

Finding and funding Voices: the London experience

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Abstract

How are the voices of marginalised and disadvantaged communities to be heard in a large conurbation? This article argues the importance of community media, and particularly community radio, in providing such communities with opportunities to express their cultures and concerns. Its main focus is London, whose size and geography pose special problems for broadcast coverage, but comparisons are made with other European capital cities – Budapest, Cardiff and Stockholm - and the historical legacy of London's problems, which has defeated other attempts in the past to use radio to meet the needs of London communities, is briefly summarised. The research which is reported is ongoing; at the time of writing a series of media policy workshops is being planned with the hoped-for involvement of the London Mayor's office and of local authorities. Policy interventions are never final, so this is an account of work in progress.

Introduction

Community media is a term used to describe the use of media by communities, social groups and civil society organisations. Community media can provide opportunities for social groups excluded or misrepresented in the mainstream to come in from the margins and give voice to their cultures and concerns. Across Europe there are many examples of young people, migrants, minority ethnic communities (for example), using media which they own and control (European Parliament 2007). In other parts of the world, community radio, in particular, has an important role to play in development, especially in rural areas (Fraser & Restrepo Estrada 2001; Gumucio Dagron 2001).

Projects and initiatives are generally classified as 'community media' if they are not run for profit but for social gain and community benefit; if they are owned by, and accountable to,

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the communities they seek to serve; and if they provide for participation by the community in programme-making and in management. These definitions distinguish community media from mainstream media, whether commercial or public service (Lewis & Booth 1989).

Involvement in programme making brings important gains in self- and peer-esteem, and on the way highly transferable digital and communication skills are acquired, as well as the capacity for team work (Lewis & Jones 2006). Thus community media can make a significant contribution to social inclusion, community engagement and regeneration.

r these benefits can only be realized within an enabling environment. The ‘third sector’, as it is often called, needs to be recognised in media policy and regulation, and its sustainability, in both social, technological and financial terms, needs to be safeguarded, especially in the move towards digitalisation. There needs, too, to be recognition of its value beyond simply the media frame. Policies for health, and housing, affecting young people and old, for lifelong learning and citizenship, for minority ethnic communities, refugees and asylum seekers, for culture and the creative industries – all can be enhanced by the recognition of the role community media can play. This ‘joined-up’ recognition and its implications for funding are vital for sustainability of the third sector.

In the following sections I will situate, within their national context, the media provision in each of four capital cities – London, Budapest, Cardiff and Stockholm¹ - before proceeding to a comparative discussion.

UK broadcasting regulation

Broadcasting is confined within the limits of spectrum availability which national regulators assign in conformity with international agreement – necessary because radio waves can cross frontiers and cause interference. For the first thirty years of its existence, the BBC enjoyed a monopoly and had then, and continues to have, a degree of autonomy from government, although it is finally answerable to the Department of Media Culture & Sport (DCMS).² Commercial television started in 1954, under the regulation of the Independent Television Authority (ITA), which was renamed Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) when commercial radio was introduced in 1973. Commercial radio was at first local, but the 1990 Broadcasting Act, which created separate regulators for radio (the Radio Authority) and television (the Independent Television Commission), authorised the launch of national commercial radio. Ofcom (the Office of Communications) took over all broadcasting as well as telecommunications regulation in 2003.

¹ I am grateful to Gergely Gosztonyi, Center for Media and Communication Studies, Central European University, Budapest; to Steve Johnson, Cardiff School of Creative and Cultural Industries, University of Glamorgan; and to Christer Hederström, Media Advisor and Public Journalist, Stockholm for their contributions to this research.

² Broadcasting had previously been the responsibility of Ministries of Posts and Telecommunications and, most recently, the Home Office.

The last two decades have seen growing competition in broadcasting, at terrestrial level and through cable and satellite, matched by increasing relaxation of regulatory constraints. In the commercial sector this has allowed a concentration of ownership leading to conformity of formats and a reduction in genuinely local programming. The BBC's local presence, too, has been reduced in response to the prioritisation of online and global TV initiatives.

