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Commercial Format FM Radio Stations for the Young in Croatia from the Perspective of the Education of Journalists

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Abstract

Croatia's century-old radio history is followed by a long tradition of radio studies, but the commercial format FM radio stations for the young has not yet been the subject of scientific research, although they have existed since 2014. This paper presents first Croatian research tracking changes in the radio industry due to radio convergence and program formatting. It aimed to identify key differences of work positions and employee characteristics compared to traditional radio from the perspective of the education of journalists, and investigate whether the study programmes educating journalists follow trends in the radio industry quickly enough. The study leans upon the theories of media convergence, radio program formatting, and formal education of journalists. For this longitudinal research, empirical data were collected in the period from 2018 to 2022 by interviewing and surveying radio directors, and the employees, and by analysing the study programmes' content. The key findings are: ten new work positions were created for which multidisciplinary journalistic competencies are needed, employees fill more than one work position, such radio stations have a larger number of employees, changes in newsrooms are frequent and large, and although a higher journalistic qualification is not a prerequisite for employment or a special contract, none of the journalists are employed part-time.

Keywords: commercial format FM radio stations for the young, education of journalists, higher journalistic qualification, multimedia, multidisciplinary journalistic competencies, radio programme, study programme, work position, radio convergence, radio industry.

1. Introduction

Radio was named as *the tribal drum*, and *the hot media* which transforms individualism to collectivism (McLuhan, 2008: 25, 263). Such understanding explains it as a community with the purpose of informing the population of listeners, but also satisfying its cultural, leisure and other needs (Vlašić, 2018). In this sense, the popularity of the radio as a media does not exclusively refer to the traditional radio whose contents are listened to through the radio set, but also to the converged (multimedia) whose radio programme is shaped transmedially, influenced by the internet and the development of technology. The European Broadcasting Union, in one of its recent researches, found that as many as 57 % of Europeans, regardless of age, trusted radio the most (EBU, 2020: 10). In support of the high result of the public trust in Croatian radio stations in 2022 – exactly one of formatted radios, *Otvoreni radio* (52 %), is listed as third, right after two commercial television stations (Peruško, 2022).

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It is obvious that today more than ever, the radio is turning to all people. Convergence enabled the 21st century radio to have a two-way course of information due to which, as anticipated, it stops being a *megaphone for citizens* and, besides the ordinary sound component, it gets a movable and pictorial one (Sapunar, 2010). To adapt to technological trends in these contemporary ages is first of all indispensable because the media digitalisation fulfils the radio content transposing it to other, unconventional platforms primarily directed toward the technologically best shod public – the Z and Y generation (Reić, 2018), i.e. listeners born from the 1980s up to the present time. This approach was specially accepted by commercial format FM radio stations for the young (CFRS for the young) which actively present their programme and other contents on their web pages, make them public on their social network profiles and music portals and share them through mobile applications. The scientific research on radio stations for the young are also so-oriented since due to new developmental tendencies of the radio, radio stations are researched in the context of the specificity of radio voices attracting the young public (e.g. Wilkinson, 2015), music as the main constituent of radios for the young (e.g. Gallego, 2015) and convergence, or the interesting content on the radio station web page as the main tool attracting the younger public (e.g. Abramson, 2014).

Media convergence, radio programme formatting and a growing radio listeners' interest in music are main features of actual CFRS for the young. These occurrences are interwoven in many ways, and can be explained by keeping in mind their causal links and the phenomena preceding them.

In brief, the commercial radio production in the digital age aims at amplifying the audience, so it is mostly led by the listeners' interests, and although the terrestrial concession still has the primary role for the establishment and regular work of the FM radio station, the focus of this type of contemporary radio is more and more on the virtual environment. Such a digital approach to the radio business is made possible by programme formatting and media convergence which, in the technological and media sense, appear as the reflection of technological development and the popularisation of the internet (Kalamar, 2016). This phenomenon was first explained as "blurring the lines between media" (Pool, 1983: 23). At the same time, it involves changes in the way of media production and consumption which is two-way oriented, top-down, from the media producer, and bottom-up, from the consumer. In other words, it can be argued that it is as a question of changes in relations among "the existing technologies, industries, markets, genres and audiences" (Jenkins, 2004). There are also those who welcome the described changes considering that the traditional media would in the new, digital environment, in fact, not be able to survive without the convergence process which offers a change at the same time allowing them to keep their recognisable features (Obradović, 2010).

The earliest signs of a converged radio were radio station web pages on which streaming initiated the cancellation of the border between concession and range of audibility. The pace of the radio convergence process in Croatia can be best illustrated by the following data – while the first research on radio stations' web pages found out that in January 2001 40 % of the 126 owning concession had their version on the internet (Mučalo, 2000), the last such research (Mučalo, Frtalić, 2011) showed that a decade later this share grew to 88 %, i.e. 70 % of the 170 concessionaires had their own web page. The Antena Zagreb radio station web page was the most comprehensive, whereas most of the others were static and non-actual. Out of the 38 categories of web contents according to which the pages were analysed, the most present ones were frequency, contact and streaming. Streaming was not owned by only five radio stations, which means that those who were broadcasting their programme in narrower areas soon understood the significance of listening to a radio programme live via the internet (Mučalo, Frtalić, 2011). And although part of the radio stations in Croatia are stagnating in the process of convergence, those are mostly small local ones whose biggest problem is lack of financial resources and a very small number of potential listeners, the rest strongly apply it.

The process of radio convergence gradually evolved directing the actual commercial FM radio production to a whole line of additional media platforms fulfilling the radio programme, as can be seen in Figure 1.

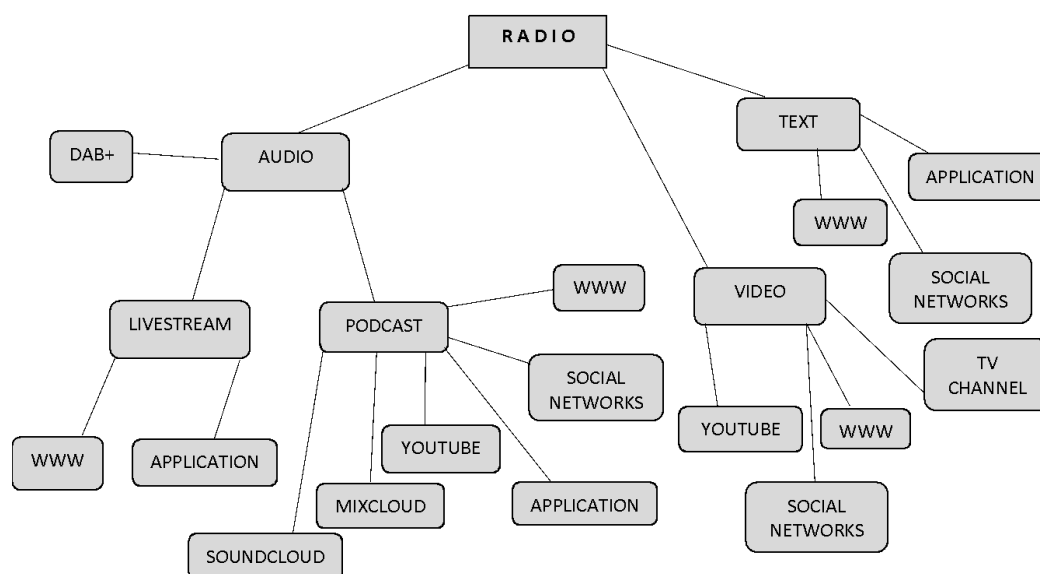


Fig. 1. Features of the convergence at the commercial format FM radio stations for the young

Hence, mobile applications are developed today, profiles on social networks and music platforms are created, while the media employees, besides reporting live into the radio ether, also report in video recordings which they publish on the radio station social networks, because radio mobile applications, podcasts, radio logs and other forms of multimedia production of a radio programme are extremely popular among the young.

