Radio Alfa, and Alfa n°1. Community radio stations aim to ensure a mission of service, entertainment and information towards a specific audience defined by a geographical and/or socio-cultural criterion. Thus, as is written on the website of the Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel, community radio stations are not public service broadcasters; they are radio stations serving the public, i.e. serving specific groups and communities within the wider public.
Funding sources	The main source of funding is the Fonds de soutien à l'expression radiophonique (FSER), which draws monies from taxes on advertising in other audio-visual media. This fund is managed by the Ministry of Culture. Other revenues are grants from regional or city governments, as well as listener donations.
History and context	Between the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, radio stations challenged the state's monopoly set up on 23 March 1945 and broadcast illegally; in essence, they were pirate radio stations. The law of 9 November 1981, known as 'the law of tolerance', allowed pirate radio stations to obtain derogations from the monopoly, thus making them genuinely 'free' radio stations. The law of 29 July 1982, called 'the law of regulation', abolished the monopoly. Nearly 1,500 stations were thus licensed and called Radios Locales Privées. Radio stations are classified into different categories (five categories from A to E and a sixth category for public service radio stations). 'Associative' radio stations are category A radio stations. They are local, non-commercial radio stations, so advertising cannot represent more than 20% of their total turnover. In order to carry more weight, community radio stations are grouped into unions – Confédération Nationale des Radios Associatives(National Confederation of Community Radios – the CNRA) and Syndicat National des Radios Libres(National Union of Free Radios – the SNRL). There are also regional structures such as Fédération des radios associatives d'Île-de-France (Federation of associative radios of Île-de-France – FRADIF) and Radio Campus (the association of student radios).

Media pluralism report	According to the Media Pluralism Monitor, the indicator 'Access to media for local and regional communities and for community media' scores at very low risk, with 6%.

Germany

Country summary	**There are striking differences in regional competence for culture, media and educational regulation and policy in over 180 community radio and TV stations (Bürgermedien, operating on a non-commercial basis, previously termed 'non-commercial') that are active in most regions in Germany, some since the late 1980s. Considering that responsibility for culture, media and educational policies is regional (termed Länderkompetenz), the regulatory conditions range from very supportive to rather prohibitive. The regional regulators variously allocate from 0 to 50% of their budget to support the sector, which directly determines the presence and number of local community media organisations. German community radio stations, TV stations and multimedia projects actively engage youth in their activities. They contribute to social cohesion by providing a framework for social groups to construct identity, to build fresh networks and to develop new relationships. According to the MPM 2017, the indicator 'Access to media for local and regional communities and for community media' ranked at the lowest risk compared to all other countries researched for this report, with 3%. However, the fact that in some regions, the media authorities themselves act as bodies responsible for community media results in a conflict of interest and is thus problematic, as it does not fulfil the requirement of independence expected of and guaranteed by non-profit, local associations.**
CR and CTV landscape	180 community radio and TV stations.
Diversity	Between 20,000 and 30,000 people are involved in production activities each year. According to the regional media authorities, more than 1.5 million listeners/viewers access their local community media on a daily basis. Volunteer producers create about 1,500 hours of program every day – the equivalent of more than 60 full-time programs. Community media organisations see themselves as an emancipatory corrective measure, meant to provide spaces for expression and self-representation to underrepresented groups or minorities, and to counter-balance the shortcomings of other media sectors. They are described as fulfilling: the right to articulate free, uncensored expressions of opinion; the right to participate in political processes and make statements on societal issues; a complementary and balancing function, by addressing topics and adopting positions that are not or only insufficiently covered by professional media, achieved by involving groups whose viewpoints are rarely taken into account in public discourse; the provision of media education/media literacy, not limited to the ability to design and produce media, but rather to critically reflect upon the entire media system and its environment and to actively contribute towards shaping it.
Legal recognition and media model	Under the broad category Bürgermedien (citizens' media), the regional media authorities include open channels, non-commercial radio, citizen radio, campus radio, education and training channels and school radio. Most of them are granted long-term licences.