The frequencies available in London are the result of the successive applications of national policies, rather than any considered plan for the capital and were originally determined by the geography of the capital and engineering decisions about the siting of transmitters in locations best able to serve the saucer-shaped bowl which is inner London. The FM coverage of the BBC's 'local' radio station, originating on the high ground to the south of the city, reaches at least 7m listeners – more than the population of many European nations. The first two commercial stations, Capital and LBC, both launched in 1973, were assigned similar-sized coverage areas by the regulator (IBA). In their case, as with all commercial licences, advertising revenue potential went hand in hand with engineering considerations to determine the transmission pattern. Although in recent years, increasingly sophisticated engineering technology has allowed the creation of smaller transmission areas, London is stuck with the consequences of planning decisions from an earlier age (the late 60s and early 70s) and the inescapable saucer shape of its local terrain. Furthermore, any changes to London frequencies would have a knock-on effect across the whole UK, since analogue FM transmission must be planned to avoid the interference that results from assigning similar frequencies to neighbouring stations.

London's government

London, like any other capital city, is the centre from which national media policy is developed, but has a problematic history as a candidate for regional media policy, in part due to its size. From 1963 its 20 outer and 12 inner boroughs were governed by the Greater London Council (GLC). During the early years of radical (national) Conservative government from 1979, the Labour-controlled GLC acted as a defiant bastion of left initiatives in transport, culture and social policy which ultimately led to its abolition in 1986 by Mrs. Thatcher. The result was a policy vacuum not filled until the restoration, on Labour's return in 1997, of an elected Mayor and a Greater London Assembly (GLA). The first Mayor elected in 2000 was Ken Livingstone, the former Leader of the GLC who had attracted the vengeance of Mrs. Thatcher. Livingstone was re-elected in 2004, but lost to the Conservative Boris Johnson in 2008. The Mayor's powers are relatively limited; education remains in the control of individual boroughs which also are recipients of funding from central government to give effect to policy across a range of social and environmental issues. The Government Office for London (GOL) represents eleven central government departments and, working in collaboration with the Mayor and the thirty-two boroughs, attempts to implement central government policies at regional level.

Community radio campaigns

Both pirates and community radio campaigners have battled for decades against the regulatory and technical constraints described above, and historically it has often been piracy which has been more successful in changing policy, the mid-60s North Sea pirates being the

classic example. Recent research by Ofcom showed that, in Hackney and Haringey, pirate radio is listened to by nearly a quarter of the population over 14, mostly by 15-24 year-olds and C1/C2s. A key finding was that “illegal radio listening and broadcasting is being driven by the importance of radio as a medium for: (1) the development and promotion of grass-roots talent, (2) the urban music scene, and (3) minority community groups”(Ofcom 2007 para 5.7.5). Piracy, an indicator of unmet needs, continues alongside the current – meagre, as will be argued – provision of community radio in London.

Other languages than English can be heard on the airwaves in London, but access to the stations which broadcast them is limited by geography – they are few in comparison with the size of the city and the number and diversity of linguistic communities.³ Apart from the many channels available on satellite, Spectrum Radio offers space to Amharic, Cantonese and Mandarin, Panjabi, Persian, Somali, Spanish, Tamil and Russian; Sunrise broadcasts in English, Hindi and Panjabi; Desi Radio in English and Panjabi; Sound Radio in Chinese, French, Hindi, Kurdish, Polish, Portuguese, Somali, Spanish, Turkish, Urdu and Yiddish. London Greek Radio and London Turkish Radio broadcast in their respective languages, and the BBC’s Asian Network in a number of South Asian languages.