The described changes in the radio production are the direct result of the radio's orientation toward the young public. Differently from the old, "passive" public whose needs were satisfied by contact-shows, the young demand interactive communication since they sometimes use more advanced technical equipment than professional journalists, e.g. (Mučalo, Šop, 2008: 54). Due to the young persons' preference to listen to and explore music on the internet to a larger extent, and by doing so they, in fact, move away from the traditional radio postulates, in 2008 the European Broadcasting Union called for the establishment of radio stations exclusively for the young whose programme would be founded on music and topic of interest to them (EBU, 2008), and which were ignored by the radio industry of that time due to the low power of consumerism of their target group (pupils, students, those employed for a short period). At the time Europe had 43 radio stations for the young aged between 14 and 35; 23 of them were analogous, 3 were digital and 14 were internet (EBU, 2008).

Although the same study showed that even 73 % of the young listened to music on their mp3s or iPods and used only the internet to obtain information and/or education about new music trends, it was found that at the same time one-fifth of all 12 to 17-year-old Europeans considered that the traditional way of listening to FM radios still had the primary role (EBU, 2008). However, the reasons why young listeners do not choose the traditional form of FM radio production to a larger extent are linked to the programme content – the presenter's extensive talks, monotonous and repetitive music interrupted by bad-quality commercials and the lack of possibility to create music charts according to one's preferences and listen to them at any time during the day, in any place (Gutiérrez, 2016).

The results obtained on the habit of listening to the radio among Zagreb secondary school students are similar to the European ones in that they also find music, which is the primary motive for listening to the radio, on the internet. As many as 60 % of them regularly visit radio stations' web pages, 9 % of them listen to the radio programme through live stream, while the others do that because of different communication and multimedia contents offered by new radio platforms (Mučalo, Knežević, 2014). Moreover, according to the first huge research on the 25-year-olds' habits in Croatia (Hendal agency, 2019), the young people's new interests when it comes to radio programmes in Croatia are in line with their way of life. Namely, the average 25-year-olds, of the 49 thousand of them living in Croatia, are employed according to qualifications, sleep between five and seven hours, and spend on average six hours a day on their smartphones. They do sport, get information online and are politically neutral. They still live with their parents, but save money,

plan to start a family, have children and buy a flat. More than two thirds of the overall respondents use social networks as the main form of socialisation. In this sense, the young are only understood by other young people.

Therefore, youth media declare themselves as the ones “conceived, developed and produced by young people” (Chávez, Soep, 2005: 410) with different aims – “youth learning, community development, “marketable skills”, citizenships, personal expression, aesthetic innovation and social change” (Chávez, Soep, 2005: 410). Yearly Youth Radio Heads Meetings (3rd, that took place in Zurich in March 2022) is another evidence of the popularity of the youth radio phenomena (EBU, 2022).

Simultaneously to the convergence process, and having in mind young people’s habits, the commercial FM radio in Croatia, gradually applies the programme formatting process, modelled on the European radio scene and recommendations. The radio station with a formatted programme, based on the market research results, turns to a narrow public and broadcasts only specialized genres of music and the best evaluated numbers which is then processed by a computer program monitored by the music editor, who according to the survey results prepares music charts to be broadcast. The *radio clock* shows how many and which songs are going to be released in 60 minutes, at which minutes and for how long the presenter is going to intervene, and if a certain presenting intervention will be an informative, entertaining, educational, sports programme, a programme for children and the young or a personal production.

While by programme formatting radio shows and the programme locality are lost, many shorter radio features are obtained prepared by the programme producers and presenters, most often popular TV personalities (e.g. first presenters at Antena Radio were well known Barbara Kolar, Tamara Loos and Zlata Muck). Radio publishers find *format* as one of the most significant strategies in programming music (Krämer, 2009: 328), while a “predictable and consistent” radio programme is the reason of its market success (Krämer, 2009: 328). The tendencies of the radio industry directly correlated with the Finnish market were, for instance, noticed even in 1985 (Ala-Fossi, 2001). That approach to music on format radio stations is named as instrumental, stating the names given also by other authors – rationalised or bureaucratic (Krämer, 2009), because music is chosen “only with regard to the appearance and functionality of the overall programme, which is often to provide a background to other activities, perhaps to entertain or relax” (Krämer, 2009: 328).

To put it simply, contrary to the traditional radio programme where music represents a break from the key radio contents (if it is not a music show), music is the programme basis on format radio stations and all other contents are treated as less important. Authors who criticize such an evolution of radio interpret it in fact exactly the opposite, as a degradation of radio. While some of them emphasise that although certain advantages of the new radio programme have been shown in audience research, in such a way the radio becomes “a media of unused trust” and gets the “status of a music background and entertainer” thus significantly distancing itself from its fundamental aims (Mučalo, 2010: 88), others expand this even further considering that format is for radio programmes and contents “the same as a tabloid for printed journalism” (Kunac, Roller, 2015: 865).

An audience perspective should be also kept in mind in the process of potential remedying objections for digital media's negative aspects, including commercial format FM radio for the young. Specialists around the world discuss different issues from the media education perspective regarding youth radio, and radio/media digitalization (Berkeley, 2009; Dyakina, Artemova, 2021; Ershov, 2018; Hopkins, 2011; Jaakkola, 2022; Mourão, Pereira, 2018; Murphy, Bluett, 2021; Terzieva, 2018). Comprehensive and coherent media education (Traynor, 2020), oriented to the digital radio as well, can be the answer to today's mediated world which characteristics should be used to the best advantage because it is “exciting, engaging, simulative and relatively inexpensive” (Starkey, 2012).

It is obvious, however, that in the digital age the radio gets diversified and that the new form of radio programme production acquires its public. The listeners’ interest in the format radio programme is visible in that today in Croatia all the private commercial radio stations format their programme to a greater or lesser extent, partly because of European trends, and partly due to the positive results reached by the pioneer of the format radio in Croatia – Antena Zagreb. This is the first private radio station in Croatia featuring convergence and programme formatting which completely changed the radio scene in Croatia, from programmes to advertising modes and creating new work positions. It was founded in 2008 after the German Antenna Bayern.

Before starting to broadcast its programme, Antena Zagreb conducted a comprehensive radio market research on a sample of 5,000 Zagreb citizens about their preferences regarding the radio programme content. It was determined that the target audience of the first format radio station will be aged between 25 and 44, and that it will broadcast, without numerous interruptions, urban, pop and rock music of the eighties and nineties of the past century and the two thousands ([Antena Zagreb, 2019](#)). On the basis of data collected in the same research, the programme scheme was prepared, each hour in the week was planned to the minute and it was afterwards approved by the Croatian Electronic Media Council. Moreover, according to the regular monthly and quarterly surveys conducted by the Ipsos agency, Antena Zagreb has been the most listened to radio station in the City of Zagreb and the Zagreb County for listeners aged 18 to 49 for 11 years.