	Community media in Germany are mostly non-profit communication initiatives, accountable to the community/ies they seek to serve, and open to participation in content production and management.
Funding sources	For most community media, funding from the regional media authority represents the core revenue. The funding is allocated from a part of the licence fee. Other funding sources are municipalities or educational funds.
History and context	The call for citizen radio stations in Germany dates back to 1928, when the 'Arbeiter-Radio-Bund Deutschland e.V.' demanded that frequencies allocated to experimental radio stations should be released for serious amateur groups. The first German community radio station to go on air was Radio Dreyeckland in 1977, initially as a pirate radio station and later – from 1987 – with a licence. Towards the end of the 1980s, non-commercial, non-profit citizen media developed further, in conjunction with the rise of new social movements and a multitude of citizens' initiatives. The first Open Channel to broadcast was the OK Ludwigsburg in January 1984. The situation of the community media sector in Germany differs greatly in each of the federal states because the political competence for media policy and legal regulation is devolved to 14 regional media authorities. Most community media initiatives are allocated a share of the licence fee received by each regional media regulator. Depending upon the situation, the regulators variously allocate from 0 to 50% of their budget to support community media. The public service requirements, which each community media initiative has to fulfil, are stipulated in regional laws passed by regional parliaments, making it very difficult to achieve an adequate and fair national framework. The regions can autonomously decide whether they even want to allow non-commercial broadcasting in the first instance. Depending on the federal state, there are either non-profit, local associations, which are responsible for the open channels, or the regional media authorities themselves act as the bodies responsible for the channels.
Media pluralism report	Following the MPM 2017, the indicator 'Access to media for local and regional communities and for community media' is at the lowest risk compared to all other countries, with 3%.

The Netherlands

Country summary	**In the Netherlands, about 250 local public broadcasters are institutionally recognised, licensed and supported by the national federation Nederlandse Lokale Publieke Omroepen (NLPO, the Dutch local broadcasting association, whose name translates to "'Locally Sufficient Media Offering'"). In relation to the size of the country, the sector shows the highest density in Europe. Legally, these local broadcasters are part of the public service system. They involve various age groups through their programming and serve as the physical space where different generations of broadcasters come together. This gives them the potential to act as a 'social glue' for local communities as they create and distribute local, community-specific cultural content. Diversity and inclusion challenges are mainly addressed through ethnically diverse programming and broadcasts for local, ethnic communities in the region. As the funding depends mainly on the policies of local authorities, the situation differs considerably from case to case and almost 30% of the local public broadcasters are struggling financially. Part of the issue here is that local authorities'**

	dispensation of funding allocated to and intended for community broadcasting is at their discretion and therefore not guaranteed. Funding challenges and the public's increasing mobility led to a review process, with the aim to decrease the number of broadcast areas from 250 to 80 larger coverage areas. **Due to the lack of funding, the MPM 2017 assesses "Access to media for local/regional communities and for community media" at medium risk, with 44%.**
CR and CTV landscape	250 community radio and TV stations.
Diversity	The Netherlands is the only country where local community radio and TV stations are legally defined as part of the public service media sector. With 20,000 volunteers, this represents a very high level of civic involvement in the sector. Local community broadcasts have the potential to act as a social glue for local communities by creating and distributing local, community-specific cultural expressions. Diversity and inclusion are mainly addressed by ensuring ethnic diversity in programming and by catering to local, ethnic communities in the region.
Legal recognition and media model	Legally, media platforms across all three levels (national, provincial and local) have the same task, namely to perform independent journalism that provides information, culture and education. Community media operate at the local level, and their role is described in the 2008 media law article 2, which requires a balanced, pluriform and diverse offering, targeting both a general audience as well as specialised ages and societal groups, i.e. 'accessible to all', consisting of high journalistic quality and independent of commercial or governmental influences. Their task is more specifically laid out in article 2.170b: "local public broadcasters are expected to offer a Locally Sufficient Media Offering". However, this requirement is not strictly defined. In 2015, local public broadcasters were active in 92% of municipalities in the Netherlands (CVDM, 2016).
Funding sources	Public funds: According to the Dutch Media Authority, in 2016, 98% of municipalities funded local public broadcasters, but almost 30% of local public broadcasters struggled financially. Funding for broadcasting is highest on the national level with 850 million euros; funding at the provincial level is at 170 million euros and the lowest at the local level, with 10 million euros.
History and context	Local broadcasting started in the early 1970s, but the network of stations grew only in the 1980s after licensing began in 1983; it has since developed to provide the greatest density of local media in Europe. The Dutch media landscape is traditionally organised in three categories: the national, provincial and local levels. While on each level, media organisations are institutionally recognised and financially supported, there are structural differences.
Media pluralism report	According to the MPM 2017, because of the lack of funding of local media, the indicator 'Access to media for local/regional communities and for community media', is assessed at medium risk, with 44%.