As early as the mid-1970s the status quo of local radio regulation and its transmission patterns was challenged. Encouragement to do so came from the Annan Committee on the Future of Broadcasting which took evidence in the mid-1970s (Annan 1977). In the years following, groups such as the Local Radio Workshop (LRW) and the Community Communications Group (COMCOM), inspired by the success of US, Canadian and Australian activists, lobbied for the introduction of community radio as a remedy for the failings of the BBC/IBA ‘duopoly’ (COMCOM 1977; Local Radio Workshop 1983; Partridge 1982). Some official recognition of the case was evident in the report of a Parliamentary Select Committee to which LRW and COMCOM had given evidence (SCNI 1978: 136/19), and in a BBC internal report which recommended the use of a mobile unit to visit districts for a two-week period, encouraging the ultimate development of independent non-profit community stations. The same report also recommended a London-wide station serving the Black and Asian communities. Another internal study a few years later, also never implemented, proposed turning BBC Radio London into a women’s station (Lewis & Booth 1989: 97-8).

Radio piracy

Abroad, well-established community radio sectors in the USA, Canada and Australia provided examples of definition, structure and finance, while in Europe the radios libres which broke state broadcasting monopolies in Italy, France and Belgium tantalised the British community radio movement with their radiophonic virtuosity, intellectual critique and political support (Lewis 1977, 1979). The protest of most British pirates had more to do with music formats unavailable in the mainstream, and while this protest was not considered

³ “London is the most ethnically diverse city in Europe, with 300 languages spoken, over 14 faiths practiced and 42 communities of over 10,000 people born in countries outside Britain living in the city” (Mayor London’s Equality & Diversity Office
http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/equalities/race_equality_scheme.jsp)

overtly political, the music – and its mainstream absence - was an important symbol of identity. However, the most serious concern of the authorities in this period was about political protest. As one radio pirate put it, “If you want to donate transmitting equipment to the Home Office, there’s no quicker way of doing it than by preaching ‘subversive rhetoric’ on the air” (Hind & Mosco 1985:39). Nonetheless, in the early 1980s a number of pirate stations with a political message managed to avoid being ‘busted’ long enough to make an impact. Our Radio in London was a coalition of socialists, anarchists, feminists, a Polish group and Gaywaves, perhaps the most sophisticated broadcasters of the group, which lasted for a year from early 1982; Radio Avalon broadcast peace news at two successive Glastonbury Music Festivals, inspiring Sheffield Peace Radio which began at the CND National Conference there in 1984 and continued for several months of weekly broadcasts. In Nottingham the same year, during the miners’ dispute with the government, an ingenious over-riding of the local commercial station’s signal was dubbed Radio Arthur for its support for the union and its General Secretary, Arthur Scargill (Hind & Mosco 1985).

Problems and pilots

Persistent campaigning by the Community Radio Association (CRA), which had succeeded COMCOM, was rewarded by the decision of the Home Secretary in 1985 to allow an experiment in 21 locations across the UK. 286 applications were received – 90 in London - but before decisions could be implemented a new Home Secretary cancelled the experiment on the grounds that the government needed to review its policy for radio. Critics suspected that a desire to curb free speech in inner cities in the run-up to a General Election was the underlying reason. This was, after all, the same year that the Conservative government abolished the GLC. The GLC had, for the five previous years, as part of a media policy grounded in social concern, worked through a Community Radio Development Unit to give advice and funding to London groups, particularly minority ethnic groups, to assist the creation of radio and media workshops, to commission research, and to increase public understanding of the possibilities of community radio. In its final year of existence, the Unit had a budget of £1.5m for these activities.

A further opportunity for the sector occurred in the last period of IBA regulation before it gave way to the Radio Authority under the 1990 Broadcasting Act. Frequency space was found within existing commercial radio franchise areas for what were called ‘incremental franchises’. A large number of applications were received from community groups, but the conditions and timescale created financial problems for such applicants. Few survived the selection process and most of those that did, were, before long, turned into conventional commercial stations by forced collaborations or takeovers (Gray & Lewis 1992:166). For the next decade temporary licences (officially known as Restricted Service Licences – RSLs) became the only means for communities to celebrate their cultures and voice their opinions.

