Multilingual and Local. Non-commercial Broadcasting and Public Value in Austria

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Abstract

Community Radio stations are relevant media for the generation of Public Value. They are important societal actors in their functions as media and also as organisations and take a prominent place in publicly funded media production. That is due to their duties, both self-defined through their charta as well as prescribed by the legislator.

This paper presents the results of a quantitative and qualitative research project financed by the Austrian Regulatory Authority for Broadcasting and Telecommunications (RTR). The research started in winter 2009 and aimed at investigating and documenting the contributions of Community Radio stations to a diverse, multi-perspective, accessible and heteroglossic mediascape and at evaluating the current discussions of Public Value from an Austrian perspective. It was also a follow-up project of two studies published in 2008; one on the effects of Community Radio on plurality and social cohesion, and another one on the legal conditions for the third sector in five European countries.

Here, a brief overview of the most important findings shall be introduced and presented. We invite those who are interested in a more detailed report and read German to take a look at the extensive study published by RTR also online:

http://www.rtr.at/de/komp/SchriftenreiheNr42010

Content

Introduction

The legal recognition of non-commercial broadcasters expressed by the implementation of the Funds for the Promotion of Non-Commercial Broadcasting (*Fonds zur Förderung des nichtkommerziellen Rundfunks*) in 2009 is an important milestone in the history of Community Radio in Austria[1]. With this political decision comes a greater awareness and acknowledgement of the achievements of Community Radio stations: Austria's media landscape cannot be imagined without them any longer.

Over the last years also European institutions have expressed greater recognition of the services of non-commercial broadcasting. This development also fostered a growing interest in radio research in order to achieve a better orientation of media political decision-making in times of societal and media change.

The research at hand follows two earlier studies: one on the legal and economic conditions for the third sector in five countries (Peissl/Tremetzberger 2008) and another one on the contribution of Community Radio stations to open access, plurality of opinion and social cohesion (Purkarthofer/Pfisterer/Busch 2008). These studies contribute to the foundation of an Austrian radio research that understands itself as a part of the vibrant scientific discussion on the European and international levels (among others Bonfadelli/Moser 2007, Meadows/Forde/Ewart/Foxwell 2007, Lewis 2008, Forde/Foxwell/Meadows 2010).

In the course of topical debates around the financing of media services in public interest for all broadcasting sectors this publication analyzes the contribution of Community Radio stations to the generation of public value and records their services, especially those concerning multilingualism and local contents.

In many programme analyses, for example in Germany (Volpers/Salwiczek/Schnier 2006 and Volpers/Bernhard/Schnier 2010) multilingual programmes were explicitly left out – a deplorable void given the growing societal diversity and the heightened significance that is being accorded to individual and societal multilingualism today.

Against the background of media political debates on public value in broadcasting (Trappel 2010, Wippersberg 2010) the first part of our study asked the question what Community Radio stations actually can contribute in this regard. The following parts were dedicated to an analysis of radio programmes and selected shows of Austrian Community Radio stations: Part two of the study analyzes the programmes of Community Radio stations regarding public value with quantitative methods. Part three takes a qualitative approach – interviews with radio producers and observations of selected shows – in order to show the specific contribution of Community Radio presenters to a

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[1] "Freies Radio" (Free Radio) is translated in this summary with the internationally used term Community Radio.

great diversity of programmes. The results of these last two parts are contracted and presented in this summary together.

Public Value

The formation of the term Public Value

Originally the term Public Value was coined in the management sciences. Mark Moore defined in his text *Creating Public Value – Strategic Management in Government* (Moore 1995) the specific demands for the work of enterprises operating under public administration or funding. Even if Moore did not aim at media in his work we can hold that also in the context of Public Value in broadcasting we start from the thought that publicly financed media have a special responsibility towards society which is to be claimed not only concerning their programmes and contents but also their organisational structures as well as the transparency of decisions and their implementation. Karmasin (2009, 92) concludes: "Not the management or political functionary, not the market or the stock market but processes of democratic participation decide about the production of Public Value." [Translated from German by the authors]

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) took up the notion of Public Value in 2004 for their programmatic development concept *Building Public Value: renewing the BBC for a digital world* (BBC 2004) and interpreted it for its purposes. *Building Public Value* became a key value of the corporation and was embedded in 2006 in the Royal Charter in which every ten years the duties of the BBC are laid down by the parliament (BBC 2006).