Serbia

Country summary	**The legal framework in Serbia does not recognise community media as such, but the category of 'civil sector media' should fulfil the interests of certain social groups (national minorities, young people, the elderly, the less able, etc.) and of civil society organisations; their services operate on a not-for-profit**

	basis. Legally, therefore, community media operate under the same conditions as other, commercial media. Regional and local media are supported via subsidies through local authorities, but the co-financing of this media often lacks clear criteria and transparent and fair procedures. Nevertheless, there exist a couple of independent community radio and TV stations working on-air or online only. They contribute to a more inclusive media practice as regards the aspects of gender, age groups or people from disadvantaged groups. In a scenario where most media in the country are involved in an intense race for commercialisation, community media constitute channels through which responsible journalism and reliable information can survive and indeed, where the quest for pluralism of information, critical thinking, public dialogue and the advancement of democracy can be realised. In the MPM 2017, the indicator 'Access to media for local/regional communities and for community media' stands at medium risk, with 56%.
CR and CTV landscape	10 community radio stations and one community TV station.
Diversity	Community media in Serbia contribute to a more inclusive media practice with regards to the aspects of gender, age groups or disadvantaged people. In a situation where most media in the country participate in a fierce race for commercialisation, community media offer channels through which journalism and information with integrity can be sustained and where the objectives of pluralism of information, critical thinking, public dialogue and the advancement of democracy can be achieved.
Legal recognition and media model	In Serbia, media owned and controlled by the community are also called 'non-governmental', 'non-commercial', 'non-profit' or 'civil society media'. This entails a greater participation of the audience in the decision-making and functioning of the media, and requires that they be independent from the government and from commercial interests. It is not obligatory by law to register media with the Media Register but it is advisable because unregistered media cannot apply for public funding to support their operational costs. The Electronic Media Act makes no concessions to the civil sector media publishers when it comes to co-funding. However, there are advantages with reference to licence fees and taxes for programme content. The same legal provisions apply for the civil sector media and other media, which is why their legal status is the same.
Funding sources	Open competitions organised at state, province or local levels still remain a significant source of co-funding for media projects. Community media are treated as non-profit media and thus have no right to make a profit, which is a severe hurdle to generating income.
History and context	The media monopoly ended at the end of the 1990s and since then, different media laws have been in effect; in 2002, community media stations were granted the status of non-profit civil organisations. At the outset of media reforms, the Broadcasting Law of 2002 regulated the establishment of radio and TV stations by non-profit civil organisations, the only condition being that the programme content of these stations had to relate to the specific activity area of the founding non-governmental organisation or civil association. The Electronic Media Act of 2014 stipulates in article 72 that the services of the civil sector are rendered with the goal of fulfilling specific interests of certain social groups (national minorities, young people, the elderly, the less able, etc.) and civil organisations, and not for making profit. By this law, the civil sector

	media can provide services within the local and regional zones of coverage. The publishers of such media can be associations, endowments, foundations, churches or religious communities. Unlike other media, civil sector media are granted the privilege of obtaining the licence for providing media services without paying the fees and taxes for airing programme content.
Media pluralism report	According to the MPM 2017, the indicator 'Access to media for local/regional communities and for community media' is at medium risk, with 56%. Reasons given for this ranking include the funding of regional and local media via subsidies, through local authorities, often without clear criteria and in a procedure that is neither transparent nor fair. The Law on Electronic media defines community media as "media service of the civil sector, that meet specific interests of various social groups and citizens". The community media service providers could be associations, endowments, foundations, churches and/or religious communities and they could be established within a local or regional zone. MPM states further that community media is in practice mostly in stations established by churches.