The turning point came in another regulator ‘legacy’. The Radio Authority, about to hand over to Ofcom and finally persuaded of the value of a ‘third force’ of radio, obtained Home Office permission for a pilot run of 15 licences in 2001. ‘Access radio’ was the term used in deference to the commercial companies’ claim that they themselves were providing community radio. The pilot period was extended, and an evaluation by Anthony Everitt judged it a success (Everitt 2003a & b). Everitt’s recommendations became the basis for the

2004 Community Radio Order (the more widely used term had reasserted itself), and its implementation by Ofcom.

The current UK context

The Community Radio Order, as implemented by Ofcom, lays down a detailed definition of community radio which is broadly in line with the summary offered at the beginning of this paper (Introduction para 2). The delivery of **social gain** is the key concept, and this is interpreted as the achievement of the following objectives –

- “(a) the provision of sound broadcasting services to individuals who are otherwise underserved by such services,
- (b) the facilitation of discussion and the expression of opinion,
- (c) the provision (by programmes or otherwise) of education or training to individuals not employed by the service [this refers to volunteers], and..
- (d) ..the better understanding of the particular community and the strengthening of links within it,

... and may also include the achievement of other objectives of a social nature and, in particular,

- (e) the promotion of economic development and of social enterprises;
- (f) the promotion of employment;
- (g) the provision of opportunities for the gaining of work experience;
- (h) the promotion of social inclusion;
- (i) the promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity;
- (j) the promotion of civic participation and volunteering.”

(Ofcom 2006, Annex A)

The sector has grown fast – by the end of 2008, Ofcom will have awarded over 200 community radio licences. Official recognition of its value is attested in several reports since Everitt’s positive evaluation – for example, from the DCMS and the Arts Council of England (Everitt 2003 a & b; DCMS 2006; Cochrane & Jeffery 2008). The main problem, and it is becoming a desperate one, is that of finance. In the words of one station manager, the sector “is running on empty”. A Community Radio Fund is routed from the Treasury to the DCMS who devolve the responsibility to Ofcom, advised by a panel on which the sector is represented. It is intended to assist stations by contributing to core costs such as fund-raising, management, community outreach and volunteer organization – tasks which are essential but hard to get financed through other sources. From the first awards made in 2005/06, the total sum available was around £0.5m, and this for scarcely more stations than the 15 original pilots. The fund is to be kept at the same level until 2011, while the number of licensed stations has risen over tenfold to close on 200.

Five years ago, Everitt calculated that on the basis of 50:50 matched funding the call on a Fund would be around £30k per station, and that any funding less than £6m in the third year of the sector would create a serious obstacle to sustainability (Everitt 2003a:139). £30k each for the present number of licensees would amount to £5.4m.

Stations can and do apply for funding from other sources, both local, national and European. The European Social Fund is one source (Everitt 2003b:33). The Welsh Assembly (see below) has agreed funding for community radio over the next five years, and the Scottish Executive's Broadcasting Commission has the funding of community radio on its agenda⁴. A number of government programmes to which local authorities can apply have aims and objectives directly corresponding to those of community radio. The question then is whether it occurs to the organisers of local authority projects to make use of community radio (or media) in their plans, and, conversely, whether a community radio station makes the contact with the relevant official or department in a local authority. Some sense of successful contacts can be found in Everitt's study of the pilot phase of the community radio sector. Recent examples of relevant government programmes include:

- Dept of Communities and Local Government: £500m for neighbourhood partnerships in deprived communities across the country, to continue helping their work to cut crime levels, improve educational achievements and boost job opportunities (<http://www.communities.gov.uk/newsroom>).
- £25 million Find your Talent programme to give young people the chance to encounter a range of high-quality cultural experiences and develop their talents for a guaranteed five hours a week, jointly sponsored by the Culture (DCMS) and Education (Department for Children, Families and Schools) ministries.
- A 'Grassroots Grants' programme which offers grant funding to third sector organisations to become 'Local Funders' and manage a small grants programme and a community owned endowment for voluntary and community groups in their area. £130m is available through the Community Development Foundation (CDF) on behalf of the Office of the Third Sector (OTS) at the Cabinet Office.
- 'The London Youth Offer' is a £78m programme to provide more activities and services for young people in the capital. £20m will come from the Mayor's London Development Agency and £58m from the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

