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The Role of Student Radio Stations in the Higher Education System

ABSTRACT

Student radio stations are an important part of the media environment in Slovakia. Our research focused on obtaining information on the functioning of these stations, including their legal regulation, training of new members and formal integration into university structures. Student radio stations have several rights and obligations secured by the new Slovak Media Act and can be classified as community radio stations. Students are mostly mentored and apprenticed by senior radio colleagues for a semester or a whole year to hone their communication skills, create scripts and master broadcasting techniques. Student radio stations are under the umbrella of, or are part of, a university, but focus on student topics in content and do not serve as a medium for a given educational institution. The topic for discussion remains whether the student radio stations are fulfilling their legal obligations and whether they are interested in applying for a radio broadcasting licence. The qualitative research carried out in this study shows that the majority of radio stations in Slovakia have advertisements on air, mostly in the form of barter, and the principles regarding commercial media communication are not always followed. A big question mark is the possibility of obtaining a radio broadcasting licence, as the current legislation may be too restrictive for student radio stations. Overall, the research has shown that student radio stations are an important part of the media environment and can provide students with valuable experience and knowledge in media work.

KEY WORDS

Broadcasting. Media Education. Radio. Student Radio. University.

1 Introduction

Student and university broadcasting in Slovakia was gradually established at the end of the 1970s, copying similar trends for this type of broadcasting around the world. It is closely linked to university dormitory life and volunteering, technological changes, but also to the emergence of big names on Slovak radio and later on the presenter scene. However, it had its heyday in the 1980s, when we can assume (and in most cases document) that student radio was present in every major university dormitory-student house in Slovakia. In the past, small audio loudspeakers were placed on the walls of each dormitory room to announce important student announcements (similar systems are still in place in some dormitories today). And it was this speaker network that was used by students who came up with the idea of playing music on them to make other students' time more enjoyable (at that time, television was just starting out and small portable radios were rare). *"All you had to do was turn the wheel on the booth, which wasn't missing from any of the rooms, and the fun could begin."*[1] The emergence of student radio is also closely related to the introduction of a new technology into state radio broadcasting – stereophonic broadcasting (the transition from MONO to STEREO broadcasting), which began to be introduced in the 1970s.[2]

The technology at this time was expensive and inadequate, but students studying in the radio station studios were able to acquire the decommissioned MONO technology that *Czechoslovak Radio* was disposing of. This laid the basis for the emergence of student radio broadcasting, whereby the playing of music could be supplemented by the spoken word, thus creating, in part, a programme that could resemble a simple radio broadcast. The so-called "IRŠ", the Dormitory Radio Studios, were born. Of course, there was no such thing as sound graphics, or the production of journalistic genres for broadcast, at that time. Students played songs from records or tapes and occasionally interjected with short spoken word pieces. The listenership of the first dormitory radio studios was high in the early days, within the dormitory, because they were the first "competitive" media against the state-controlled mass media, which, since they were not under the scrutiny of state censors, had a certain degree of freedom, at least in the choice of music. However, in addition to university "IRŠ", we are also familiar with the term: School Radio (mainly widespread in primary and secondary schools).

In many institutions, it is considered a means of communication that targets a dispersed audience, but the same target group – students who share similar interests. It allows messages intended for school pupils to be disseminated effectively. The content creators are mostly teachers or school management. The speaker network is not used creatively, but only to convey essential information. School radio, on the other hand, is a form of the educational concept of learning-by-doing, and in some cases, a way for pupils to engage in leisure activities. It is a form of active participation of pupils who create media content through online platforms, not frequency[3] mainly for financial or time reasons. We mentioned the concept of learning-by-doing, which focuses on hands-on activities with real media. It does not emphasise the learning of media content, but the creation of media content. It enables people to learn about their own role in the collective, to improve their coordination of their own activities, their ability to express and defend their opinion and to make decisions in the interests of the whole. Students who experience this concept will learn and navigate communication technologies, have insight into music, new trends and gain contacts.[4]

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[1] *Inro − o nás a naša história.* [online]. [2023-02-12]. Available at: <https://sites.google.com/a/inro.sk/inro-sk/home/o-nas>.

[2] *História VKV vysielania.* [online]. [2023-02-12]. Available at: <https://www.retromania.sk/1960-1969/historia-vkv-vysielania>.

[3] Note of the authors: *Radio Aetter* operating at the Faculty of Mass Media Communication of the University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava has also broadcast from November 2020 on the frequency as the first Slovak student radio in Slovakia.