2. Materials and methods

The purpose of this longitudinal qualitative research was to gain insight into the changes in the radio industry in Croatia due to radio convergence and program design from the perspective of youth radio and journalism education. The study compares the situation of commercial FM radio stations for the young with that of traditional radio, and tends to spot changes taking place during last four years in this new industry. The central aim was to study the structure of work organisation and employment on commercial format FM radio stations for the young in Croatia, as well as to determine the content related to those topics in the current study programmes that educate journalists in Croatia.

Having in mind that in Croatia higher journalistic qualification is not a precondition for employment in media organisations ([Vukić, 2017](#)), as well as the fact that new trends in the development of the radio imposed by the media convergence ([Bastos et al. 2012](#); [Garrand, 2006](#); [Hirschmeier et al., 2019](#); [Kalamar, 2016](#); [Mučalo, 1999](#); [2010](#); [Mučalo, Knežević, 2014](#); [Obradović, 2010](#); [Sapunar, 2010](#); [Vlašić, 2018](#)) initiated the appearance of new work positions which then require the actualisation of study programmes educating journalists, the following research questions relating the circumstances of working on CFRS for the young were set:

RQ1: What are new work positions which new organizational structure includes as a consequence of program format convergence, due to which radio stations employ a larger number of employees than traditional ones?

RQ2: What is the precondition for the (type of) employment - an enrolment and/or completion of a study educating journalists, regardless of the work position?

RQ3: What is the employment position of journalists with academic qualifications and students of studies educating journalists?

RQ4: What are actual differences in the structure of work positions and employees between such radio stations?

RQ5: What type of content relating to the radio and the features of commercial format radio stations for the young (primarily radio convergence and program formatting) is present in the actual curricula and the syllabi of the study programs that educate journalists?

We collected data from respondents by surveying ([Ivanuš, 2021](#); [Mučalo, 1998, 1999, 2010](#); [Mučalo, Čeč, 2017](#); [Mučalo, Knežević, 2014](#); [Šulentić, 2022](#)) and interviewing ([Mučalo, Čeč, 2017](#); [Šago, 2017](#); [Vukić, Šulentić, 2021](#)), traditional qualitative methods and a common practice of radio studies in both Croatia and the rest of the world ([Schramm, Cohen, 2017](#)), while for examining curricula a content analysis is applied, a habitual method in researching higher education of journalists ([Vukić, 2017](#)).

Phone interviews were conducted with all directors of CFRS for the young in Croatia, Enter Zagreb, Extra FM and Ultra Split (N=3). To question directors was a decision reached due to the fact that they are at the highest hierarchical level in the radio station organisation structure, they personally make decisions on the type of employment contract and other working conditions for each employee and carry out selection interviews. Since that research sample encompasses the whole population, and the collected data give a comprehensive picture of the educational and personnel characteristics on such media, it makes them nationally representative and possible to be generalised. The research was conducted in the period from 1st to 15th December 2018.

As an additional methodological instrument, we used the survey questionnaire which was sent to respondents after the phone interview by electronic mail, and they had to answer them individually following the previous interviewer's instructions. The questionnaire, which was answered in less than one week, consists of five parts, and of closed-ended and open-ended

questions. Although a survey, in principle, is not used to examine such a small sample, we considered it useful for obtaining exact data on the number of employees, their qualification on all current work positions, the director's attitude to the extent to which the employment of new staff on this type of radios is determined by their enrolment or completion of a study programme that educate journalists, and to create a list of all work positions on radio stations for the young, as well as for the collection of the type and level of education of those employed in certain work positions.

In-person interviews were individually conducted with six employees (N=6) of commercial FM radio stations for the young in Croatia, on 4th and 5th September 2019. The sample included two employees of each radio station which were randomly chosen, depending on their interest in collaboration: two respondents working since 2015 on Enter Zagreb as music editor and audio producer, two respondents working on the Ultra Split radio as a DJ and audio producer, and two respondents working since middle 2018 on Extra FM as DJ and music editor. This method was used to, according to the format radio employees' personal experience, additionally confirm the titles and descriptions of work positions obtained in a formal way.

Those were both semi-structured interviews which were repeated on 20th May 2021, due to financial consequences that COVID-19 pandemic might have produced in the economic sector.

Further, the curricula and course syllabi content analysis were conducted of all higher institutions educating journalists in Croatia in the period from A.Y. 2019/2020 to A.Y. 2021/2022. The collection of those which have courses related to radio (N=6) as well as the list of those which emphasising on media/radio convergence, formatting and other topics that could be useful for those who will work at format radio stations for the young, enabled an insight into how often and extensively changes are made to those study programs from the context of the radio. Those data were collected from pedagogical documents found at official websites of those academic institutions.

3. Discussion

Croatian scientists have traditionally been following up the development of the radio and actively studied the aspects of its convergence and digitalisation (Gruhonjić, 2011; Mučalo, Frtalić, 2011; Šop, 2011) and the professional qualifications of journalists in radio in general (Mučalo, 1997, 1998; Zgrabljic, 2002). However, an overall lack of examining the phenomenon of radio programmes formatting is noticed, despite the fact that its success is earlier being actively studied, for instance, in neighbouring countries (Milinkov, 2011; Pralica, 2011; Spaić, 2005, etc.). But new trends in radio studies are visible, in particular regarding changes that have affected radio in Croatia due to the pandemic (Mučalo et al., 2020; Šulentić, 2022), student radio (Vukić, Šulentić 2021), and women in leading positions at Croatian radio stations (Ivanuš, 2021).

The commercial format FM radio stations for the young in Croatia became formalised only eight years ago with the aim for younger generations, who consume media content on their own demand, to be attracted to the radio as a mass media as much as possible. In 2022, from 141 radio stations which broadcast their program in Croatia via terrestrial transmitters, three of them have formatted radio programmes for the young, focusing on their wishes and needs (AEM, 2022).

Enter Zagreb (Enter Zagreb, 2022) is the first radio in Croatia oriented to young people from 15 to 29 years of age owning a concession over the eastern part of Zagreb which started to be active in 2014. From its establishment till today it has become the music trendsetter for the young and it is the only radio which broadcasts only new electronic music. It introduced a new approach to informative programmes to the Croatian ether. It does not take over the foreign news from the information agency Media Service (agency for the production of informative content) like most radio stations, but it is prepared by journalists-hosts so that by its topic it is adequate for students and the younger public's interest, they last up to two minutes, are not broadcast at the full hour, but seven minutes before each full hour, and political news is almost completely excluded. Enter Zagreb was also the first in Croatia to start the guerrilla campaign in announcing the birth of a new radio. Animated projections were shown on Zagreb buildings' facades out of moving cars, and attractive visual animations of famous DJs were also used. Additional attention was attracted on the streets of Zagreb by loud music combined with city lights programmed to alternately release both mp3 and live radio broadcast. According to the Ipsos agency survey for the City of Zagreb County in the quadrimestre June-September 2018 conducted on a sample of 1,541 respondents aged 18-49, Enter Zagreb was the 4th on the list of the most listened radio stations during a week's period (8.7 %) (Ipsos..., 2018).

