
Introduction

Issue 46 of *Quaderns del CAC* is all about **Participation, Citizens and the Media**. The growing interest prompted by the participatory paradigm, which has emerged following the changes in the media ecosystem led us to invite the research community to share their insights. The response has been very encouraging, and we would like to stress this in particular because this issue has been produced in the middle of the COVID-19 crisis, which impacted authors and reviewers just like the rest of us. As a result of everybody's efforts, the reader now has several contributions that explore the various aspects of the topic.

Our guest author in this issue is **Marius Dragomir**, Visiting Professor at the Central European University (Budapest), where he leads the Center for Media, Data and Society after more than a decade working for the Open Society Foundations in London as head of the Program on Independent Journalism and the Network Media Program. From his prime vantage point he examines in his paper, *Voting with your wallet: the real meaning of citizen participation in the media*, the dynamics between citizen participation and business models in order to place the sustainability of independent journalism at the forefront of the debate. He looks at the connection between two aspects which are much discussed separately but rarely interrelated: the changing model of journalism funding and citizen participation in the media.

Javier Marzal-Felici, **María Soler-Campillo** and **Carlos López-Olano** address public service media. In their paper entitled *Citizen participation and public media. Results of focus groups on academics, professionals and experts in social dynamization* they confirm the crisis of legitimacy of these media as part of the changes affecting the media ecosystem. They also note the role that citizen participation can play as a tool for legitimising public service and curbing its loss of social relevance. Finally, the article additionally underscores the function of co-creation as a potential framework for citizen participation in public media.

Natalia Quintas-Froufe and **Montserrat Vázquez-Gestal** examine participation from the perspective of audience complaints about public service media. In their paper *The RTVE audience Ombudsman as a mediator in the resolution of complaints about the children's channel Clan (2010-2015)* they describe actions taken by parents of children watching the specialised public channel Clan in which they share their concerns with the Ombudsman about its contents. In addition to presenting the institution and setting out the issues which bring about unease, the paper picks out some benefits arising from this interaction such as the explanation of principles which can enhance the media literacy of families.

Eloi Camps Durban looks at the community radio experience. In his article *Participation in Community Radio: a proposal for analysis based on the concepts of symbolic resistance and media literacy* he reviews examples of participatory content by drawing on case studies chosen from community radio station projects in the Catalan media space. The paper starts from the assumption that participation in these alternative media projects is inseparable from contributing to content creation and suggests the concepts of symbolic resistance and media literacy as a framing for analysis.

José Emilio Pérez Martínez takes us back to one of the most authentic experiences of media participation: free radio. In his article *Madrid's free radio stations: local media and neighbourhood participation in the 1980s*, he studies the synergy between social movements and free radio. He documents the experience of the use of radio by Madrid's neighbourhood movement, which was especially vibrant in the 1980s. The projects analysed show how participation in free radio is another form of activism and a way to shatter the spiral of silence they endure.

In her article *Deficient regulation of community media in Spain: the case of Cuac FM*, **Isabel Lema Blanco** investigates the vicissitudes which even today still impact the community media projects that are the heirs to the initiatives described in the previous paper. Lema examines the barriers the public comes up against when trying to access non-profit media. The research is backed up by a case study of Cuac FM (A Coruña), a community radio station that has won a battle against the government in the courts and is used as a connecting thread to examine the regulation of community media by current legislation.

Ángel García-Castillejo, **Manuel Chaparro-Escudero** and **Lara Espinar-Medina** write about this regulation of the sector. In their article *Amendment of the Andalusian Audiovisual Law by Decree-Law 2/2020 and the privatisation of local public media. Impact and constitutionality analysis* they drill down into the structure of local media in Andalusia

and the impact which rollout of the recast Andalusia Broadcasting Act would have. Although they largely cover the possible outcomes for the local radio industry, they also point to the consequences it might additionally have for local public television stations.

Tiffany Marques, Jorge Ferraz de Abreu and Rita Santos address the issue of interactive television as a fine example of participation. In their article *Unification of audio-visual content over iTV, a trigger to attract younger generations to the big screen: the case of Ultra TV*, they discuss the problem presented by the younger generations' disaffection with the TV screen and examine a strategy to turn this lack of interest around. Based on a case of a unique interface that integrates linear and non-linear content, they demonstrate the potential to attract young users to iTV screens and transform their viewing experiences.

In a quick reaction piece, **Emma Torres-Romay and Silvia García-Mirón** analyse the activity of Instagram influencers in Spain in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. In their article *Influencers and coronavirus. Contents on the COVID-19 pandemic in social network prescriber publications in Spain (2020): the case of Instagram* they explore the contents about the pandemic produced by a group of prominent influencers, how they affected their business activities and the forms and genres chosen to address the issue.

In the articles section, **Clàudia González Deumal's** paper entitled *Analysis of media literacy initiatives by schools and local media in Catalonia* takes a look at media education projects leveraging the synergy between schools and local broadcasting media. The article identifies the activities by ownership of the schools, educational stages and their interrelation with local media.

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