[4] VRABEC, N.: *Mediálna výchova: teoretické východiská a trendy*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2013, p. 21-22.

Both types of student broadcasting could also be defined as community media in current terminology. The term community media is defined by L. Škripcová and M. Mistrík as the most general name for this type of media. An important factor is the close connection between the media and the community itself. At the same time, they serve as a mediator of information between the medium and the community. Compared to abroad, the term community media is used less in the Slovak Republic because it is rarely found in the media environment.[5] Community media are meant to blur the boundaries between audiences and media content creators through participation. They are non-profit, non-commercial and independent media and do not compete with mass media, mainly because they are meant to create a space for content that does not normally get a place in mass media broadcasting. Community media serve and are accountable to communities. The overriding principle is freedom of expression and information reception, with respect for the human rights and freedoms that constrain their freedom.[6] The audience of community media is also different from the audience of mass media. It is characterised by intimacy, proximity, participation, partial anonymity, homogeneity of interest, and organisation.[7] College radio can be a fantastic learning tool for students, but its viability and scope, particularly in the local context, need to be thoroughly investigated in order to document the potential successes and challenges that may arise during its operation and to develop a framework that offers the greatest benefits while supporting the college's primary goals for the all-around development of the student community.[8]

Recently, for the first time, the term community media was introduced into the legislation of the Slovak Republic (during the amendment of the Audiovisual Act), which regulates community broadcasting as well as the rights and obligations of community broadcasters. The Media Services Act states that community broadcasting is a linear media service provided by a person other than an entrepreneur which is not primarily economic in nature, in particular local broadcasting, if its purpose is not directly or indirectly to make a profit. A community medium which is not primarily economic in nature shall also be considered to be a community broadcast in which the advertising message does not exceed 1% of the airtime per calendar day. A community medium which is not primarily economic in nature shall also be deemed to be a community medium whose revenues from commercial media communication and other forms of promotion do not exceed 5% of the community media provider's costs of community broadcasting or the provision of a community video service in a financial year, up to a maximum of EUR 100 000. The provisions relating to other media shall also apply to a community medium which contains commercial media communication or other forms of promotion. One of the rules is that the commercial media communication must be easily distinguishable from other components of the programme service or on-demand audiovisual media service. A community medium is subject to the obligations as a broadcaster of a locally broadcast programme service.[9] Student media emerge mainly as part of the educational process in schools of all types. They are a place for hands-on learning about media and its participants are involved in the creation of content for the media. They have a different tradition in terms of their emergence – in some places they emerged as an implementation of media education in education, elsewhere they have been part of the school for many years and form a certain tradition. However, according to L. Škripcová and M. Mistrík, although student media may have certain characteristics of community media, they are not community media in the true sense of the word. This is mainly due to the fact that

5   MISTRÍK, M., ŠKRIPCOVÁ, L.: *Komunitné médiá.* Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2021, p. 10.
6   Ibidem, p. 24.
7   Ibidem, p. 30.
8   BAHAELDIN, I., NAVEEN, M.: College Radio as a Mechanism for Participatory Learning: Exploring the Scope for Online Radio Based Learning Among Undergraduates. In *Higher Learning Research Communication*, 2016, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 22. [online]. [2023-02-20]. Available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1132944.pdf>.
9   *Media Services Act No. 264/2022 Coll.* [online]. [2023-02-20]. Available at: <https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2022/264/20220801>.

the leaders of the institution have the possibility to interfere in the broadcast, for example, in the content or at the organisational or financial level of the media. They even describe a very specific type of media – the in-house media, which are the subject of this study. The community from which they emerge is temporal, but they have a greater degree of freedom because the students create them on their own initiative within a narrowly circumscribed group of people.[10]