Extra FM (Extra FM, 2022) is chronologically the second youth radio in Croatia which started to broadcast at the beginning of May 2018. Like Enter Zagreb, it is oriented to the younger population, but has a wider concession so it can be heard in the City of Zagreb, Velika Gorica, Zaprešić, Sveta Nedelja, Samobor, Dugo Selo and the municipalities of Stupnik and Brdovec. It is specialised for regional music, while the informative programme is taken over from the agency Media Service, which means that, contrary to the Enter Zagreb radio, this stations' radio newsroom has no journalists - news presenters at all. What is specific for this radio is that Extra FM has its television music channel, so along with a radio music editor, it also has a television one. According to the survey (Ipsos..., 2019) for the quadrimestre January – March 2019, only six months after its programme started running, Extra FM came to the 7th place of the list of weekly most listened radio stations (7.2 %) among 18 to 49-year-olds of the City of Zagreb and the Zagreb County.

Ultra Split (Ultra Split, 2022) is the radio station owning a concession in the area of Split-Dalmatia County. It is the youngest radio station for the young in Croatia which started to broadcast at the end of May 2018. Like Extra FM, this radio station does not have its own informative programme, but broadcasts the news of the Media Service, and music-wise it has a similar orientation as Enter Zagreb, i.e. foreign electronic pop, but with a much larger and wider music base. In a very short period of time, the Ultra Split radio station has become the synonym for the largest electronic music festival in this part of Europe, the Ultra Europe festival, which is traditionally held in Split. Like Extra FM, according to the survey (Ipsos..., 2019) for the quadrimestre January – March 2019, only six months after its programme started running, Ultra Split was in the 3rd place of the list of weekly most listened radio stations (9 %) among 18 to 49-year-olds of the Split-Dalmatia County.

Those results of the audience research of all the three format FM radio stations for the young have confirmed that young people very much want and need a radio adapted to them which could meet their needs in such a specific way (Giger, 2013).

The quality and credibility of the radio content is, among others, ensured by journalistic competencies which imply knowledge on the specificities and principles of the radio as a media, as well as the skills needed to work on a radio station, and are traditionally acquired as part of the formal education of journalists which, according to the normative classification criteria, is conducted via the higher education system at Croatian universities and colleges (Vukić, 2017).

However, the empirical research conducted in Sweden and England (Witschge, Nygren, 2009) is one of those which showed the correlation between the effect of the internet and economic strategies and aims of the media moguls as the causes of new jobs occurrence in the radio practice, which consequently changed the focus on certain journalistic competencies leading to the conclusion that the sole convergence transformed the radio journalist "from a lonely wolf into a (multimedia) team player" (Verweij, 2009: 75). Hence, journalists also express "a significant interest for life long education which would especially tackle the problem area of (...) new technologies and their impact on the everyday practice of Croatian journalism" (Brautović, 2009: 342). Multimedia radio trends in Croatia were noticed in the middle of the nineties of the past century, when the warning was about the necessary changes in the radio journalists' formal education so as to, among other things, train them for new, higher, regulatory functions of presenters such as *moderators of the polylogic radio*, since new forms of radio features are developed (Sapunar, 1994: 156).

In such circumstances, the positions on the radio directly linked to journalism jobs become transformed, so on the one hand the question is asked about the extent to which actual study programmes educating journalists in this sense follow the new developmental path of the radio in order for them to offer the acquisition of new multidisciplinary journalistic competencies, while on the other there is the question if those programmes can even be the precondition to work in such a radio newsroom since, despite the existence of the higher education system for the education of journalists which was established in the middle of the last century, the Croatian media have been now traditionally employing to work as journalists also those who were not part of this system. This enables more correlated occurrences (Vukić, 2017). First of all, journalism is not a regulated profession and is still looked on as an activity for which innate giftedness, creativity and talent are more important than education. Even more importantly, some authors declare that such special journalistic competencies cannot be triggered by studying, but are only consolidated and institutionalised by education (e.g. Labaš, 2005). At the same time, the number of those who see higher education of journalists as crucial not only to work in journalism, but as a base for the

potential regulation of the journalism profession in Croatia, is too low (e.g. [Malović, 2002](#); [Vukić, 2017](#)). It is also necessary to highlight that in Croatia there is still no systematic education in public higher institutions for some other important positions on the radio, such as speakers ([Occupations..., 1998](#)) and radio producers. There are, however, professional training courses at private institutions offering lifelong learning programs such as one-year Presenter in electronic media (e.g. [Experta, 2022](#)).

However, the situation is not the same everywhere. Although Croatia have neither the legal regulations or educational norms determining employment in the media with regard to the work position someone applies for ([Kunac, Roller, 2015](#)) and therefore the radio, The United States of America, for instance, have clear rules. According to the data released by the U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics ([USBL, 2022](#)) to work at a radio station it is necessary to be at least a bachelor of journalism or communications. Directors and programme directors, on the other hand, have to own a four-year study programme in communication or a radio diffusion diploma and have prominent managerial skills. The condition for an audio producer and technician employment is, besides an internal technical training, a higher institution diploma in the field of engineering, IT or radio diffusion. While the presenter of a modern converged radio station, often presented to the public as a DJ, has to be a professional in music and have ample general knowledge, radio reporters and presenters need a completed faculty education in communication, journalism or international relations.

Indeed, qualifications are those directly connected with the description and categorisation of workplaces according to the national qualification framework. The last scientific research dealing with journalists as employees on radio stations in Croatia was conducted more than two decades ago. Although it was focused on the work positions' functions and workplaces on local radio stations of the time, including journalism jobs, it brought out valuable data on radio journalists' educational characteristics. The research encompassed 80 local radio stations and 256 interviewed employees, of whom 47.6 % had a secondary school qualification, 32.9 % had a faculty diploma, and 19.5 % a college degree ([Mučalo, 1998](#)). There is no information about the type of higher education programmes, though.

The last published data on the structure of the employed on local and regional radio stations in the Republic of Croatia, but not on their qualification, were analysed in the government document which is part of the National Report on the Media. It served as the working material for the discussion about the media policy of the Republic of Croatia 2015-2020 ([Ministry..., 2015](#)), and it relied primarily on the data obtained in the last population census (2011) processed by the National Bureau of Statistics. At the time Croatia had 5,452 citizens with a journalism profession, and only 525 of them were unemployed. Out of the 4,909 employed journalists, 3,852 of them were employed in the media, 682 on the radio. The workplace analysis showed that most of them were journalists (41 %), then technical (22 %) and administrative staff (13 %), speakers and lecturers (12 %), artistic employees - music editors or DJs (5 %), other workers engaged in the programme production (3 %) and those who were not (4 %). Although from 2008 to 2012 the overall number of journalists employed on radio stations decreased by 20 %, when it comes to the type of contract of employment, the number of those employed full time compared to those employed on a service contract rose from 50 % (2008) to 70 % (2012), which indicates that journalists employed on local and regional radio stations are mostly employed with an employment contract.

