CALL
FOR PAPERS

Title

Podcast in the future of journalism. Exploring forms and formats of sound storytelling in digital news media

Edited by **Marta Perrotta**

Brief description of project's scope and content

This book was conceived as one of the deliverables of a Creative Europe project - Jourpart - funded by the European Commission in March 2023 and starting in September 2023. The project is called **WePod - We Produce Podcasts. Cross-border collaborative Podcast Productions** and deals with supporting European co-productions of journalistic podcasts and studying existing models of cross-border partnerships in the podcast industry. So this book addresses the scenario of the international journalistic podcast, framing it from different theoretical perspectives and viewpoints - from those of media studies and sociology, to those of regulation and those of digital humanities - as befits the project it is meant to support. A collection of selected essays will cover the various aspects of the issues surrounding the transformation of journalistic publishing and the integration of tools and forms of sound storytelling that are more sustainable and attractive to tomorrow's audiences.

Keywords

Podcast; Radio; News; Media Production; Digital Journalism; Transnational; Cross-border; Media Industries; Regulatory Framework; Ethics; Platforms; Digital Disruption; News Consumption; Remake;

Call for essays

Originally born as a complementary delivery system for radio contents, in the last decade podcasts have entered their "second age" (Bonini 2015): they have become a medium producing native contents according to its own aesthetics, schedules, means and market strategies; which are different from those of radio broadcasting and highlight podcasting's greater productive and expressive freedom (Sellas and Solà 2019).

This development is occurring in the context of amateur and independent productions being affected by the wider process of "platformization" that characterizes digital media: podcasts are being absorbed by big platforms for content delivery such as Apple, Spotify, Google Podcasts, Youtune po and this is having an impact on their production and business models (Sullivan 2019). Moreover, we are witnessing the rise of podcast networks (composed of producers sharing common goals and policies) which is causing the gradual shift of a relevant part of podcasting from grassroots and niche production practices to those specific of industrial production (Sellas and Bonet 2022). Due to the availability of high budgets and the possibility to expand their audience beyond niche targets, podcasts are reaching high-quality productive standards, experimenting with genres, aesthetic strategies and modes of storytelling (Spinelli and Dann 2019).

In this complex and fast-transforming landscape, an important role is played by journalistic podcasts: daily news podcasts, for example, "make up less than 1% of all those produced but account for more than 10% of the overall downloads in the US and 9% in France and Australia, according to analysis of publicly available data" (Newman and Gallo 2020). As the long history of radio journalism has shown us, audio persists as a vigorous cultural power in our progressively digitally mediated world, and audio journalism conveyed by podcasts is an important source for documenting the massive social, political, cultural, and economic changes that have characterized people's life in the past years: this is supported by the fact that citizens in 26 of 37 European countries trust radio the most, according to *Trust in Media* report (EBU 2022), describing a behavior opposite to overall fall in trusting news. Also, journalistic podcasts created by mainstream news organizations are rapidly growing in number (+32% from January to October 2019), reaching mass media levels of audience (Nee and Santana 2021).

All this is posing many challenges to the European news media sector, plus the intensified cross-border competition on a global scale has put pressure on the economic sustainability of professional journalism, with local media particularly affected by this situation. News publishers and journalists have thus turned to podcasts' light formats, which can be adapted to the listener's tastes and habits, and more intimate forms of storytelling and engagement (Lindgren 2016; Nee and Santana 2021) in order to reach younger audiences, who tend to be the age groups showing less trust in news but also the habit of accessing news via the internet and social media.

To what kind of journalistic products this investment has led, will be the main question addressed in this book, which is intended to explore topics that have to do with digital sound journalism in the European context. Therefore, essays focused on (but not limited to) the following topics are encouraged:

- The role of podcast journalism in Europe.

- Training and skill paths to become a podcaster in the journalistic field.

- Collaborative journalism experiences across Europe: transnational collaborations among journalists and local/independent podcast creators (co-productions, adaptations, translations);

- Best practices and criticalities of the European journalistic scenario.

- How does podcast journalism address issues of European relevance such as war, immigration, climate change.

- Digital culture, news consumption and sound-based journalism: how are listeners developing skills in audio comprehension, critical listening and information evaluation?

- How do news podcasts win their target audience? How does it change according to the format?

- How does podcast journalism impact on the growth of news consumption in the Millennials and GenZers generations.

- What are the existing business models (linked to news podcasts)? Can large and small actors cooperate? Are there sustainable business models for news podcast creators?

- The impact of podcast journalism on the fight against disinformation; what is its contribution compared to other media? Are news podcasts more reliable?

- Gender issues in the context of podcast journalism.

- Maintaining ethical standards and navigating regulatory frameworks in news podcasts: issues of accuracy and fact-checking, transparency and disclosure, ethical standards in interviewing, privacy and consent, content regulation, misinformation, advertising and sponsorship, intellectual property ownership, licensing, plagiarism.

- The relationship between podcast-based journalism and other media.

Authors should submit a 500-word abstract (excluding references) to the editorial team at marta.perrotta@uniroma3.it along with a short 150-word bio and contact information

(institutional affiliation, email) for all contributors by **10th of January 2024.** Notification of acceptance will be given by **28th of February 2024**. Authors of accepted abstracts will **submit their manuscripts by 30th November 2024.** The book will be published by **30th April 2025.**

Expected length - 120.000 words

Notes on the editor

Marta Perrotta is associate professor (L-ART/06) in the University of Roma Tre, Italy, in the Department of Philosophy, Communication and Performing Arts. She is the director of Roma Tre Radio, the web radio of the University, the Rector's Delegate for Communication and Institutional Promotion. She is among the co-founders (2002) of an international radio research network (IREN), funded by the European Commission from 2004 for a triennial project. She is also member of the Editorial Board of IMAGO, Studi di Cinema e Media. She is a writer and author of programmes of the Italian Public Service Broadcaster Rai Radio 2 and has been author of TV programmes (2008- 2011).

Her research publications cover radio and podcast studies, media production studies, gender and media studies. She is the leader of the international research group *Women on air. Voices, professions and listening in radio and sound media*, which includes 15 scholars and scholars from French and German universities (www.donneinonda.eu). The research project was selected for funding for three Italy-France-Germany 2022-24 trilateral research conferences at Villa Vigoni, the German-Italian Centre for European Dialogue.

She is Research Coordinator of *WePod. We Produce Podcasts. Cross-border collaborative Podcast Productions,* a Creative Europe Jourpart project, funded by European Commission, which has started in September 2023 and supports European co-productions of journalistic podcasts, while studying existing models of cross-border partnerships in the podcast industry. More info at www.wepodproject.eu. One of the scopes of the project is to develop a White Paper for Podcast Co-productions with recommendations for a common European IP legal framework concerning the sound media sector.

More details on https://romatrepress.uniroma3.it/