We can assume that student radio stations are copying the trends applied by private radio stations in Slovakia. *"In conclusion, we can establish the current trends in commercial news broadcasting in Slovakia. We can say with certainty that news coverage, in terms of scope, is short and does not get much space. It is mostly composed of 4 to 5 news reports. It may start with headlines. The news service also consists of weather forecasts and traffic services, which are placed in different positions within the news, which means that the news service may start with weather or traffic information and continue with social events from home and from around the world."*[11] In the fast-paced and constant flow of information we encounter in practice that there is not enough space even for basic learning and gaining experience for novice reporters, let alone training reporters in depth about the essentials of radio reporting or the reporter's character qualities. That is why school and student media outlets are coming to the fore to deliver this basic service, and in this way, aspiring journalists are gaining basic knowledge and skills about working in the media.[12] *"Students work with educational media activities to develop different key competences, including social, presentation, communication and technical skills. Students are developing their media and information literacy by creating media content. When teachers involve students in creating media productions using video cameras or computers."*[13] Radio is classified more by how it is sponsored than by what it accomplishes. Each financing source directly affects the programming that a station can offer or is willing to do, which in turn is influenced by the level of competition it confronts. We may say that "IRŠ" falls under the category of "institutional ownership", such as a university campus, hospital, or factory radio that is maintained and funded by the organization for the benefit of its clients, including its clients' clients, patients, employees, etc.[14] The original meaning of the abbreviation "IRŠ" (from Slovak: Internátne Rozhlasové Štúdio, in English: Dormitory Radio Studio) changed over time to Internet Radio Students, which was a reaction to a change in broadcasting technology. For example, *Rádio TLIS* went from its original wire radio, which operated through booths in dorm rooms, to an Internet stream in the year 2000. The role of the radio is to educate and train students in audio-visual technology, radio broadcasting, and organizational skills.[15]

2 Methodology

Within the theoretical part of the study, we briefly analysed the concept of community media, anchored in the Media Act No. 264/2022, the Act on Media Services and on Amendments and Additions to Certain Acts (Media Services Act). Based on induction and deduction, we sought

[10] MISTRÍK, M., ŠKRIPCOVÁ, L.: *Komunitné médiá*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2021, p. 56-57.
[11] BÔTOŠOVÁ, Ľ., BRNÍK, A.: Trends in Radio News Coverage of Private Broadcasters in the Conditions of the Slovak Republic. In *Communication Today*, 2022, Vol. 13, No. 2, p. 91. [online]. [2023-02-20]. Available at: <https://communicationtoday.sk/wp-content/uploads/05_BOTOSOVA_BRNIK_CT-2-2022.pdf>.
[12] BÔTOŠOVÁ, Ľ., FURTÁKOVÁ, L.: Vlastnosti rozhlasového reportéra. In MAGÁLOVÁ, L., KOLENČÍK, P., MACÁK, P. (eds.): *QUO VADIS MASSMEDIA, QUO VADIS MARKETING*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2022, p. 65.
[13] BÔTOŠOVÁ, Ľ., VRABEC, N.: Specifics of the School Radio Stations and Their Online Presentation in the Framework of Slovak Republic. In KUSÁ, A., ZAUŠKOVÁ, A., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L. (eds.): *MARKETING IDENTITY: Digital Mirrors – part II.* Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2018, p. 29.
[14] MCLEISH, R.: Radio Production. Oxford : Elsevier, 2005, p. 14. [online]. [2023-02-20]. Available at: <https://ayomenulisfisip.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/robert_mcleish_radio_production_fifth_edition__2005.pdf>.
[15] *Rádiá.sk: Legendárne študentské rádio otvorí dvere.* [online]. [2023-02-20]. Available at: <https://www.radia.sk/spravy/4700_legendarne-studentske-radio-otvori-dvere>.

to answer how student radio stations are anchored in this law. In addition, we have tried to describe the very emergence of student broadcasting in Slovakia, and its established forms at different levels of the educational process.

The research part was carried out on the basis of qualitative enquiries of persons responsible for the operation of student radio station within a given organisation. We approached all currently operating student radio stations in Slovakia (only university radio stations) and using a structured online questionnaire with open-ended questions, we collected answers from respondents, persons responsible for the operation of the radio station and those who make decisions that are crucial for the functioning of student radio stations. We collected responses between January 9 and February 10, 2023. The structured questionnaire contained 14 questions. Some took the form of closed questions, others were open-ended. The questions were set to elicit responses to our secondary research questions and thus the main research question. The aim of the present research study is to gain insight into the role and status of student radio stations in the higher education system. We will gain an overview of the set topic by analysing the current broadcasting of college radio stations. It is necessary to get an overview and comprehensive information about the functioning and organization and provision of student radio stations, as well as to find out the current status and definition of broadcasting or the motives of students and their experiences with student radio in a particular institution. Based on the stated objective of this study, the research questions need to be formulated.

Main research question:
What is the current state of student, university broadcasting in Slovakia?

Secondary questions:
How are student radio stations anchored in the new Slovak Media Act?
How are newly admitted students prepared for radio broadcasting?
How are student radio stations formally integrated into university structures?
Are student radio stations fulfilling their obligations under the legal norms?
How do student radio stations function in terms of organisation?