4. Results

RQ1 – New work positions and multiple work roles

The key features of work organisation at commercial FM radio stations for the young in Croatia are the employment of a larger number of people and the conduction of a larger number of business activities and more work positions' functions by one employee. On Enter Zagreb, for instance, the programme producer is at the same time editor of the web page and social networks, and on Ultra Split and Extra FM some presenters-DJs are also social networks editors. Even despite such division of work, the indicator of the hugest detachment from the last, similar research conducted in 1997, when the average radio "had a simple personnel structure consisting of the editor-in-chief and three persons conducting editorial and journalistic jobs" ([Mučalo, 1998: 228](#)), is visible in the change in the total number of employees which is significantly higher on commercial format radios for the young, regardless of the overall trends in the last few years. Namely, from the one of the latest researches on the radio conducted in 2019 ([Ivanuš, 2021](#)), we

learn that of 33 local and regional radio stations (excluding public one) 66,7 % of them still have less than ten employees, while only 33,3 % of them employ from 10-20 persons.

Compared to 2018 when the distribution was as follows: Ultra Split (9), Extra FM (10) and Enter Zagreb (20), in 2021 Radio Enter Zagreb has eight fewer employees (12), Extra FM remained at the same number (10), and Ultra Split hired two additional employees (11). Looking at all three radios, out of a total of 39 employees in 2018, in 2021 were 31 or 20 % fewer. The main reason given by the director of Enter Zagreb is the change in the strategic position of Enter Zagreb and the harmonisation with the proposal of the new Electronic Media Act and the possibility of Enter Zagreb becoming a specialised, not a general radio channel. Reducing the number of employees from 20 to 10 was planned in 2019. As a result of the audience increase, Ultra Split hired additional employees. No radio has reduced the number of employees and external collaborators due to the COVID-pandemic situation.

Those results actually mean that such radios need additional employees who will engage in formatting the radio programme, and apply and maintain the radio and multimedia contents on other platforms. The consequence of such trends is the development of new work positions, such as the voice of the radio station, commercial voice and the programme producer working in the production or brand manager and graphic designer who will create and maintain the image, while the traditional radio journalist is transformed in these new circumstances into the *interactive multimedia journalist* (Bastos et al. 2012: 105) who is imposed with the demand to produce original content for different media.

It should be also emphasised that all three Croatian CFRS for the young employees are of the same age as their listeners, while job advertisements mostly seek for students who will undergo their training at the radio station (Enter Zagreb, 2022). This tendency where young people are employed for the production of radio contents for the young is in line with certain research which, among other things, indicate that the influence of technology and the internet on the radio journalists' everyday job is better accepted and turned into practice by the young (Bastos et al. 2012).

The work organisation model of CFRS for the young in Croatia cannot be unambiguously determined for two reasons. The division of labour only in principle follows the hierarchical structure organised according to the obligations of certain work positions' functions, responsibilities and control because all of them have to directly report to the director and programme director. Besides, one person performs more work positions' functions which are often at different hierarchical and functional levels.

Such an organisation of works is the consequence of the radio development which is under the influence of the convergence and formatting process, which is consequently the cause of more work positions not linked to journalism. The placement of contents from the air to additional platforms like web pages, mobile phone applications, social networks profiles, music platforms and other media, establishes work positions which include business activities non-existent on the radio before, such as the programme producer, social networks editor, web page editor, TV editor and graphic designer, content manager, etc. which can be derived from Table 1.

On the one hand, work positions for journalists get new titles and include a much wider range of business activities, whereas on the other, a part of their business activities gets combined to other work positions. The traditional ones, such as journalists, speakers and presenters, are called today the news presenters and DJs, while the activities of the editor – presenter on the format station are performed by programme producers monitored by the programme director, content manager and programme director assistant where, as in non-format radios, qualified journalists can also be employed.

In a non-format radio station, the journalist is often a field worker and prepares the stories alone, while somebody else reads it on air, while the news presenters-journalists and the DJs in collaboration with the programme producer, prepare and realise the whole programme for the ether individually and fully. More precisely, on a format radio station the DJs are also technicians because they take care of the radio desk themselves, mix music, create contents for the radio social networks, write articles for the web page and work as presenters of the radio's social events. Such a job description inevitably requires a higher journalist's engagement than the one provided by the Croatian Media Act which says that a journalist "engages in collecting, processing, shaping and sorting out information to be published in the media" (Media..., 2013) which also means a longer working day (Ministry..., 2015). Except for that, the today's CFRS for the young requires journalistic competencies for the occasional performance of work position' functions such as brand

and content managers. This means that they organise events like the two-day Enter Music Festival of the Enter Zagreb radio or Extra concert of the year in the Zagreb Arena. The ones who perform this are those employed as programme directors and their assistants and programme producers.

Hence, the organisation structure of commercial format FM radio stations for the young in the Republic of Croatia includes a whole range of new work positions which emerged as a direct consequence of the media convergence and programme formatting, so a larger number of staffs is employed than on radio organisations. So, when discussing about organizational structure of the radio in the future, it is recommended to start from joint job formation (old and new), in particular having in mind that the new one is provided for by almost all formatted radio stations in Europe (Table 1).

Table 1. List of work positions with the appertaining description of business activities at Croatian formatted radio stations (for the young) in 2021

Work position	Business activity description
Director and programme director*	The manager and person in charge of all the radio business activities on all platforms. The director and programme director in one person on format radio stations for the young is responsible for the financial success of the station, the business strategy, with the content manager he/she creatively designs the plan for the ether, social networks, web page and advertising campaigns programmes, in line with previously agreed strategy of the radio station and advertisers' demands. They are superior to all programme employees. He/she closely collaborates with the sales department for financial results, and prepares the annual financial programme and advertising strategic plans of the radio station.
Programme producer*	The person who prepares the content for one or more shows or radio features of a certain DJ on a daily basis. He/she conducts interviews, adapts tones with an additional check-up of the audio-production, writes a synopsis (scenario) for the DJs and, advised and monitored by the programme director, answers for the overall content of a certain period in a day. The programme producer creates and publishes statuses on social networks, answers the listeners' questions, writes articles for social networks and mobile phone applications linked to a certain show.
DJ (presenter-technician) *	The presenter on a format radio station is, along with the programme producer, completely responsible for their whole show so that they control and release tones, commercials, music backgrounds alone, and they mix music charts for their show which have been previously determined. They also put statuses on social networks and create content for the web page.
News presenter – journalist*	On a format radio station, they work in newsroom and on the field, prepare all audio-features for the ether and read, sometimes also realise, the informative programme completely individually.
Audio-producer	The person in charge of the "radio sound" who uses technical knowledge and computer programmes to prepare the whole production of the radio station. Closely cooperates with the programme producer and DJ on a daily basis to prepare shows, while strategically agreeing upon long-term production changes and campaigns with the programme director.
Sales voice*	The main, recognisable voice of the advertising content of the radio station in the sense of sponsorships for shows, sales promotions and big promotions (advertising formats of the format radio station) which do not regard the commercial break.
Station voice*	The main, recognisable voice of the radio station which records all the programme elements.
Social network editor*	The person who, in agreement with the programme director, realises the strategy of the radio station social networks.
TV editor*	The editor of the television channel of the radio station who, with the help of the music editor, prepares the schedule for the spots and commercials to be broadcast on the channel.