The debate about Public Value has since not only caught almost all European public service broadcasters but also (within the framework of competition laws) the policies of the European Commission. Public Value thereby becomes a criterion for programme production and other activities that are allowed or are to be implemented with public funding.

While the controversy about Public Value primarily puts pressure of legitimation onto public broadcasters, it also opens opportunities and perspectives for a reassessment of media services in public interest. Especially relevant seems to be the reevaluation of societal services of the non-commercial, open access broadcasting sector (the third sector) as it has been legally defined also in Austria's KommAustria law since 2009 (BGBl. 2009/52, § 9i (3)).

Given the convergence of media and the blurring of previously clear distinctions between public and commercial media offers, a sincere debate about the question which media forms and offers correspond best to societal needs is very urgent. The boost which the third sector has been experiencing in many countries can if nothing else be understood as a compensatory reaction to the

continuing commercialisation and concentration of the media sphere on national and global levels (Forde/Foxwell/Meadows 2010, 36).

Within the frame of a fundamental examination of the Public Value of media, societal responsibility and the role of media within societies cannot be measured any longer only by their published contents and legal constitution, but must be redefined in the sense of media governance as an extensive accountability vis à vis society (Donges 2007). This also means questions of transparency, culture of critique, training of employees, quality and ethics as well as other forms of self-commitment must step into the spotlight.

Both the European Commission and the Council of Europe have dealt with this subject matter extensively during the last years. In contrast to the European Union, the Council of Europe tries to introduce "A New Notion of Media" into its work for an orientation framework for media politics that benefits European human rights. Jakubowicz (2009) demands in this context a principal change of thinking in the interpretation of Article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights: *Freedom of Expression* should thus in the future be interpreted as *right to public expression*. Jakubowicz argues for this view on the basis of the growing impact which diverse forms of public access media such as open channels or Community Radio stations have gained.

The most detailed examination of Public Value in free media can presently be observed in Australia. The non-commercial broadcasting sector there comprises at the present day 483 licenced stations, thus a more extensive coverage than commercial broadcasting (Forde/Foxwell/Meadows 2010, 54). The knowledge gained through long term accompanying research of the Community Radio and TV-sector in Australia can be partly transposed to Europe and Austria:

> *„Citizens who feel they are being listened to are likely to participate*
> *with more vigour and enthusiasm in society than those who are*
> *treated primarily as a consumer there to receive whatever is offered*
> *from above." (Forde/Foxwell/Meadows 2010, 38)*

Diversity of languages and low thresholds are important factors in the practise of non-commercial broadcasting stations which equal access to public value primarily for marginalised groups which feel not represented in mainstream media formats or may speak the language of the majority not so well. Susan Forde (Forde/Foxwell/Meadows 2010, 146) notes:

> *„It is clear that indigenous and ethnic community radio and television*
> *are the most effective ways of reaching audiences who have either*
> *rejected the frameworks of mainstream media or who speak English*
> *as a second, third or fourth language – or not at all."*

Not least because of scientific studies like the Australian example the community broadcasting sector has been considered with growing interest under the term "Community Media" in media political debates of the United Nations (2010), UNESCO (2008), OSZE (2007), Council of Europe (2007) and the European Parliament (2008 a, b), as for example expressed in the *Declaration on the Role of Community Media in Promoting Social Cohesion and Intercultural Dialogue* (Council of Europe 2009). The existence and the operation of independent Community Radio stations as well as other media of the civil society are also defined by the United Nations (2010) as important factors for the functioning of local communities. The meaning of such media for the local population is described as a common value to be understood in the sense of Public Value. As central qualities of these media their non-commercial status, local anchorage and communal organisation structures are emphasized.

The aspects of policy documents and declarations enumerated here are mirrored in the self-definitions of community media in many European countries. These self-commitments were mostly written before these media were officially and legally recognized as Third Sector. Thus for example the Charta of AMARC-Europe was included in Ireland's declaration of community radio policy (BCI 2001) or the report of the United Nations (2010, 12) points explicitly to the important contribution of AMARC for the development of an international framework for the regulation of community radio and TV stations.