There are currently 8 student radio stations operating within universities across the country. As part of the qualitative research, we collected responses from all of the radio stations contacted. We then generalised the results and present their interpretation below.

Name of the Radio Station	University	Web of the Radio Station	Person responsible for completing the data
Aetter	University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava	https://aetter.sk/[16]	Miroslav Kapec
INRO	Technical University in Zvolen	https://inro.tuzvo.sk/[17]	Mária Štulajterová
PaF Rádio	Prešov University in Prešov	http://pafradio.unipo.sk/program-radia-paf.html[18]	Alexandra Tomečková
Rádio 9	Technical University of Košice	http://www.radio9.sk/[19]	Michal Porezaný
Rádio Rapeš	University of Žilina in Žilina	https://www.rapes.sk/[20]	Andrej Čižniar
Rádio X	University of Žilina in Žilina	http://www.radiox.sk[21]	Adam Škrváň

[16] *Rádio Aetter.* [online]. [2023-02-20]. Available at: <https://aetter.sk/>.
[17] *INRO ZVOLEN.* [online]. [2023-02-20]. Available at: <https://inro.tuzvo.sk/>.
[18] *PaF Rádio.* [online]. [2023-02-20]. Available at: <http://pafradio.unipo.sk/program-radia-paf.html>.
[19] *Rádio 9.* [online]. [2023-02-20]. Available at: <http://www.radio9.sk/>.
[20] *Rádio Rapeš.* [online]. [2023-02-20]. Available at: <https://www.rapes.sk/>.
[21] *Rádio X.* [online]. [2023-02-20]. Available at: <http://www.radiox.sk>.

ŠtuRKO	Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice	http://sturko.intrak.upjs.sk/[22]	Martina Kollárová
TLIS	Student Dormitory Mladosť – Comenius University in Bratislava	https://www.tlis.sk/[23]	Filip Antala

TABLE 1: *List of active student radios in Slovakia*
Source: own processing, 2023

3 Results

All the radio stations contacted have their own website where they have their stream. When asked: *How do you disseminate your radio broadcasts*, all the radio stations answered that they mainly broadcast on stream, but there were other answers as well. *TLIS*, *Rádio X, Rádio 9* and *Rádio Aetter* also broadcast on the *radia.sk app*, and *Rádio Aetter* also has its own FM transmitter and *Rádio X* has its own app. *INRO*, *PaF* and *Rádio 9* also share broadcast content through speakers in the school dormitory.

Does your radio station pay any fees to SOZA or SLOVGRAM?
Only two radio stations out of the respondents pay fees to the institutions that are responsible for performers' copyrights.

How many members does your radio station have?
The number of staff members that make up the editorial staff of the radio station studios of the surveyed entities starts at 10 and the highest number of members in the editorial staff is 28. Their activities include being in charge of broadcasting, preparing news blocks, enrolling new members, as well as managing social media and promoting the activities and activities in the radio studios.

Radio	Number
Aetter	25
INRO	12
PaF Rádio	20
Rádio 9	25
Rádio Rapeš	28
Rádio X	26
ŠtuRKO	10
TLIS	20

TABLE 2: *Number of people included into student radio stations*
Source: own processing, 2023

Do radio station members have any advantages over other students?
The remuneration of the station's students or those involved in the station is mainly in the form of accommodation benefits. *"For members staying in STU dormitories, we provide work evaluation in the form of dorm points."* TLIS Rádio. *"Yes it's both accommodation discounts and scholarships. Admittedly each according to merit."* Rádio Rapeš. *Rádio X* is similar: *"They have dorm points, dorm discounts, and occasionally scholarships."* In addition, they consider collaboration with educators or other professional radios to be a benefit: *"Motivational*

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[22]   *ŠtuRko.* [online]. [2023-02-20]. Available at: <http://sturko.intrak.upjs.sk/>.
[23]   *TLIS.* [online]. [2023-02-20]. Available at: <https://www.tlis.sk/>.

scholarship, collaboration with educators, professional radios." *ŠtuRKO. PaF Rádio* also talks about the reward in the form of credits earned *"More points when applying for accommodation, possibility of applying credits."* At *Rádio 9*, students do not receive any benefits related to incentive pay for their work in the radio studio. They also receive benefits at *INRO Rádio,* as well as at *Aetter Rádio*, which is the only one operating on the frequency: *"They get points when they get accommodation, they can write it down as a subject."*