Music editor*	On a non-format station, the music editor was in charge of the choice of songs and preparation of music charts based on personal knowledge and preference, whereas on the format radio the music editor works on a previously conceived base of initial market research whose results dictate the music genres and specifically determined songs released by the station. After that, on a two-week basis, a music survey is conducted among listeners, so the music editor uses these results and regular analysis of new songs to prepare music charts.
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*Work positions that can be performed by employees with a journalistic qualification

It should be emphasised that in 2018 the list of positions was even more diverse. Since then, five following positions were lost: *programme director assistant* - deputy, the programme director's right-hand man, *brand manager* – the person who takes care of the strategic future of the reputation and image of the radio station, deliberates on external influences and strategic occurrences of the radio station and represents the radio station at important events and meetings, often instead of the director, *content manager* – the person who closely cooperates with the programme director and programme producers and is in charge of planning, before all, long-term programme campaigns, but on a daily basis he/she checks with the producers how a topic will be dealt with in the ether and on other platforms, *web page editor* – the person who, in agreement with the programme director, realises the strategy of the radio station web page, and *graphic designer* – the person who, on the basis of the graphic book of standards of the radio station, prepares all the visual elements presenting the radio to the public, equally for social networks, the web page, etc. There are other changes regarding work positions in 2021 that needs to be noted as well: separation of the positions of director and program director on two radios, the position of social media editor on two radios is lost, the position of news program editor and secretary and person in charge of marketing is introduced (2in1), and for the first time one employee has three positions (3in1) with those combinations – director, program director and sales voice and audio producer, music editor and sales voice.

RQ2 – Employment preconditions

The work at the formerly described work positions presuppose multidisciplinary journalistic competencies. Further to the theory of formal education of journalists (Vukić, 2017), it is however to be assumed that CFRS for the young, as well as other media, should employ in the programme production persons of a higher education in the journalism or related scientific field or profession. However, directors of the three commercial format FM radio stations for the young in Croatia share the common opinion that higher education qualification of journalists, regardless of the work position, is not crucial in their choice of employees. It is because those studying for journalists do not obtain competencies needed to work at such radio stations. That is why they are primarily looking for personal motivation to work on this kind of radio, and if they are hired, they will be properly trained. What kind of educational structure of employees can be then expected at CFRS for the young?

RQ3 – Employment position of journalists with an academic qualification and students of studies educating journalists in newsrooms

Since this is a radio whose main part of the programme is to generate music charts using certain software, the description of business activities and work positions' functions has significantly changed, and new work positions have been formed which demand employees having different competencies than journalistic, it was assumed that the smallest number of those employed on such radio stations would be those studying and/or those who completed their study for being journalists. However, there is no intersection of the former situation of qualifications for employees working on these specific radios so the results can be only conditionally compared to those relating to former research on education characteristics of people employed on radios and the Croatian media in general (DZS, 2013; Ministry..., 2015; Mučalo, 1997; Plenković, Mustić, 2014) where a similarity can be noticed in the employment trend.

Namely, when it comes to CFRS for the young, the results from 2018 show that out of the 39 employed, even a third (13) completed a study programme educating journalists, and if four students attending studies that educate journalists are added, it can be determined that almost a half (44 %) of all media workers on radio stations for the young in Croatia at that time were in the process of attaining or have attained an higher journalistic qualification. Furthermore, while

20 employees had a higher education, the smallest number belonged to students (7), whereas 12 employees (or 30 %) had only a secondary school education.

The qualifications of employees have changed greatly in just three years. In general, there are fewer employees with a university degree, but the biggest change is in the number of employees who have completed a university degree in education for journalists (down from 13 to 5 employees) and students who have studied education for journalists (down from 4 students to only one). The number of employees with secondary education and the number of students who are not in the study that educates journalists has increased. Is it really a sign that we are moving towards cheaper labour or that journalists are less and less needed on such radio?

With the intention to determine the type of journalists' employment contracts on CFRS for the young FM radio stations, it was noticed that the situation in 2018 was more positive than in former research studies on the structure of employment on radio stations in Croatia. About twenty years ago radio stations had three or four permanently employed journalists out of five to six of them, while the others were freelancers (Mučalo, 1998). In the year 2000, the president of the Croatian Journalists Union warned about the 20 % of radio stations' employees "moonlighting" and the trend of signing cheaper and more insecure author's contracts than a permanent employment contract (Popović, 2000: 131), whereas the annual research conducted by the Bureau of Statistics from 2008 to 2012 shows that the number of freelance journalists in the Croatian media in general is decreasing, from 28 % in 2008 to 24 % in 2012 (Ministry..., 2015).

Employees on commercial format FM radio stations for the young are employed on the basis of the following employment contract types – fixed-term or indefinite term contract, self-employment trade where at the end of the month they issue an invoice to the radio organisation for the performed work, student contract or author's contract which is typical for freelancers. Although the key findings of this part of the research from 2018 confirm that employment contracts on format radios for the young are not determined by the higher journalistic qualification, it is a valuable fact that neither qualified journalist working for CFRS for the young was at that time employed as a freelancer. Namely, while somewhat more than a half of the overall number of permanently employed had an employment contract (56 %), these are the terms of employment for almost all the highly educated journalists (92 %). All the students, on the other hand, were employed on a student contract, while only 15 % of the total number of employees signed an author's contract.

Unlike 2018, in 2021 no employee of the author's contract has been hired, the percentage of employees working through a student contract (from 18 % to 29 %) and through a work contract (from 56 % to 65 %) has not increased. The percentage of employees who have independent trades slightly declined (from 10 % to 6 %). Despite a significant change in the number of employees with a university degree in journalism and students who study journalism, these staff continue to work through employment contracts (4), student contracts (1) or self-employment (1).

RQ4 – Differences in the structure of work positions, and employees

The actual structure of employees on CFRS for the young in Croatia is different mostly regarding the number of employees, type of jobs combined for one employee and the programme production practice.

Enter Zagreb – The first and oldest CFRS for the young in Croatia with a concession for the east part of the City of Zagreb which has its own informative programme and the best audience results (Ipsos..., 2015) gives an occupation to 20 employees, 100 % more than the two other radio stations which have country concessions. The director and programme director are the same person, while the programme director assistant is also in charge of the programme. Seven presenters are in charge of the realisation and ether, and at the same time they work as technicians. Besides the presenters, in the format radio popularly known as DJs, the programme content is prepared by two programme producers. While Ultra Split and Extra FM take over the news from the agency for the production of informative contents Media Service, the journalists-presenters of the Enter Zagreb radio produce their own informative programme. Two audio-producers are in charge of the radio sound, and the music editor prepares music charts on the basis of surveys conducted with listeners on the radio social networks every two weeks. A third of the Enter Zagreb employees own a degree of a faculty educating journalists or are currently attending such a study, while the remaining 65 % did not attain such study programmes in their formal education.