More research is needed to ascertain the take-up of programmes of this kind by community radio groups and stations. Some other sources are the National Lottery Heritage Fund. A certain number of Service Level Agreements have been negotiated between local authorities and CR stations to provide information about council services to listeners, often in minority languages. Over the years, some fitful recognition of the value of community radio by Arts organisations has been evident, for example by Northern Arts (funding a conference at the University of Sunderland in 1996) and West Midland Arts (support for WSM Telford cable radio in the 1970s). Currently, Resonance FM, a London station owned by the London Musicians Collective currently receives some £60k per year from Arts Council England

⁴ Scottish Broadcasting Commission *Interim Report on the Cultural Phase*
<http://www.scottishbroadcastingcommission.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/4/0000359.pdf>

which also funds New Style Radio in Birmingham. Belatedly, the Arts Council report, mentioned above, is an emphatic endorsement for community radio.

European comparisons

Putting London in a European context, I want to focus on three aspects which are critical to finding and funding voices in a capital city: (1) a 'transformative moment' (2) the capital's media within the national context (3) an infrastructure of support that guarantees sustainability.

I mean by a **transformative moment** one either generated by political decision or an initiative of which political forces take advantage. The explosions of radios libres in the 1970s, first in Italy, then in France and francophone Belgium, were, broadly speaking, social rebellions against centralised monopolies which were then exploited by political parties in opposition to government.

In Sweden, at the end of the same decade, a Liberal government introduced *närradio* in order to break the monopoly of the public service broadcaster. In Budapest, after the ending of the communist regime, the law allowed only for state broadcasting. No other form of broadcasting was imaginable to most politicians except American-style commercial radio. There was no political will to open the airwaves to public access. It was left to the pioneering Radio Tilos and the others that soon followed it to break the law in an attempt to anticipate a future structure ("It is all about what will be" as one of the broadcasters said at the time). Eighteen years later, this brave initiative, followed by patient lobbying and campaigning, has been rewarded as authorities and politicians have been finally convinced.

In the UK, a country not given to revolution and where the campaign for community radio has continued for over thirty years, the moment of transformation has never quite happened. The North Sea pirates were absorbed into the BBC and commercial radio systems, the defeat of the trade unions by the Thatcher government passed with only fragmented media protest, using video not radio, and the creation of a community radio sector by the Labour government in 2004 has not been backed by political will to vote the necessary finance. It is just possible that things may change in London. Four months after the election of a Conservative Mayor, and at a time when the popularity of Gordon Brown's Labour administration is at an unprecedented low, it is too soon to interpret Conservative policy in the capital. One reading is that the Tories will use the period between now and the next General Election, due in 2010, to try out experimental and popular ideas. This could work in favour of community radio.

The Cardiff story 'Part 1' illustrates the transformative moment in reverse. The commercial radio franchise won in 1979 by an alliance of community organisations was left unsupported by the regulator when, a month after the licence award, the radical Thatcher government swept to power. CBC lasted only 5 years before being transformed into a conventional commercial station (Lewis & Booth 1989: 108-114). The problem for UK nations – Wales Scotland and Northern Ireland – is that the principle of subsidiarity in media policy has never been recognised. Thus despite political devolution, decisions about frequencies and licences are still made by central government and its agencies, such as the regulator Ofcom.

So recent developments in Cardiff - the Cardiff story 'Part 2' (see below) - take place within the limitations of rule from London, although the Welsh Assembly has been able to give incremental support through various channels to add to the inadequate Community Radio Fund available from London.

The **national media contexts** of Sweden and the UK are in some respects similar despite the difference in duration of the respective community media sectors. Both have established and long-standing public service broadcasters and both have been under increasing pressure of competition and liberalisation. Swedish community radio and television have been transmitting for much longer but have this in common with the UK that public funding is scarce or non-existent.