When asked, if you had to describe student radio broadcasting in 3 words, what would they be?
Those in charge answered mainly with words like experience, experience, diversity or creativity. The essentials that they shared in their answers were processed into a cloud of words that have connotations for people involved in radio programming in educational institutions. A more detailed version of their responses is shown in Picture 1, below.
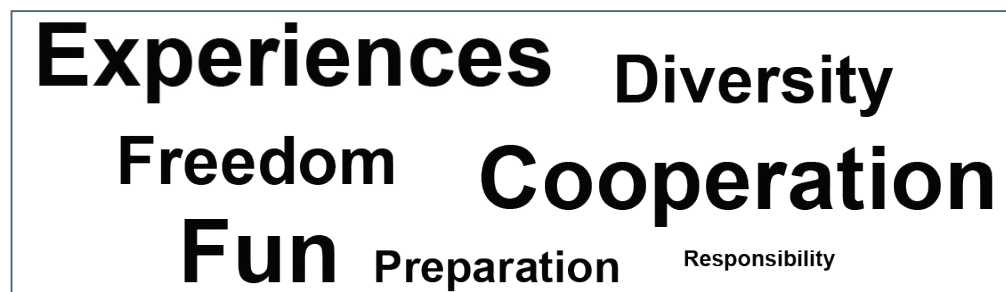
PICTURE 1: *Word Cloud – Conotation with student radio*
Source: own processing, 2023

What do you consider to be the strengths of student radio broadcasting?
Among the strengths that emerged, in the words of the radio leaders, were diversity, room for trying new things, and a relaxed approach to learning (*Rádio Aetter*). Students can make friends, learn to talk and communicate (*INRO*). Another positive, according to the interviewees, is that it is based on campus, the speakers are in the dormitory rooms, and therefore the content that the radio station produces reaches the students directly as the target audience of the medium. They also described that the language training of the presenters (especially the news presenters) will be improved (*PaF Rádio*). The otherness of the media content and the direct orientation towards the target group of university students, the possibility of regular renewal and the preparation of content tailored to the current semester also resonated in the responses (*Rádio 9*). A recurring positive aspect of the existence of student radio is that it represents a great experience in life. When broadcasting, one learns to speak fluently and in a written manner which will be helpful in, for example, a job interview. One will also get an insight into new things when preparing for a given session (*Rádio Rapeš*). Participation in the radio medium also develops the personality traits of the individual – improving communication, socialising, improving the courage of shy people to express themselves (*Rádio X*). Last but not least, working for student radio media is also related to the development of competences that are later used by graduates in practice. Through student radio we gain a lot of experience that helps us to "grow" and develop in our activities in the future (after school) (*ŠtuRKo*). Hands on skills for students seeing their future in the media, another media space for information about the university and for its and other students *(TLIS)*.

From the above, radio station studio managers consider the following to be strengths:
- experience in media production, specifically radio broadcasting;
- development of communication skills;
- increasing the level of communication in the native language;
- creation of content directly targeted at the university students.

What do you see as the weaknesses of student radio broadcasting?

Among the most frequent negative or weaknesses mentioned were: the turnover of people, the unreliability of students, the students' workload (they cannot devote themselves fully to broadcasting – especially during exam periods) (*Rádio Aetter, Rádio 9*). Also, inactivity and disinterest in being part of the editorial team and creating media content: in our case, there is not as much interest in this as there used to be when people did not have access to the internet and listened to the radio regularly (*INRO*). Furthermore, the technical proficiency of the broadcasting members of the radio station also poses a problem. Limited knowledge in technology, weak influence of the teaching environment (*PaF Rádio*). Many members speak ungrammatically or dialect. This makes the broadcasts lower quality. Admittedly this can be unlearned but it takes time. Broadcasting is only via internet stream (*Rádio Rapeš*). For the creators, feedback in the form of a listenership survey is also demotivating: there is a problem with listenership which demotivates some members (*Rádio X*). Another significant aspect is that students expect to be paid for the work they do: students expect to be paid for the work they do, they don't see it as an experience that will help them in their job searches. With their reluctance, radio activity also declines (*ŠtuRKO*). As podcasts have come to the fore in recent years, some creators also see another drawback: the weak interest in radio broadcasting in the modern era (*TLIS*)

Thus, we can argue that the weaknesses of radio production include:
- inactivity on the part of students;
- low listenership figures;
- lack of financial reward;
- lack of experience with the technology needed in broadcasting;
- poor level of communication in the native language.