Compared to 2018, the positions of director and program director at Enter Zagreb in 2021 were separated, but there is no assistant program director. Of the seven presenters-DJs, only one is

currently working on Enter. Today, the position of music editor includes the job of a journalist. As part of the news program, there used to be three journalists-news anchors, and today the same program is prepared by one journalist and the editor of the news program, who is also a journalist. Enter Zagreb left its employees in the positions of audio producer, technical manager and sales voice, but lost positions such as radio voice (one employee), program producer (two employees) and the position of editor of social networks and website (one employee). Three years ago, half of the employees (10) had a university degree, one quarter (5) had a high school diploma, and the remaining quarter (5) were students. Today, there are also half of the employees with a university degree (5), two employees with a high school diploma and three students. Out of a total of 20 employees in 2018, seven (35 %) were with a higher journalistic qualification or were students of a study that educates journalists. They included the work position' function of director and program director, a fourfold position of host-DJ, journalist-host and music editor. Currently, out of a total of ten employees, four (40 %) have higher journalistic qualifications. These are the editors of the news program, the music editor, the journalist-host and the host-DJ. The biggest difference is that today there are no employees with higher journalistic qualifications in the separate positions of director and program director.

Extra FM -The head of the Extra FM radio is the director and programme director who is, like on the Enter Zagreb, one single person. Of the five presenters, one is also the social network editor, while the audio producer is at the same time the station voice. The television editor is the one in charge of the overall television music programme of the radio station, prepares the music video spot charts and makes agreements and realises the advertising programme. Of the ten employees of the Extra FM radio station, 40 % completed a study programme that educates journalists (3) or are in the study process (1).

In the case of Extra FM radio, the positions of director and program director were separated in 2021, and the position of assistant program director disappeared. The position of audio producer and voice of the radio is also separated. Instead of five presenters-DJs, today there are four of them, none of whom work in the position of social media editor, which has been completely lost for the last three years. Three years ago, four employees had either a university degree, four had a high school diploma, and the remaining two employees were students. Today, only two employees are highly educated, four remain with secondary education, but the number of students has increased from two to four. Out of a total of 10 employees, in 2018 three employees with higher journalistic qualification and one student studying journalism (40 %) were employed, while Extra FM today does not have a single employee or student with a higher journalistic qualification.

Ultra Split – Contrary to the Enter Zagreb and Extra FM radio, the radio station Ultra Split does not have a programme director assistant, but there is also one person performing the work position' function of both the director and programme director. The number of employees and their current work position' functions are very similar to the personnel structure of the Extra FM radio station, except that it does not need a television editor because it does not have its own television channel. There are five presenters employed on this radio, one of them being the social networks editor. The quality of the programme is in charge of one producer and audio-producer being the radio voice at the same time. The music editor and the two presenters have a secondary school qualification, while the other employees are highly educated journalists or communicologists. Of the nine employees of the Ultra Split, two-thirds of them have a higher journalistic qualification.

On Ultra Split radio, the position of director and program director remained combined, but that person also received the third part of the 'indebtedness' in the form of a sales vote. The situation is similar with the previous position of music editor, which today includes the job of audio producer and sales voice. Earlier, five presenters-DJs were hired, one of whom was also the editor of social networks, and they all shared one program producer. Today, there are four presenters-DJs with four program producers, one of whom is a social media editor. The new position that was not registered at Ultra Split in 2018 is the position of secretary who also does marketing work. Of the former nine employees, six had a higher journalistic qualification or a university degree (66 %). The remaining three employees had a high school diploma. Today, out of a total of eleven employees, only one has a higher journalistic qualification and one is a student of education who educates journalists (18 %). Three employees are highly educated, six have a high school diploma, and two are hired through student contracts.

RQ5 – Radio in the curricula of the study programmes that educate journalists

The content analysis of the curricula and the syllabi of the study programmes which educate journalists in Croatia shows that they do not mainly educate with regard to the type of the mass media, but tackle them to a certain extent as part of particular courses and/or study options. As a rule, students who attain general higher journalistic qualification are trained to work at any media, while in practice and undergoing additional education they build upon the attained academic journalistic competencies (Vukić, 2017). There is a small number of radio courses and options/streams (Table 2), and their content is mostly oriented toward the acquisition of general theoretical knowledge on the traditional radio, as well as getting to know the organisation and content of live work in the studio of the faculty radio or radio organisation with which cooperation has been established.

Table 2. List of study programmes in the 2021/2022 academic year which educate journalists and have the radio option and/or courses which thematize the radio as a mass medium

Institution	Study	Courses	Semester	Compulsory (C) Elective (E)	Stream
Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb, University of Zagreb	Undergraduate university study Journalism	<i>Fundamentals of the radio</i>	III	C	Radio
		<i>Radio journalism</i>	IV	C	
		<i>Forms of radio expression</i>	V	C	
		<i>Radio newsroom</i>	VI	C	
University North, Koprivnica	Undergraduate university study Journalism	<i>Introduction to radio journalism</i>	II	C	–
	Undergraduate university study Communication studies, media and journalism	<i>Introduction to radio and television</i>	III	E	
		<i>Joint contribution: Radio show</i>	V	E	
		<i>Introduction to radio and TV</i>	III	E	
Faculty of Croatian Studies, University of Zagreb	Undergraduate university study in Communication studies (single and double major), Module Media	<i>Joint contribution: Radio show</i>	VI	E	–
		<i>Theories and systems of radio communication</i>	III, IV, V and VI	C	
University of Dubrovnik	Undergraduate university study Media and the Culture of the Society	<i>Electronic media: Radio and TV reporting</i>	II	C	–
		<i>Workshops: Radio production</i>	III	C	
		<i>Radio informative programme</i>	V	E	

			<i>Editing the radio programme</i>	VI	O	
Croatian Catholic University, Zagreb	Undergraduate university study in Communication science		<i>Radio journalism</i>	II	C	–
VERN' University, Zagreb	Undergraduate professional study Journalism		<i>Radio Journalism</i>	II	C	–
			<i>Radio production</i>	III	C	
			<i>Radio journalist-presenter</i>	IV	C	

There is no graduate study educating journalists in the Republic of Croatia having courses dealing with the radio as a media separately. Even so, in public institutions, a special feature of the undergraduate study of Journalism at the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb, in the 5th semester, is the possibility of students choosing two of the five specialised fields: Press, Radio, Television, Public Relations and New Media (FPS, 2022). To work on formatted radio, it would be useful to enrol in the Radio and New Media majors. At undergraduate study programmes that educate journalists at University North almost all courses concerning radio are elective. Further, from the 2nd to the 6th semester, the undergraduate study Media and Culture of the Society in Dubrovnik is planning a radio education designed in the form of various thematic workshops and one obligatory course (UNIDU, 2020).

The postgraduate level does not focus on the type of media, while the doctoral degree in communication sciences can be attained at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Zagreb, at the postgraduate study conducted in cooperation by the University of Dubrovnik, and the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, and at the University North.

There are only few, almost imperceptible, changes occurred in the content of the curricula of the study programmes that educate journalists in Croatia through the period of time 2018–2022. University North introduced new course directed to the students' radio practice Joint contribution: Radio show at the undergraduate university study Journalism. Along with the course Introduction to radio and TV, those are two courses at the study programme undergraduate university study Communication studies, media and journalism which is another option for future journalists from the A.Y. 2020/2021. At the undergraduate university study Media and the Culture of the Society the University of Dubrovnik added a compulsory course Electronic media: Radio and TV reporting to the list with the already existed workshops in A.Y. 2021/2022. A private institution, VERN' University, added a course Radio production, and the course Radio presenter became Radio journalist-presenter.