But the Swedish närradio system is without parallel in Europe. There are some 160 CR stations with one FM frequency being reserved in most municipalities except for the three largest cities, to which more are assigned - Stockholm 6, Gothenburg 4 and Malmö 2. Broadcasting time on the transmitters is shared by a range of non-profit local associations including student and religious organisations who must find their own production facilities. Licences are issued to each group for three years by the Radio and TV Authority (PTS).

In Hungary during the 1990s three community radio groups shared, or at times competed for licences in Budapest while some 10 to 15 stations broadcast in the rest of the country. But since 2004 under new licensing arrangements, small low-powered stations have been allowed to operate under relatively easy legal and technical conditions. These were designed for small local communities, such as schools, prisons, hospitals, small villages, festivals, housing estates, universities, local libraries, neighbourhoods, etc. In Budapest four of these small community radios have started broadcasting in different districts of the city. They include a mainly cultural station (Fúzió Rádió), two educational radios (EPER Rádió, Cool FM) and a civil movement station (Csillaghalom Rádió). Alongside them the four 'old' radios continue - Civil Rádió the voice of civil associations, Tilos Rádió for alternative groups, Roma Rádió C and the mainly commercial Rádió Q.

Finance and sustainability: Sweden

Some local council funding pays for live coverage of council meetings, but the majority of funding comes from the contributing organisations and volunteer labour. Gothenburg makes an annual contribution to community radio and television of 900.000 SEK (= £77.4k GBP). And there is some involvement also of the County of the Western Region. In Christer Hederström's view "developing community media in Stockholm will not be possible without some official funding from the City or the County government." The City has not yet indicated that any support will be considered. But on the national level the centre-right party in power till 2010 is giving serious consideration to create a system, which would channel some state support to local non-commercial broadcasting via a national organisation. The most common suggestion is to use a small portion (1-2 %) of the TV licence fee as in Denmark.

Finance and sustainability: Hungary⁵

Most of the support for Hungarian community radio comes from the state itself. The current Media Act says that 0.5 – 1.0% of the annual revenues of the Broadcasting Fund shall be used for the repayable or non-repayable subsidisation of non-profit oriented broadcasters (Act I of 1996 Article 78). The Broadcasting Fund is a segregated monetary fund which is intended to “support public service broadcasting, public broadcasters, non-profit oriented broadcasters, public service broadcasts and programmes, to preserve and further develop culture, to provide for the multicoloured nature of broadcasts, and to support the other responsibilities defined in this Act.” The Hungarian State Treasury provides the Fund which is managed by the National Radio and Television Board. Between £450-870k GBP is available for the community radio sector per year and annual applications are made under four categories:

- application for yearly running costs
- application for technical development (studio equipment)
- application for starting or developing broadcast diffusion
- application for creating news, sports or magazine programs

Every radio station may apply once a year for each call for application. The amount of self-financing for the different applications may range from 15% to 50% - a level high enough to intimidate community broadcasters.

Table 1 below shows basic figures of the yearly incomes of three radios in the year 2007, two larger community radios (Civil and Tilos) and the smaller Fúzió from Budapest:

The figures clearly show that most of the income of Hungarian community radio stations in Budapest comes from the unique supporting system of the National Radio and Television Board. Local government support is almost non-existent, whether from Budapest city council or the municipality of the local district⁶ of the radio. Local government's contribution used to be considerably more before 2005, but since then almost all municipalities have experienced difficult financial circumstances and support for the civil sphere has been dramatically reduced⁷.

The support shown coming from different ministries is not especially for community radio but for different civil projects to which stations can apply. Radios mostly apply to make programmes on specific topics for audiences different from those of public service and commercial broadcasters. It could be a support by the Ministry of Education and Culture for making an adult educational programme for a year (Fúzió Rádió), or a drug prevention programme on Tilos Rádió. Civil Rádió, for example, got support from the Ministry of

⁵ In this section I have followed Gergely Gosztonyi's research paper very closely.