How many different shows do you regularly produce and put on the air?

The number of shows varies in the survey conducted at universities in Slovakia. We assume that this is due to the fact that most of the radio stations are gradually switching to stream broadcasting, which is also steadily present in private radio stations in Slovakia, and they prefer it to the classical session with a clearly defined structure.

Radio	Number
Aetter	2
INRO	4
PaF Rádio	9
Rádio 9	6
Rádio Rapeš	10
Rádio X	8
ŠtuRKO	7
TLIS	7

TABLE 3: *Number of radio shows*

Source: own processing, 2023

Can you briefly describe how you go about training new presenters?

Systematic preparation is key to the induction of new presenters: first the theoretical basis, then practice in the training studio (*Rádio Aetter*). Each presenter prepares themselves before their show, the presenters are selected by audition so we know that we can count on them and it will turn out well (*INRO*). The training of new presenters is taken care of by senior presenters who have been in radio for more than two years. They are supervised by a senior presenter

(*PaF Rádio*). They practice broadcasting "to the wall", which includes correct intonation, vocal emphasis, articulation, voiceover training, as well as reading the news on the microphone. Follow-up joint analysis of recordings is also an important part. Later "co-moderation" in session with a more experienced colleague and technician (*Rádio 9*). In some radios we form mass creative workshops: we do workshops and give them homework, for example, making a poll (*Rádio Rapeš*). A senior presenter gets a newcomer in charge and passes on their experience to them (*Rádio X*). The new presenter goes through a training session, first seeing how the broadcast is done, then trying out the "in the wall" broadcast with a senior member of the radio. They do this 2-3 times to get used to their voice in the headphones and then chooses a show and a senior colleague to broadcast with. We operate this system for one semester and only then can they broadcast alone with their own show (*ŠtuRKO*). They always get a senior member with the same focus in radio as a mentor, who has the task of explaining everything to them and showing them what and how radio works. At the meetings in the newsroom we discuss the progress of the new members individually (*TLIS*). Training new presenters is not easy either. Among the most recurrent shortcomings of students who start in radio are, for example, distorted information about working in radio and preparing broadcasts, insufficient speech, poor ability to select topics that are subsequently processed for broadcast, the first contact with the microphone, the students' speech is more commanding than narrative, the absence of work with technology.[24]

Can you briefly describe how you go about training new editors?
Systematic training – first theoretical basics, then practice in recording stories, later in the practice studio (news blocks) (*Rádio Aetter*). The training of new editors is handled by senior editors who have been in radio for more than two years. They are supervised by a senior editor (*PaF Rádio*). Workshops to which we invite editors from professional radio stations and make an analysis of them (*Rádio Rapeš*). The editors pass an exam already at the audition, if we like their work and they are capable and adept, we meet them and we explain how the work of an editor is realized, we instruct them in the use of the ictaphone and we try to give them a simple task that they should be able to master. Usually, the presenters are also involved in the editorial work so that they can use their knowledge in the future and not only devote themselves to one activity (*ŠtuRKO*). In newsrooms, the process of apprenticeship for editors is similar to that for moderators. At the moment we don't have editors, but the same way as presenters (*TLIS*). Similar to presenters (it is often a double position) (*Rádio 9*). Similar to moderators, experience is passed on and a few times a year we have sessions where this is explained (*Rádio X*). In some radios the position of editor is completely absent. We don't have editors (*INRO*).

Do you have advertising on air?
Two of the eight radio stations surveyed do not include advertising in their broadcasts. The others answered this question in the affirmative; an interesting finding is that most of the time this advertising is in the form of barter, in one case for free and in two cases for money. Advertising is seen as communication that aims to increase public awareness of products and services. In order to market products and services, radio is essential. Jingles and other unique advertising programs designed to raise public awareness are used to do this.[25] Another question is also related to advertising: *How many different commercials do you air per year?*

[24] BRNÍK, A., BÔTOŠOVÁ, Ľ., KAPEC, M.: *Rozhlasová tvorba a prax*. Trnava : FMK UCM in Trnava, 2020, p. 115.
[25] APUKE, O. D.: *Introduction to Radio Production*. Nigeria : LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2017, p. 15. [online]. [2023-02-20]. Available at: <https://dvspascentr.ru/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/IntroductiontoRadio-1.pdf>.