The Charta as self-commitment and the recognition of Public Value
The self-commitment to the provision of open access to broadcasting implies a number of tasks that Austrian Community Radio stations undertake to fulfill. With the introduction of interested groups and individuals to active media work comes in everyday radio work the transmission of fundamental knowledge of the media system and the production of radio programmes. In the Charta of Community Radio stations the headline "Participation" leads aspects and tasks that contribute importantly to the activation of civic engagement, to the support of local and regional culture, to societal dialogue and solidarity as well as generally to mediated reflection of societal diversity (VFRÖ 2007).
The Charta exceeds the legal definition by giving almost an instruction for actions, which is meant to orient the operation of radio organisations. Moreover the Charta defines a commitment to transparent organisation structures and to local and regional relatedness of the radio stations. It can be read as common guiding principles with which Community Radio stations define their demands and engagement in a clear and verifiable way.

One form of public recognition of the Public Value of Community Radio are the many projects that are financed by the European Union, the federal states, as well as the Austrian government for the generation of specific contents and activities. For example during the EU year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 the project *Radiodialoge - Voices of diversity* – a common project of all Community Radio stations in Austria – was a fundamental element of the communication strategy of the Austrian ministry for education, arts and culture (BMUKK), the official body responsible for the realisation of the EU year in Austria.

As second field of journalistic and professional recognition of the Public Value of Community Radio productions are to be named the awards that shows and productions receive within the competition for the price for adult education. This price is given out jointly every year by four important institutions of adult education and honours radio productions that display a high educational value. Since 2005 28 productions have been distinguished, 10 of them came from Community Radio stations, all others except one from public service broadcasting channels. Considering the completely disproportionate facilities of Community Radio stations compared to public service broadcasters concerning infrastructures, staff and operational resources, the significance of such external awards and qualitative distinctions should be rated very high.

Conclusions for the programme analysis

An adequate analysis of the programmes of Community Radio with consideration for their societal benefits in the context of a debate about Public Value of media must put programme outputs in relation to the given organisational, social and cultural conditions under which they are achieved. Thereof three central (partly overlapping) aspects can be deduced for an analysis of Community Radio services:

- Organisation of participation and societal involvement
- Linguistic and cultural diversity
- Plurality of opinions

Under the aspect of "organisation of participation and societal involvement" there is to be considered primarily the issue of specific organisational and management structures which foster the creation of Community Radio programmes. These aspects were already researched in previous studies (Knoche/Grisold/Hirner/Lauggas/Wagner 2001 and Purkarthofer /Pfisterer /Busch 2008).

We would like to stress here that participation and societal involvement are also fostered in Community Radio stations by media pedagogic and other training activities as well as by a specific idea of active listenership.

The aspect "linguistic and cultural diversity" concerns the linguistic design of programmes (mono-, bi-multilingual language play and experiment) and also the choice of music and other features of the

programmes. The explicit locality allows complex regional and local identities to be presented and negotiated, and at the same time the diverse languages and cultures also build bridges to a bigger translocal background.

The rate of medial representation of specific groups in Community Radio in relation to their representation in mainstream media and society would be another important aspect for future programme analysis.

"Plurality of opinions" eventually comprises all content wise aspects and positions which are articulated by the diverse formats in the radio programmes – very often contents and formats which can only emerge thanks to the offer of open access. Especially complementary broadcasting offers and countering information, for example own news magazines and educational shows, are important achievements of Community Radio producers.

We concentrated our analysis mainly at the local contents and the complex local and translocal experiences that are brought into the radio programmes by volunteers and their networks.

Results of the study

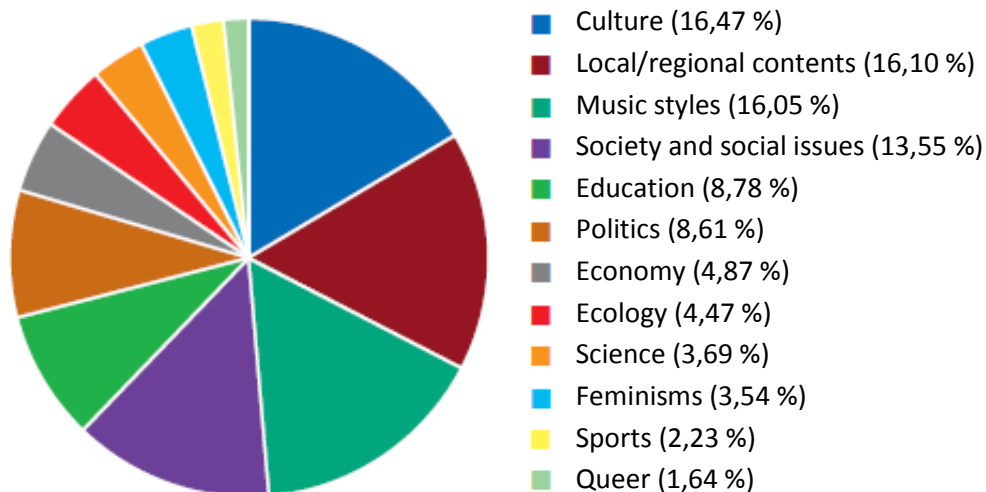**Plurality of opinions and societal participation**