For the students to be able to correlate their theoretical knowledge to practice, a few Croatian universities and faculties educating journalists have established radio stations, among which the Radio Student of the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb is the longest-running, followed by the UNIDU radio of the University of Dubrovnik and the Pressedan Radio of the University North. However, their journalistic and media practice of doing business in general is significantly different than the one on commercial format FM radio stations for the young because it is in line with the syllabi content which mainly follow the traditional radio organisation and production structure. It is therefore justified to say that the actualisation of study programmes in radio education in the context of new radio trends is unavoidable. When it comes to the practical part, it does not have to be oriented toward the establishment of radio stations of this kind at universities, it would suffice to enable the production of a (smaller) part of the radio programme in a way typical for commercial format FM radio stations.

Although the application of the convergence process of radio contents and formatting of the radio programme has been present in Croatia for the last fourteen years, some course titles thematically connected to the radio show that there is a lack of those linked to such new developmental tendencies of the radio, so arising from this perspective it can be said that the study

programmes do not, at present, on that way answer to the educational needs of journalists to work in these specific radio stations.

In spite of, actualisation of education topics for the attainment of journalistic competencies to work on the radio in the digital age should be stronger linked to the information and communication technology – the new media, internet and social networks (Plenković, Mustić, 2014), the media convergence and work on various media platforms, as well as with couplings of theory and practice at faculty radio studies and radio newsrooms in line with contemporary trends throughout the world (Perišin, Mlačić, 2014). A good foundation for such intervention is separate courses related to topics like digital age, convergence, multimedia, digitalization, transmedia and similar which is in today's journalism studies anyway, a horizontal topic. From numerous courses that directly or indirectly deal with the mentioned topics, for the sake of illustration the following can be singled out.

Graduated study Journalism at the Faculty of Political sciences in Zagreb offers an elective course Journalism in intermedia surroundings, while undergraduate study of Journalism plan elective courses Introduction to internet journalism, Photojournalism, Online journalism and new media, and compulsory course Methods and techniques of new media (FPS, 2022). In the 6th semester of the undergraduate study of Communication studies, media and journalism at University North there is also an elective course Multimedia, in the 2nd semester of the graduate studies Journalism and Communication studies, media and journalism there is an obligatory course Technological innovations and journalism. At undergraduate study programme Journalism there are courses like Online journalism, Introduction to photography and video, Web design, Multimedia storytelling (UNIN, 2022). At the undergraduate study Media and Culture of the Society in Dubrovnik there is, additionally, obligatory course New media (UNIDU, 2020). While undergraduate study in Communication Science at Croatian Catholic University in Zagreb offers compulsory course New media and web technologies at the 4th semester, and elective course Internet journalism, the same graduate study programme plan obligatory course Digital communication channels in journalism at the 1st semester, and Integrated media newsroom at the 3rd semester (UNICATH, 2022). VERN' University, a private institution, in its new plan for undergraduate professional study of Journalism for A.Y. 2022/2023 offers obligatory courses like Introduction to digital and online media, Photojournalism, Filming and editing in video journalism, Public speaking and oratory in broadcasting journalism which could all be useful for journalists working at formatted radio stations (UNIV, 2022).

Besides, when it comes to commercial radios, the correlation between journalism, the media and entrepreneurship at all levels should be kept in mind and thus educate the future media workers for the development of entrepreneurial competencies (Biondić et al. 2011). And since the causal link between entrepreneurial education and the increase in media workers employment has been proved, it is advisable to base the contemporary entrepreneurial education in the journalistic segment on competencies “such as the innovative approach to problem-solving, readiness to change, self-confidence, flexibility, creativity, communication and risk management” (Biondić et al., 2013: 114). Such outcomes can be found, for instance, in the elective courses Management of creative industries (UNIN, 2022), Sustainable development and societal innovation (FPS, 2022), Computer-mediated communication, and virtual management (FCS, 2022), obligatory courses Media management (UNICATH, 2022), Media industry, and Media entrepreneurship and media management (UNIV, 2022).

Additionally, students had the chance to learn about the youth-format radio stations at the 3rd HRF Academy in 2020 in Zagreb, organized as part of the training programme of the Croatian Radio Forum Association (HRF, 2020). AMM global institute, as a first private institute of creative industry in the Republic of Croatia, also organises frequent education about commercial formatted radios for students of all universities in the country (AMM..., 2022).

From the sustainability point of view, of both sustainable journalism education and sustainable journalism (Vukić, 2019), it is necessary to accelerate the process of making changes in curricula in public higher institutions that educate journalists and to establish institutional cooperation with these new radio stations. The answer could also be developing new curricula directed toward specific media types. Especially because study programmes which do not educate journalists, but communication and media professionals in other areas, follow more the contemporary trends in radio production and direct their students toward these new media environments, e.g. undergraduate study Communication Management at the Edward Bernays

University College (private), offering the elective course Radio (EBUC, 2022), undergraduate study Media Design (UNIN1, 2022), and undergraduate professional study Multimedia, Design and Application (UNIN2, 2022) at the University North (public) which offers the course Introduction to Radio and Television.

Based on the results obtained, it can be argued that if journalists are not educated soon to work on these new forms of radio stations, there are arguments in favour to the possibility that they could be replaced by other media staff. Therefore, it is reasonable to ask whether the already small amount of authored media content produced on such stations, which should undoubtedly be created by highly educated journalists, at that point is going to be produced in another way.

5. Conclusion

Enter Zagreb, Extra FM and Ultra Split are the only commercial format FM radio stations in Croatia primarily addressing their target public aged 15 to 29, and are a real example of modern format and converged radio stations which, except primarily through the ether, address the very demanding contemporary listeners via mobile phone applications, web pages, social networks and television channels. New platforms, and the development of the radio as a media, enabled the formation of a differently outbranching organisation structure which assumes a larger number of employees and a multitude of new work positions than on traditional one, while at the same time the description of a journalist's business activities has significantly changed.

This longitudinal qualitative research found great differences in the workplace titles and description when compared to traditional radio newsrooms, an increase in the employees' range of work and the trend of unifying more different work positions. In this sense, motivation, the wish to acquire new knowledge and love for the radio are more important preconditions to get employed at such a radio station than formal education of journalists. Nevertheless, almost half of the overall employed in 2018 were employees having higher journalistic qualification, or students at studies that educate journalists. Still, there are in total a fifth fewer employees in 2021, and only Enter Zagreb has halved the number of employees (the pandemic was not the cause).

The comparison of data regarding structure of work organisation and employment on commercial format FM radio stations for the young in Croatia from 2018 to 2021 show the rapid changes that are happening on the modern type of radio. Although higher journalistic qualification does not presume the type of employment contract, thusly organised radio practices in the media industry employ journalists primarily on the base of a fixed-term contract.

The significance of the CFRS for the young should be observed through the prism of the radio media development in new technological circumstances which can serve as a practice room for students of studies educating journalists, as a platform for transmediality which requires multidisciplinary journalistic competencies and a possible place of employment for young, qualified journalists.

Therefore, it emphasizes the importance of attaining the key journalistic competencies at higher education institutions, including new ones, for what it becomes inevitable to find the way of faster alignment of journalism curricula with the changes in the radio industry. That effort supports the initiative of making the academic journalistic qualification a precondition for employment in journalistic jobs in media.

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