

Presentation

Radio is undergoing a very extensive and profound process of transformation. The impact that new digital technologies, transmission networks and sound media/communications services will have on areas of activity and expression pertaining to traditional radio is expected to be just as, if not more, important than on the press and television. As a medium, radio's organisation and programming models, languages, contents and uses, are on the threshold of initiating changes that may raise expectations of creativity and expansion -but there are also many question marks and doubts hanging over them. These doubts include, for example, the adaptation of regulatory environments, the market availability of digital receivers and questions about business opportunities. This issue of *Quaderns del CAC* presents a brief look at the issue of radio transformation in Europe, Spain and Catalonia, and offers different opinions on its evolution over the coming years.

The issue is structured from the most general observation through to the most specific. The article by María del Pilar Martínez-Costa ("Digital Radio") takes a detailed and documented look at the unequal status of digitalisation in Europe, focusing particularly on some of the pioneering countries, with references to the international reality and the situation in the United States and Canada. Carmen Peñafiel applies the same approach but centres on the different digitalisation speeds across Spain in the second article ("Both Sides of the Digital Radio Question"). It is followed by different assessments on the prospects of digital radio in Fernando Rodríguez Madero's article "A Sector Analysis of Digital Radio". Josep Maria Martí tackles the issue from the point of view of programming and describes and evaluates the current situation of radio in Catalonia ("The Radio Supply in Catalonia: Between Maturity and Crisis"). Montserrat Bonet focuses on the elements of uncertainty facing local radio in Catalonia ("Who's Afraid of Local Radio?") and Joan M. Corbella closes the issue with a systematic analysis ("Radio in Catalonia: Uses and Perceptions") of the results of the CAC survey of October 2003 on the perceptions and preferences of radio listeners in Catalonia.

Finally, this issue includes three contributions in the "Observatory" section. The first is an extensive general view of international initiatives promoted by the UNESCO in defence of cultural diversity, by Martí Petit ("The International Convention on Cultural Diversity (UNESCO): Context, Evolution and Perspectives"). The second is an assessment report on the first 10 years of the Barcelona independent film festival L'Alternativa, by Fran Benavente ("Ten Years of L'Alternativa, the Independent Film Festival of Barcelona: The Aesthetics of Resistance"). Finally, Anna Estrada looks at a study the CAC commissioned on the quality of the Catalan language on television ("The Quality of the Catalan Language Used on TV").

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