The perception of gaps in the media service – for example concerning certain regions of the world or neighbourhoods, certain styles of music or political orientations – very often brings interested individuals into the radio station. Many of the radio producers and presenters we interviewed mentioned when asked for their motivation their wish to create a show that they would have liked to hear themselves (but which was inexistent). It is also seen by them as an important element for audience commitment to present positions and opinions which are frequently perceived as alternative, challenging or marginalized. The radio producers and presenters use their shows as spaces for experimentation, in order to create counter-publics and to talk about underrepresented issues.

The great thematic width of radio programmes that could of course be shown only in a simplified way due to the choice of categories underlines the importance of this space which Community Radio stations offer for complementary or countering information and for debate.

The categories for the analysis of contents applied in our study were developed in a workshop together with several programme coordinators. In telephone interviews and personal meetings with the programme coordinators each show was attributed one or more categories depending on their contents. The percentages were finally calculated for the whole of spoken word programming, playlists were not taken into account.

Some categories of course, such as culture, local contents, music and social issues can be applied to a broad range of programmes and thus represent a bigger part of the programmes. Also education and politics lie very close together. The other themes can be regarded as side issues also in Community Radio stations.

- Culture (16,47 %)
- Local/regional contents (16,10 %)
- Music styles (16,05 %)
- Society and social issues (13,55 %)
- Education (8,78 %)
- Politics (8,61 %)
- Economy (4,87 %)
- Ecology (4,47 %)
- Science (3,69 %)
- Feminisms (3,54 %)
- Sports (2,23 %)
- Queer (1,64 %)

Portions of categories in all spoken word programming. Source: RTR 4/2010 p. 56

Category	Percentage of broadcasts in %	Examples of possible contents
Culture	16,47	Events, Lectures, Music, Discussions, Cultural associations/clubs…
Local/Regional contents	16,10	News, Events, Consulting, School radio …
Music (as a topic)	16,05	Metal, New Classic, ‚Wienerlieder‘, …
Society/Social	13,55	Self-help groups, Visions for society, Communities, Associations …
Education	8,78	Information, Lectures, Consulting …
Politics	6,81	News from the Town hall, political education …
Economy	4,87	Citizens' initiatives, social projects, fair trade …
Ecology	4,47	Environment protection, sustainability, climate change …
Science	3,69	Student radio, IT, …
Feminisms	3,54	Gender equality, women's movements …
Sports	2,23	Football, Paralympics, …
Queer	1,64	DJs, Literature …

Percentages of the categories: shows about culture, local/regional contents, society, education, politics, economy, ecology, science, feminisms, sports and queer issues in the total of spoken word programming in Austrian Community Radio. Source: RTR 4/2010 p. 56

Programming in a local and regional context

Certain groups within the population are threatened with being excluded from society or of remaining present only as object of negative or discriminatory reporting. Community Radio stations are able to make a significant contribution against the creation of a communicative society that serves only two thirds. In the context of the societal challenge of lifelong learning they are important learning spaces for multiple competencies apt for widening and enriching the critical and self-determined agency of disadvantaged groups and individuals and for supporting them in embracing their role as active citizens. Community radio stations are thereby seizing the actual societal challenges and fulfill their public value as forms of "bottom up public service".