Slovenia

Country summary	**With Radio Študent celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2019, Slovenia could be perceived as the country with the oldest community radio station in Europe. Yet, community media do not exist as a specific category in national legislation. The Mass Media Act recognises "media programmes of public interest", which include regional, local, non-profit and student radio stations. In the category of student radio stations, there are Radio Študent in Ljubljana and Radio Marš in Maribor, but Radio Romic also fits into the category of non-profit and can be considered as a community media organisation. Radio Študent and Radio Marš are very urban-oriented. Radio Romic has regional coverage for Prekmurje, a more rural area. Both student stations stand for civic participation in media production, training and a broad and diverse spectrum of topics within their respective programs. Media legislation allocates 3% of the public broadcasting fee to a funding system for regional, local and student radio and for non-profit TV. However, this support is not obtainable for any of the stations mentioned above, as such support is contingent upon the employment of six paid staff members and a stipulation that 50% of a station's income must come from sources other than public funding. The involvement of mostly young volunteers or symbolically – i.e. nominally – paid members, is a precondition for the stations to be sustainable.** **In the MPM 2017, the indicator 'Access to media for local/regional communities and for community media' scores at medium risk, with 50%.**
CR and CTV landscape	Four radio stations can be indentified as community stations – two non-profit and two student radio stations.
Diversity	While Radio Študent and Radio Marš cater primarily to urban areas, Radio Romic has regional coverage for Prekmurje, a more rural area. The involvement of mostly young volunteers or members paid a negligible, 'symbolic' fee is essential to the station's survival. At the same time, a need to create stronger links between investigative journalism and community media has been expressed as a desired objective.

Legal recognition and media model	The term 'community media' does not exist in Slovenian legislation. The Mass Media Act recognises "media programmes of public interest", which include regional media (ten radio and two TV stations), local (eight radio and five TV stations), non-profit radio (two radio stations) and student radio (also two radio stations). However, the problem lies in one of the conditions for obtaining this special status, which stipulates that the media station must have three employees on a regular basis (for local media), and six employees on a regular basis (for non-profit media). "Media of public interest" can make a profit on condition that it is used strictly for programme development purposes. The state recognises that such media operate in the public interest and as such, they have an opportunity to get more funds from the Annual Public Call. However, obtaining such funding poses a challenge as employing six people on a regular basis is not feasible for nearly all such media organisations. Another problem is the fact that a media publisher must provide 50% of their budget from non-public resources, in order to be co-funded by the state through the public call and that is unattainable for many non-profit organisations.
Funding sources	Co-funding by the state, through a 3% portion of the licence fees for other media. Other sources are listener support, project funding and also advertising. Funding drawn from the licence fee is allocated to the development of radio and television programme services with the status of a local, regional or student radio or television programme service, or a non-profit radio or television programme service.
History and context	Slovenia has a long tradition of community media, as Radio Študent is the oldest community radio station in Europe and celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2019. Radio Marš celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2020. Both have the legal status of 'student radio stations'. Legislation still does not recognise community media as a specific category and support for community media has not been developed since the early years. Responsibility for the survival of these media has been completely shifted to the media owners. Many regional/local media suffer from insufficient funding, which results in a small number of staff members. They also face takeovers by bigger media companies, or they just stop their work because there are not enough funds. The majority of local media still function as communication channels for the local mayors and their parties. Public service has no obligation to involve regional or local communities, to have journalists from different geographic areas or to provide news in local languages. In practice, local news programmes are broadcast but the number of local correspondents has been reduced in the last few years. Community media is somewhat present, but not always independent. There is no systematic political interference; however, the content of community media is mostly hampered by unannounced budgetary cuts that in the end also influence the content and volume of production, consequently pushing programming towards more commercialisation and less criticality.
Media pluralism report	The indicator 'Access to media for local/regional communities and for community media' scores at medium risk, with 50%. Although the access to both community and local/regional media is guaranteed by law, with two bodies designated to monitor compliance with sanctioning powers, there is no data on their effectiveness, as the law is in the process of amendments.