⁶ Budapest has 24 districts.

⁷ There are other parts of the country where local governments give a small funding to the local small community radio but most of them do not.

Social Affairs and Labour's Year of Women programme, and the Ministry of Environment and Water's Green Spring programme.

Table 1: Funding of three Budapest community radio stations

Source of Fund	Civil Rádió	Tilos Rádió	Fúzió Rádió
National Civil Fund ⁸	23.140 ⁹	14.680	639
Broadcasting Fund (Yearly running costs)	19.147	19.147	4.787
Broadcasting Fund (Tech development)	2.282	4.002	2.170
Broadcasting Fund (Broadcast diffusion)	0	0	0
Broadcasting Fund (Creating news, sports or magazine programs)	7.659	0	0
Municipality of the capital city Budapest	638	0	479
Municipality of the local district of the radio	638	0	255
1% income tax donations ¹⁰	1.969	23.838	479
NGOs	0	0	0
Different national ministries for different projects	22.976	957	320
Listeners' / private donations	1.490	5.744	0
Membership fee of program makers	0	176	10

Support from other NGOs and civil society organisations is shown to be zero for all three radios in 2007, an indication that Hungarian civil society, only eighteen years after the change

⁸ http://www.nca.hu/?page=webtext/show&wte_code=english.

⁹ All data were taken from yearly reports of radios and changed into GBP by the author. Not all incomes of the radios are shown in the table.

¹⁰ Hungarian taxpayers may choose to donate 1% of their income tax to non-profit organizations.

of regime, is simply not strong enough to provide the financial support to be found among its Western European counterparts. Support does indeed come in all kinds of ways other than financial - participating in programmes as experts, collaboration in organising programmes, supply of volunteers etc.

Cardiff and Wales

I turn last to Wales since much of the British context has been covered already, and because the circumstances of the particular case-study involving community radio in Cardiff are currently somewhat fluid; a briefer account is therefore in order.

Since 2006, a considerable amount of political power has been devolved from Westminster to the Welsh Assembly in the Principality's capital, Cardiff. Cardiff has a long history as a port with cosmopolitan trading connections that have fostered the growth of communities from overseas retaining their own languages as well as speaking English. English, rather than Welsh, is mainly spoken in Cardiff and South Wales. Over the last few decades and before the formal step to devolution, official policy has attempted with some success to reverse the decline in the native language suppressed for many centuries by London-based government, but progress has been slower in the traditionally English-speaking areas.

According to the 2001 census, Cardiff contains the largest concentration of 'non-white' populations of any local authority in Wales, both in terms of actual numbers and overall percentages. The same source notes an increase in the minority ethnic population in the city from the 6.10% reported in the 1991 census to the 8.43% reported in 2001, mainly in the Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese populations. Most of the minority ethnic communities, and virtually the whole Black community, live in the area near the former docks, transformed in the last few years by redevelopment on a massive scale. The need to counter the disorienting effect of this development on the original working population (it has built the huge Millennium Centre, the Welsh Assembly's Senedd building and a number of high class hotels), is thought by some observers to have been the motivation for a series of funding initiatives, from some of which community media projects have benefited.

Through the 1990s a number of projects based in the Black community succeeded and/or competed with each other. From time to time temporary licences (RSLs) were obtained to broadcast over the air for up to a month. The Cardiff Bay Development Corporation was an important source of funding, as was a sequence of organisations committed to funding training schemes (South Glamorgan Training and Enterprise Council, Education Learning Wales, and the Welsh Assembly's Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills). This kind of funding, which has commonly supported similar radio projects across the UK, was primarily to increase employment opportunities among socially excluded and disaffected young people and adult groups. It could not be used specifically to obtain temporary RSL or for direct broadcasting costs, but could be used for training.