Radio	Numbers of spoken word shows	amount of spoken word in minutes (per week)	numbers of shows with explicitly local content	amount of time of shows with explicitly local content in minutes (per week)	amount of programming with explicitly local content (% of all spoken word programming)
Freies Radio Salzkammergut	65	3459,25	33	1787,75	51,68
Agora 105,5	36	3109	16	1715	55,16
Freies Radio Freistadt	74	5898,75	48	4036,25	68,43
Radio Helsinki	100	6882,5	58	4487,5	65,20
FREIRAD 105,9	87	5258,5	66	3109	59,12
Radio FRO	96	5677,5	56	4290	75,56
Radio FREEQUENNS	32	2395	9	960	40,08
Radiofabrik	137	5610	77	2778,63	49,53
Proton – das freie Radio	28	5205	14	1575	30,26
Campus & City Radio	35	5760	17	1665	28,91
ORANGE 94.0	151	6764,5	94	4650	68,74
Radio Y	23	2437,5	20	1927,5	79,08
Radio B138	51	3410,75	42	2901,5	85,07
in total	915	61868,25	550	35883,13	58,00

Amount of programming with explicitly local content in per cent of all spoken word programming.
Source: RTR 4/2010 p. 53

The local relevance and translocal networks of radio stations and shows concern mostly different circles and networks than those addressed and represented in mainstream-media with local content.

The great variety of perspectives and thematic foci present in the programmes is suited for depicting the spatial relations of a local audience also in their complexity. Interests and experiences that transgress the realm of the local are appreciated and made accessible for mediated negotiation.

The interviews done for this study revealed major tendencies of Community Radio shows concerning their spatial embedding. Political shows that aim at a better participation through better information of citizens offer deliberately extensive coverage of local and regional political personalities and affairs. These contents are not present in majority media, not even public service regional channels. Important factors for the hosts of these shows are to give enough time (up to one hour talk), daring questions and if possible uncut airtime to decision makers in order to allow listeners to make up their own minds.
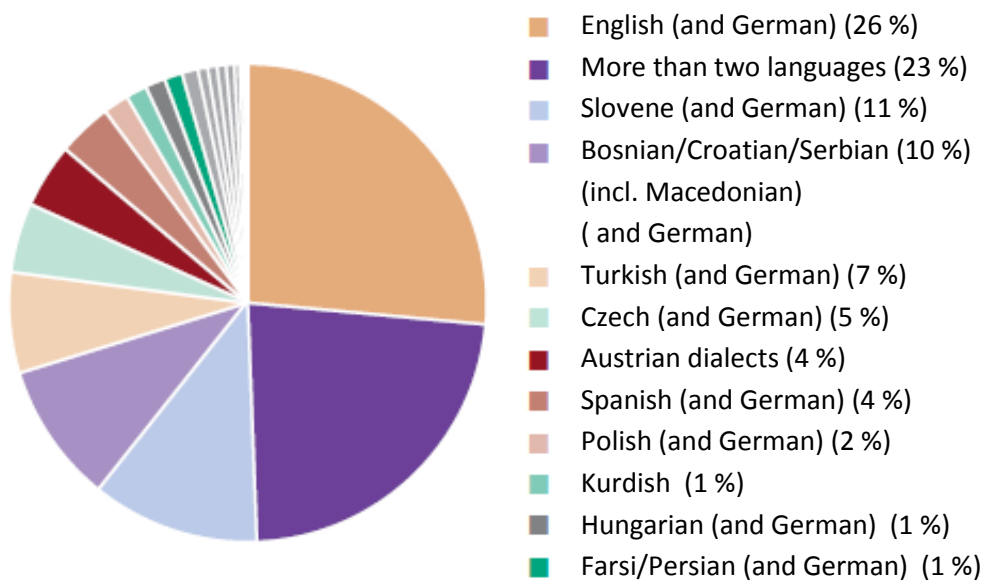
Not only in shows with a focus on politics, the local and the global are strongly interwoven in order to discuss societal questions by focussing and explaining neighbourhood issues.

Multilingual shows tend to have particularly complex spatial ties because of their connectedness to and addressing of local linguistic communities, members of the Austrian majority, listeners in their countries of origin and diaspora in other regions of the world.

These ties also bring forward translocal approaches to production, when for example teams on two continents co-produce and present a radio show, each speaking from their specific standpoint and life world. Actual developments in media support these approaches greatly, but it can be stated for all shows analysed for this study that the internet has added to their repertoires several useful ways for the research and exchange of information, dissemination of aired shows, additional contents and interaction with an active audience.