Radio	Number
Aetter	9
INRO	1
PaF Rádio	6
Rádio 9	4
Rádio Rapeš	4
Rádio X	10
ŠtuRKO	5
TLIS	1

TABLE 4: *Amount of commercials in a broadcasting*
Source: own processing, 2023

If the legislation was more open and allowed universities and their student radio stations to obtain licences, would you consider applying for a frequency?

Seven of the eight radio stations surveyed would be positive about applying for a licence if it were possible in terms of the legislation. This is a clear illustration that students would be interested in producing in a regional radio environment that has community content. However, financial security is also an important part of this, and as we mentioned that broadcasters under licence and those streaming content also have many obligations from a legislative perspective, it is worth noting the financial side of this as well. Universities do not have the finances to assess the work of students, let alone to pay fees to the institutions that administer the performers' copyrights, as well as the renewal of technology and the various fees that arise from operating a medium under licence. This includes expenses for the broadcasting programme, transmitter, etc. Only *PaF Rádio* station would not be interested in this model.

Radio	Number
Aetter	yes
INRO	rather yes, but we do not have the means to implement
PaF Rádio	no
Rádio 9	rather yes, but we do not have the means to implement
Rádio Rapeš	yes
Rádio X	we are thinking about it
ŠtuRKO	rather yes, but we do not have the means to implement
TLIS	rather yes, but we do not have the means to implement

TABLE 5: *Interest of radio stations to broadcast with a license*
Source: own processing, 2023

4 Discussion

On the basis of the data we received from the respondents who are responsible for the functioning and running of student and university radio studies in Slovakia, we answer the set research questions.

Secondary questions:
How are student radio stations anchored in the new Slovak media law?
The new media legislation in force gives student radio stations a number of rights, but also obligations. All of the radio stations interviewed broadcast their radio broadcasts via online stream and thus fall under the law under content streamed over the Internet. At the same time,

it can be argued that their content as well as value orientation can classify them as community radio stations, which are separately characterised in the Media Services Act.

How are newly admitted students prepared for radio broadcasting?

Over and above all, senior radio colleagues are responsible for training the newly recruited students . This means that they operate under their watchful eye for at least one semester or a whole year. They work on honing their communication skills, as well as on scriptwriting or mastering broadcasting techniques. Most of the time, a form of feedback also works, which is beneficial for new members of the editorial staff. At the same time, in many cases, they can broadcast "to the wall". This means that they can practise their broadcasts, record them, expose errors and imperfections, and in this way they can improve.

How are student radio stations formally integrated into the structures of the university?

Student radio station studios are formally umbrellaed by the university or parts of it. Thus, they have the possibility to perform under their name, but we know from practical experience that most of the time they focus on student topics, oriented towards the target group of HE students, and therefore do not explicitly serve as a medium of a given educational institution.

Do student radio stations fulfil their legal obligations?

Almost all of the radio stations interviewed have advertisements on air. Two of the eight radio stations surveyed do not include advertising in their broadcasts. The others answered this question in the affirmative, an interesting finding being that most of the time this advertising is in the form of barter, in one case for free and in two cases for money. The survey does not indicate whether they adhere, for example, to the principles that apply to commercial media communications. At the same time, in the questionnaire that we distributed to radio station managers, we learned that radio stations would be interested in applying for a radio broadcasting licence. Seven of the eight radio stations contacted would be positive about applying for a licence if it were possible in terms of legislation. This is a clear illustration that students would be interested in producing in a regional radio environment that has community content. However, a big question mark in this ambition is the financial aspect, which is linked to the fact that only two radio stations pay fees to the institutions *SOZA* and *SLOVGRAM*.

How do student radio stations work in terms of organisation?

All of the radio stations interviewed broadcast their programmes via streaming over the internet. In Slovakia, according to the results of the survey, the *radia.sk* application is also popular, through which several radio stations share their broadcasts. One radio station has a local frequency and there are still those student radio stations that broadcast through speakers in the dormitories.

Main research question:

What is the current state of student or university broadcasting in Slovakia?