Switzerland

Country summary	**The community media sector is defined by the media law as "complementary" to public service and private broadcasting. Its main tasks are to provide open access to media production facilities and training, to produce local, diverse and complementary cultural content and to operate on a non-profit basis. The first community radio station to go on air was Radio LoRa in Zurich in 1983. Today, there are 17 non-commercial radio stations in Switzerland that are members of the national federation UNIKOM, nine of which possess an FM licence and are co-funded by the government through a portion of the licence fees. Programmes are aired in more than 25 languages, with specific intercultural, multilingual training formats in place. Some stations specifically support people with physical – or varying degrees of mental – health conditions. While the community radio sector is quite developed, there are no community TV stations active in the country. The media authority BAKOM supports the sector with a yearly budget allocated from the licence fee. In addition, a wide range of institutions, such as regional and local authorities and foundations, support the sector with funding. Local research projects have shown that regardless of whether or not they later pursue a professional media career, migrants have been able to engage on equal terms in Swiss society and to improve their professional and social integration skills thanks to their work in community radio.[1]**
CR and CTV landscape	17 community radio stations, most of them located in the German-speaking regions.
Diversity	Programmes are broadcast in more than 25 languages, with particular intercultural, multilingual training formats in place. Some stations specifically support people with physical or mental impairments or people with psychiatric illnesses. Local research projects have shown that regardless of whether they later pursue a professional media career or not, migrants have been able to engage on equal terms in Swiss society and to improve their professional and social integration skills due to their work in community radio. Training activities, mainly organised in cooperation with the radio school klipp+klang, are supported additionally, as community radio stations are recognised as places of learning. Thousands of volunteers, including citizens with a migrant background or with disabilities, are actively involved in the production and management of UNIKOM radio stations.
Legal recognition and media model	The Swiss media law of 2007 reconfirmed the recognition of community radio stations as a distinct and complementary third media sector, necessary for cultural and linguistic diversity, pluralism and freedom of information. However, FM licences are no longer assigned since 2007. A new media law is now being developed and it is not clear which criteria will guide the co-funding of community radio stations in the future. Certainly, local and non-commercial broadcasting would not survive without the financial contributions these sectors receive from the licence fees. This was a major factor for civil society mobilisation against the populist No Billag initiative in 2018, which aimed to abolish public service broadcasting by scrapping the annual media licence fee.
Funding sources	Nine of the 17 community radio stations are co-funded by the government through a portion of the licence fees. The remaining eight, which started as Internet-based

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1   Bonfadelli, Heinz et al. (2008) *Migration, Medien und Integration. Der Integrationsbeitrag des öffentlich-rechtlichen, kommerziellen und komplementären Rundfunks in der Schweiz*

	projects, have been able to access financial support for distribution via small-scale DAB+ channels.
History and context	The first community radio station to go on air was Radio LoRa in Zurich, in 1983. Today, all 17 non-commercial radio stations in Switzerland are members of the national federation UNIKOM. Thanks to the migration to DAB+, a total of 77 niche local radio stations are currently operating (these include UNIKOM members, as well as community radio stations from the French and Italian Cantons, who have not all joined the Federation).
Media pluralism report	Switzerland is not among the countries covered by the Media Pluralism Monitor nor are the non-commercial stations included in the national enquiry on quality in the media. An estimated ranking on the MPM scale for social inclusiveness might place Switzerland between Germany and Austria, at low risk. Such an estimate might be based on the local research projects cited above (for instance taking into account community media's contribution to migrants' professional development and confidence levels and their consequent ability to integrate into Swiss society).[2]

As indicated at the beginning of this report, there is a more recent MPM survey published in 2020. This more recent publication tabulates data from research conducted in 2018/2019. There are some consistencies as well as key differences between the 2017 and 2020 results, which it may be relevant to outline here. Austria's MPM indicator 'Access to media for local and regional communities and for community media' remains at 19%. Bosnia and Herzegovina are still not included in the MPM 2020. Although France's MPM 2020 indicator 'Access to media for local and regional communities and for community media' is still ranked low, at 25%, it is significantly higher than in 2017, when it was 6%. The reasons for this are perhaps discernible in the MPM 2018 survey, which points out that there is insufficient data for France. More importantly, France's approach to community media as well as to minorities (within legal frameworks) and to diversity more broadly, is quite different from other European countries. Finally, in France, access to media for women leaves considerable room for improvement. Following the MPM 2017 for Germany the indicator 'Access to media for local and regional communities and for community media' was at a very low risk (3 %) but is indicated with 19% in 2020. The reason for this increased risk is unclear, and is perhaps not so much a case of changed circumstances, but rather a matter of distinct perceptions by the former research team. One might also add that this time around, the research remit was extended to focus equally on online media; such an extension may have affected such assessments. The Netherlands similarly fares worse in the MPM 2020 survey but not significantly, increasing from 44% to 56%, primarily due to underfunding of local media. No results were published for Serbia in the MPM 2020 survey. Slovenia fared much worse in the MPM 2020 survey, insofar as the indicator 'Access to media for local and regional communities and for community media' is concerned, rising from medium risk, with 50% in 2017 to high risk, with 69% in 2020. The reasons seem manifold here, including underfunding, the threat of takeovers by bigger media companies, insufficient involvement of local journalists and lack of autonomy. Switzerland, as in 2017, is not included in the MPM 2020 survey.

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2   Bonfadelli, Heinz et al. (2008) *Migration, Medien und Integration. Der Integrationsbeitrag des öffentlich-rechtlichen, kommerziellen und komplementären Rundfunks in der Schweiz*