Multilingualism and cultural diversity

While the previous debate about Community Radio focused mainly on organisational structures and plurality of issues, the linguistic diversity of their programmes is a unique characteristic of Community Radio stations in Austria. In Austrian public service media the amount of not (only) German shows has been decreasing (Busch 2004). At the same time the trend in Community Radio stations goes towards more multilingual shows. This development goes along with a differentiation of services that is a response to more diverse needs of information and allows a plurality of opinions also in other languages than German. Meanwhile Community Radio stations broadcast on average 30% of their spoken word programmes in not (only) German language. Approximately one fifth to one fourth of this not (only) German programme is even produced in more than two languages – very often a hint on a bridging function of a radio show in a specific, spatially located linguistic context.

- English (and German) (26 %)
- More than two languages (23 %)
- Slovene (and German) (11 %)
- Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (10 %) (incl. Macedonian) (and German)
- Turkish (and German) (7 %)
- Czech (and German) (5 %)
- Austrian dialects (4 %)
- Spanish (and German) (4 %)
- Polish (and German) (2 %)
- Kurdish (1 %)
- Hungarian (and German) (1 %)
- Farsi/Persian (and German) (1 %)

Amounts of languages and language combinations in the not (only) German programmes. Further languages not present in the diagram (<1%): Italian, French, Slovak, Romanian, Arabic, Twi, Bulgarian, Amharic, Russian, Chinese, Portuguese.
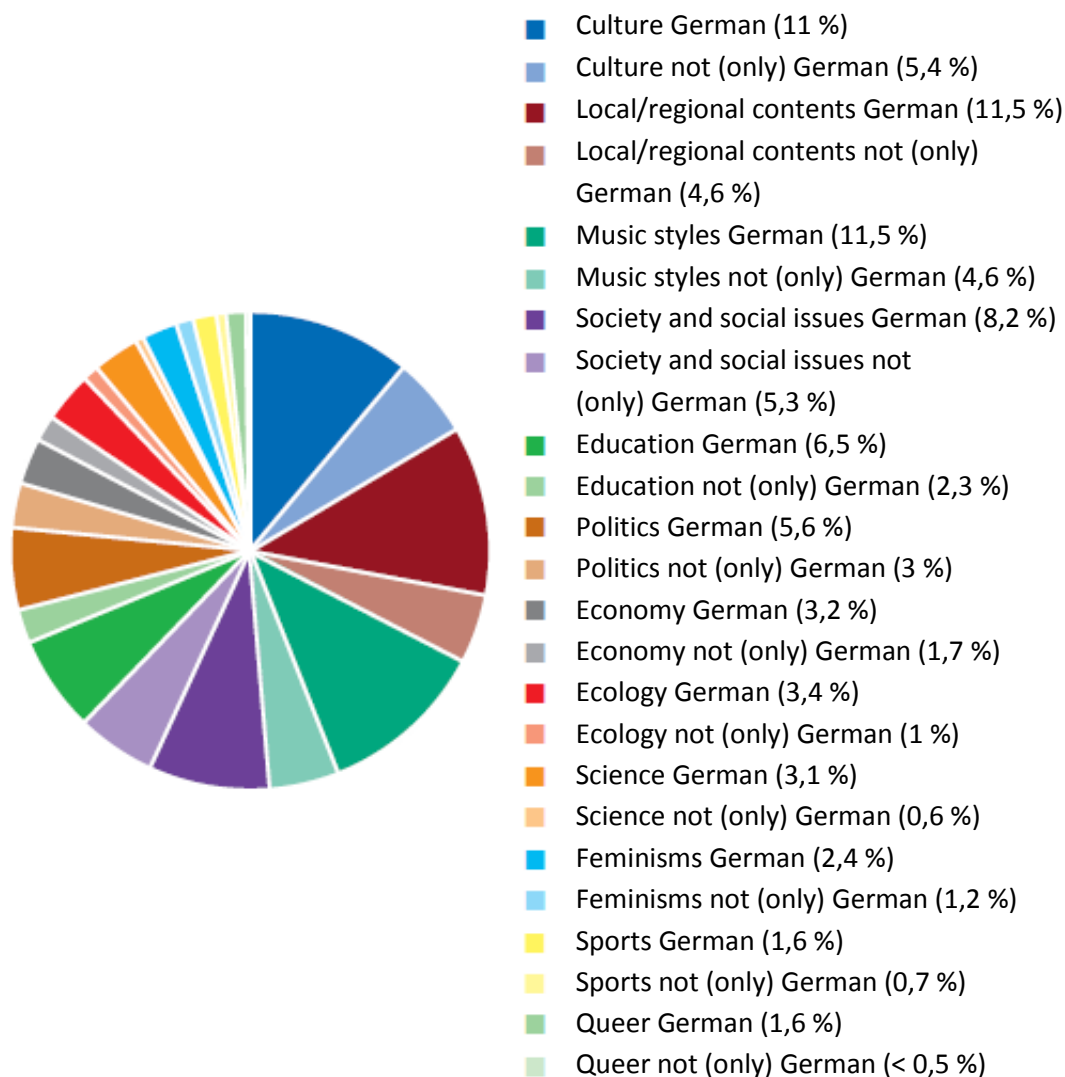Source: RTR 4/2010 p. 48