Student or university radio broadcasting has a long tradition in Slovakia, which has undoubtedly produced many popular presenters currently working in the national media in Slovakia. Among other things, the radio stations have a stable place and are popular with the generation of university students who are the target group of these media. However, the motivation and future of these entities operating within universities and colleges is questionable. Students expect better technology, reward for their work and it is not enough to gain skills that they could use later after they finish and graduate from university. The current situation may have been exacerbated by the weakening of stable editorial offices, especially during the pandemic, which demotivated many students, especially in the training and induction process. We therefore predict three possible paths of development:

1. Schools will have radio stations only as a hobby activity and will not reflect the needs of the media, will not be included in the curriculum and plans and will operate as hobby associations at the dormitories. Examples of this model of radio station operation include *Rádio X, Rádio 9, Rádio Rapeš* and *TLIS.*
2. Radio stations are part of the functioning at schools that provide mass media education, but their weakness is that radio is not part of the curriculum of the educational process. They are used as a supplement and an extra-curricular activity that can be a good form of promotion. Overall and what the school has to offer. *PaF* and *ŠtuRKo* radio stations have this type of functioning.
3. The radio and the students' activity in broadcasting along with the provision of broadcasting is part of, or is incorporated into, the curriculum of the adjacent study programmes and also those adjacent to it. This includes, for example, mass media communication and also marketing communication. This includes only *Rádio Aetter*, which broadcasts on the local frequency 107,2 FM.

The clear conclusion of this study is that student radio stations have merit, and we dare say that if their existence were helped in terms of simplifying legislative and bureaucratic processes, we would have several local radio stations run by students in the Slovak Republic. The trend of radio broadcasting has been taken over by the podcast, but also thanks to radio dormitory studios, or more recently student radio stations, it is possible to maintain the opportunity to learn through the concept of learning-by-doing and to acquire skills for practice, but in addition for life. This is proven by the practice of the last decades, where people and former members of the IRS are not lost in the crowd, but are still working in the media, and in various positions – sometimes even in the management of specific media.

5 Conclusion

In the past, student radio broadcasts formed a solid foundation for future careers as well as for student life itself. Today, however, the future of student radio is under threat for a number of reasons. The recent pandemic has made it impossible for students to access dormitories as well as universities. Both the motivation and the collective of radio station studios have weakened, and after several years they have had to re-establish a programme and assemble an editorial staff. Experience shows that despite the aforementioned benefits – such as bonus points for accommodation, credits or scholarships – students are not sufficiently motivated to stay in their positions. Another critical point in the existence of student radio stations is the fact that there has not been a *Radio Rallye* competition since 2019. *Rádiorallye* is an annual competitive showcase of the creation and broadcasting of amateur university, college and boarding school radio station studios, rings, clubs with the participation of entities from the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic (hereafter referred to as IRŠ). The aim of the *Rádiorallye* competition is to present the best quality production, programme and broadcasting of IRŠ.[26]

This has also changed, currently many schools have radio only as an interest activity and do not reflect the needs of the media, they are not included in the curriculum and curricula and operate as interest associations at the dormitories. Examples of this model of radio operation include *Rádio X, Rádio 9, Rádio Rapeš* and *TLIS*. The second group of radio stations focuses on being part of the functioning at schools that provide mass media education, but their weakness is that radio is not part of the curriculum of the educational process. They use them as a supplement and an extra-curricular activity that can be a good form of promotion overall and what the school has to offer. *PaF* and *ŠtuRKo* radios have this type of functioning. The third

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[26] *Rádiorallye*. [online]. [2023-03-02]. Available at: <https://radiorallye.sk/>.

category involves the fact that the radio and the students' activity in broadcasting along with the provision of broadcasting is part of, or is incorporated into, the curriculum of the adjacent programmes of study and also those adjacent to it. This includes, for example, mass media communication and also marketing communication. In this case, working in radio is a practical practice of theoretical skills in laboratory conditions. This includes only *Rádio Aetter*, which broadcasts on the frequency 107,2 FM, providing morning blocks of broadcasts as well as afternoon blocks of broadcasts. In addition, it broadcasts regular news blocks with sports, weather and traffic information from Trnava and the surrounding area where it operates. They also have people in the team that are specifically oriented towards social media management as well as advertising. Professional radio stations frequently select new editors and presenters from among the student radio stations. They are familiar with the fundamentals of operating in the radio medium and have solid production skills. Before the internet was created, the initial purpose of college radio stations was to improve the lives of students who lived in dorms. Each room had its own speaker, which was centrally connected to the radio studio. Today, all student radio stations belong to the universities (not the dormitories).[27] *"Radio is not expensive. It is portable. It can be easily carried around. Unlike other mediums which require full attention, radio can be listened to while doing other activities such as, driving, reading, etc. If we want to sustain the future of student radios it is necessary not only to support the development, functioning, but also to motivate students in creation and participation."*[28] Last but not least, we need to insist on its gradual implementation in the education curriculum to ensure that the quality and effectiveness of student radio stations are improved.

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