Between 2004 and 2007, Beats FM, supported by a Local Partnership Group in the Butetown district of the former docks area, obtained funding from the Communities First programme which worked throughout Wales to tackle deprivation. Finally, in 2006, a regular community radio licence was awarded by Ofcom, and under the new name of Radio Cardiff,

the station launched in October 2007. Its funding came from Communities First with matched funding from the European Social Fund Objective 3 tied to training under the Pathways to Employment programme. At the time of writing there is some uncertainty about where Radio Cardiff's next funding will come from.

Earlier in 2008, the Welsh Assembly initiated its own Community Radio Fund to provide £100k over the next five years, with conditions similar to Ofcom's Community Radio Fund but restricted to stations that are not applying to Ofcom's fund in any particular year.

Funding from other sources in Wales is worth mentioning as offering potential models or precedents. GTFM, based about 12 miles north of Cardiff, in Pontypridd, was established in 1999 by a Tenants & Residents Association. It began broadcasting RSLs, then joined forces with the University of Glamorgan and was chosen as one of the fifteen pilot Access stations, the only one in Wales, and was finally awarded a regular community radio licence in 2005. Over this period, funding has come from the European Regional Development Fund, the Welsh Assembly's Local Regeneration Fund, the local Pontypridd Council, the Coalfields Regeneration Trust and the Volunteering in Wales fund. Currently some £50k a year is brought in through advertising revenue. The University connection has also brought in funding from an interesting source - the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), under the heading of 'Widening Participation'. This is a policy operating in the newer UK universities (where respective HE Funding Councils exist) to encourage a wider range of applicants for university places. HEFCW's contribution is a significant recognition of the longer-term social and educational value of training in the technical and communication skills needed to work in community radio.

Summary and conclusion

Table 2 below provide a short-hand summary the sources of funding for community radio in the four capitals. What appears crucial is the extent to which, nationally, there is sufficient funding to give some longer-range security to the kinds of broadcasting projects considered here. This is not to suggest that government should fund the entire operation, but some core funding is essential to allow this kind of voluntary, third sector work to continue. The level needs to be sufficient for them carry on their operations without being inhibited by a constant search for the next piece of funding. In all the cities reviewed here, there are funds available for programmes involving the arts, social inclusion, the environment, regeneration, employment training. There is a need to join up these sources in recognition of the fact that community media projects deliver on and contribute to a whole range of social and economic programmes and should not be simply pigeon-holed under 'media'.

There is recent support for this argument in a report produced by the European Parliament's Culture and Education Committee which "calls on Member States for more active support of community media to ensure media pluralism" and contains in its recommendations some important suggestions about funding and infrastructural support¹¹.

¹¹ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+COMPARL+PE-402.919+01+DOC+PDF+V0//EN&language=EN>

Table 2: Sources of funding for community radio

Source of funding	London	Cardiff	Budapest	Stockholm
European		EU Social Fund, EU RDF		
National	Community Radio Fund	Community Radio Fund + Welsh Assembly	Civil Fund, Broadcasting Fund	–
City	media training (Desi Radio)	Cardiff Bay Development Corporation		for live broadcasts
Local municipality	–	Pontypridd Council		
Income tax donations			Voluntary 1%	
NGOs			–	Yes
National (other)	Arts Council, Office of the Third Sector	Welsh Assembly, Communities First	Education, Social Affairs, Environment	
Listener gifts or subs			Yes	Yes
Advertisements	Desi Radio	GTFM		
Fundraising events	Yes			
Charities, trusts	Yes			

A final word should be added about the use of the internet. Most community radio stations that are licensed to broadcast over the air also use the internet to widen their reach and include geographically distant members of the communities of interest which they serve. Since broadcast licences are restricted in number, subject to political control and costly to obtain, many more groups have taken to using internet-only broadcasting (webcasting). In either case the internet is an important medium, particularly for minority ethnic communities to connect to other communities of their diaspora and to reach their countries of origin. But to make local contact and encourage social cohesion, physical co-presence is ultimately

irreplaceable. The project which provides space for people to meet each other, to compete – and compromise - about time and resources in a broadcast schedule, difficult as that task always is, is helping to build a more democratic society.

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