Radio	Numbers of spoken word shows	amount of spoken word in minutes (per week)	numbers of not (only) German shows	amount of time of not (only) German shows in minutes (per week),	amount of not (only) German programming (% of all spoken word programming)
Freies Radio Salzkammergut	65	3459,25	15	763,5	22,0712582
Agora 105,5	36	3109	20	2163	69,5722097
Freies Radio Freistadt	74	5898,75	13	1338,75	22,6954863
Radio Helsinki	100	6882,5	16	1740	25,2815111
FREIRAD 105,9	87	5258,5	36	2682,5	51,0126462
Radio FRO	96	5677,5	27	1372,5	24,1743725
Radio FREEQUENNS	32	2395	3	240	10,0208768
Radiofabrik	137	5610	23	1849,25	32,9634581
Proton – das freie Radio	28	5205	10	1130	21,7098943
Campus & City Radio	35	5760	5	420	7,29166667
ORANGE 94.0	151	6764,5	63	3382	49,9963042
Radio Y	23	2437,5	8	1050	43,0769231
Radio B138	51	3410,75	3	210	6,15700359
in total	915	61868,25	242	18341,5	29,6460624

Amount of not (only) German language programming in per cent of all spoken word programming.
Source: RTR 4/2010 p. 45

The interviews with producers and hosts of multilingual shows conducted for this study permit the conclusion that radio hosts enjoy using their linguistic skills and draw personal gain from it. They display a great sensitivity for the linguistic needs and skills of their guests and listeners and confirm that within their audience there are information needs that are met much better by bilingual or not German presentation. These needs concern information about rights and opportunities that enable people to participate more fully in their social, cultural and political environment. In other cases the hosts create diverse spaces for the negotiation of specific issues and perspectives of multilingual communities without squeezing seemingly similar linguistic offers into the same niche programme. Moreover the radio hosts are able to develop and implement new formats that serve the translation and mediation within audiences and between different groups in society.

Community Radio stations thus gain a particular significance in multilingual societies for linguistic minorities, migrants and other marginalized groups as well as for societal communication. It is shown in the intersection of multilingual formats with local and regional thematic foci that radio presenters often function as mediators in their closer and wider surroundings and enable societal participation for others who, for example due to linguistic barriers, would only with difficulty find access to suitable communication spaces and relevant information. These contributions to intercultural dialogue and societal cohesion are important services of public interest.

Looking at the distribution of thematic categories once more, the chart of not (only) German and multilingual shows depicts a very similar distribution to German speaking shows. Remarkable is the presence of not (only) German shows in all categories, but especially the high percentage (over 30%) of not (only) German and multilingual shows in the categories politics, culture, economy, social issues and feminisms. A third of all shows attributed with the category culture are presented not (only) in German language but a variety of languages spoken in Austria.

Culture German (11 %)

Culture not (only) German (5,4 %)

Local/regional contents German (11,5 %)

Local/regional contents not (only) German (4,6 %)

Music styles German (11,5 %)

Music styles not (only) German (4,6 %)

Society and social issues German (8,2 %)

Society and social issues not (only) German (5,3 %)

Education German (6,5 %)

Education not (only) German (2,3 %)

Politics German (5,6 %)

Politics not (only) German (3 %)

Economy German (3,2 %)

Economy not (only) German (1,7 %)

Ecology German (3,4 %)

Ecology not (only) German (1 %)

Science German (3,1 %)

Science not (only) German (0,6 %)

Feminisms German (2,4 %)

Feminisms not (only) German (1,2 %)

Sports German (1,6 %)

Sports not (only) German (0,7 %)

Queer German (1,6 %)

Queer not (only) German (< 0,5 %)

Portions of German and not (only) German shows in all categories. Source: RTR 4/2010 p. 59

This visualisation shows the strong interest of multilingual radio producers in the whole spectrum of themes present in Community Radio: Each theme is present in German language as well as other languages (the lighter version of the same colour). Considering the complementary function of Community Radio we can state that especially the not (only) German shows do not, as frequently assumed, cover only issues related to migration but cater for a great variety of unmet needs in media coverage and debate in other languages than the mainstream.

But also listeners who mainly use German in their everyday life can profit from multilingual shows in that they offer an opportunity to widen or (re)activate linguistic repertoires and to gain insight in topical issues that are currently discussed in other linguistic communities. The fact that Community Radio stations do hardly regulate linguistic choices and means makes it easier also for speakers of varieties of lower prestige or for learners to express themselves in a self-determined way.

Besides the communicative function of language also the very important symbolic presence of languages must be stressed. Especially languages which are often marginalized in Austrian daily life because of their lack in official status can by being spoken within the recognized structures of Community Radio stations gain in prestige - as do their speakers in self-confidence.

The appreciative dealing of Community Radio stations with multilingualism fosters its societal acceptance and can contribute to both, dialogue transgressing linguistic borders and broadening of the linguistic repertoires of producers and listeners.

Conclusions and Future Perspectives

Conclusions

The systematic record of all radio shows in Austrian Community Radio stations functions as an inventory for the alternative radio landscape in Austria that did not exist before.

The individual radio stations did maintain internal statistics for the report of their work to the legislator and founding bodies, but they were never combined for an impression assessing more than the single radio station.

The combination of data collected for this study allows a first comparative perspective at the structures of programmes in Community Radio in Austria. Following our research question we highlighted multilingual/not (only) German and local/regional programmes. The last census in 2001 registered 11,4 % of the population as speaking also other languages than German in their surroundings whereby 13,07 % of these are members of autochthonous Austrian minorities. Media offers and services are thus absent for the majority of multilingual not only German speaking citizens in Austria.

Against the backdrop of the Austrian mainstream mediascape 30% of multilingual programming produced and broadcast by Community Radio stations are an important contribution to a diversified media service that takes into account the needs of growing multilingual audiences.

Even more significance must be attributed to the services of Community Radio stations given the fact that 23% of all not (only) German shows are effectively multilingual and thereby offer translation and mediation services.

But the public mandate of Community Radio stations in this regard does not end with the broadcasting of multilingual and local content – it is extended into active engagement in their local surroundings, for example as employers, organizers, forum for local political debate etc. Simultaneously these activities create spaces for agency for individuals who maybe do not want to

make radio themselves but contribute to an active cultural and societal organisation (see also Purkarthofer/Pfisterer/Busch 2008).

In conclusion we would like to cite once more Trappel's (Trappel 2010) suggestion to define public value of public communication as the sum of the services mass media perform for the self-understanding of democratic societies. According to their self-commitment and also to their broadcasting assignment, Community Radio stations commit to the idea of an active, participating audience who is not only informed by media but who takes an active part in shaping their media. Community Radio stations consider themselves responsible not for reaching a broad audience in numbers but for building a participatory communication space for marginalized topics. Their practice of organizing access to media services for marginalized and underrepresented groups matches with an understanding of public value that emphasizes the facilitation of an inclusive and accessible public space of negotiation.

The need to attribute to the work of Community Radio stations a stable place and voice within the debate about Public Value seems self-evident, concerning both the academic and the media political contexts. A critical examination of Public Value of media should in no way be confined to the public service sector and the possibility and limits of its public funding. The topic of Public Value seems very apt to advance a broad negotiation of the role of media and their responsibilities in a multilingual society. In this respect not only the contents but especially questions of media organisation and media education should be at the centre of debate. Consequently media education and advanced media training should be expanded and formally recognized within the education system.

Future Perspectives

A next step for the on-going accompanying research on community radio could be a comparison of multilingual programmes in Community Radio with the multilingual offers of public and private-commercial broadcasting. Also the area of media coverage surveys should undergo a reconceptualization, taking into account Public Value. It should position itself more independently from economic priorities in order to show more specifically the public gain produced by media.

Community Radio stations will be challenged to maintain a self-confident and self-conscious discourse of quality which allows them to develop strategies and actions for the realization of goals concerning their listeners, radio producers and the public. The services of Community Radio stations shown in this study qualify them for a prominent decision-making position in future debates around social and public functions of media.

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