

**Local news, social commitment and public usefulness: Case studies of digital native media in southern Europe**

Rubén Rivas-de-Roca<sup>1\*</sup>, Cruz Negreira-Rey<sup>1</sup> and Xosé López García<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela, Spain

\*rubenrafael.rivasderoca@usc.es

This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published online by SAGE Journals in Journalism on 21 November 2025, available online:

<https://doi.org/10.1177/14648849251403225>

# Local news, social commitment and public usefulness: case studies of digital native media in southern Europe

## Abstract

Local journalism plays a crucial role in the social and political life of many territories. This does not prevent this specialisation from experiencing problems caused by the crisis in the business model, leading to the emergence of digital native media. The aim of this research is to analyse how digital native media in Southern Europe develop their information model and their relationship with their audience, in particular social commitment and public usefulness. Our study is based on five case studies of local outlets in France, Spain, Italy, and Portugal, selecting projects covering different areas within the same media system. The results show notable differences in terms of transparency and participation, involving an approach that prioritises proximity. Moreover, while some media focus on pluralistic sources and incorporate elements of constructive journalism, others maintain a more institutional profile.

## Keywords

Local journalism, digital media, southern Europe, social commitment, public usefulness

## Introduction

Local journalism has recently undergone profound transformations. After the general crisis of the traditional media model (Franklin, 2008), the first decades of the 21st century have been marked by an economic, professional and trust crisis in journalism in a changing Western society (Nielsen, 2016). In addition to the lingering effects of the recession was the COVID-19 crisis, which increased economic hardship as journalists struggled to maintain their independence and professional role (Maniou et al., 2025) in a precarious and *permacrisis* situation (Papadopoulou et al., 2024). Local media responded by innovating services to meet audience needs, while seeking profitability (Olsen & Furseth, 2023).

Despite the reasons for concern, the last few decades have witnessed a renewal of local media ecosystems with the growth of local and hyperlocal digital native media, understanding hyperlocal as reporting very small and specific geographic areas such as neighbourhoods or villages (Harte et al., 2018). Many of them emerged in a context of crisis (Negredo et al., 2020), opting for entrepreneurship and pursuing a clear vocation to provide information to the community (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2023). Digital native media in Europe have opened up new forms of journalism that maintain traditional principles and innovate beyond technology, placing the audience at the centre and integrating them into the production processes (García-Orosa et al., 2020).

Local media manage to remain the preferred option for most citizens when it comes to subscriptions (Newman et al., 2024), although the challenge is still to protect their position as a news reference (Wadbring & Bergström, 2015). Previous comparative studies show how European local media have made significant efforts to adapt to the digital medium and to changing audience behaviours (Jenkins & Jerónimo, 2021; Negreira-Rey et al., 2022).

Therefore, this research pursues the main objective of finding out how local digital native media in Western and Southern Europe build their news models and their relationship with audiences. To this end, the frame of local media and journalism studies was adopted, focusing on their public service mission, based on the concepts of social commitment, news quality, and public usefulness, which are discussed in the theoretical background. The research is based on the analysis of five case studies, selecting news outlets from France, Spain, Italy, and Portugal that cover different geographical and social areas, and present different business models and editorial strategies.

The news ecosystems of France, Spain, Italy, and Portugal are commonly grouped under the polarized pluralist model, characterized by strong political parallelism, significant state involvement in media, and relatively low news consumption. In France there is a huge public intervention together a culture of check and balances (Badillo et al., 2016; Fernández-Viso & Fernández-Alonso, 2024), but concerns about media concentration persist. Spanish news media are highly politicized, with opaque subsidies to some political-oriented news outlets at both the national and regional levels (Fernández-Alonso & Espín-Heras, 2022).

Italy's media landscape features a blend of public and private dominance, with historical ties between media owners and political elites (Memoli & Splendore, 2014); meanwhile, Portugal can be considered a unique case. This country is on the path to the degovernmentalisation of media policies (Fernández-Viso & Fernández-Alonso, 2024). In fact, the Portuguese news ecosystem is assessed as a borderline case that is much closer to the liberal model (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). Across all four countries, traditional media is in decline while digital and social media are rising in influence, in a framework of political parallelism.

These shared features make Southern Europe a revealing region for studying the practices of local journalism. The diversity of news outlets chosen will allow us to learn about different approaches to the production of valuable high-quality information for local citizens, as well as projects that move forward with participatory strategies and corporate principles oriented towards social commitment. Two specific objectives are pursued:

S.O. 1. To study the degree of social commitment of the media, analysing their corporate and editorial dimension regarding transparency and ethics, the formal structure of their websites or relations with their audience.

S.O. 2. To analyse the news production of the media in the sample in order to study parameters linked to quality, constructive approach and the value of journalistic content in a proximity context.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### *Local journalism in the digital age*

Proximity online media, which play a key role in the social, economic and cultural life, are no stranger to the tensions between tradition and change in digital journalism (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009). In fact, some authors underline that the decline in the number of these local media threatens democratic functioning (Barclay et al., 2024), insofar as these enterprises are political actors that make it possible to know what is happening in the areas closest to them. Despite the difficulties and renewed challenges, local journalism is at a

stage where its central role in the societies of the third millennium is evidenced by current technologies (Eldridge et al., 2019).

Technological innovation has opened the door to new alliances and the defence of old news values in order to improve the functioning of democratic societies (Esser & Neuberger, 2019). In a context in which digital native media are becoming increasingly important (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2023), proximity information is emerging as a central political element in the construction of local online communities (Rivas-de-Roca et al., 2020).

Proximity journalism in the digital society revolves around the three Cs of community, commitment and continuity (Gulyas & Hess, 2024). These elements revalue the importance of locally created news in the day-to-day lives of residents and those who maintain relationships with these communities (Khanom et al., 2023). This news is produced within the framework of the authority and democratic role of current mainstream news journalism, based on an updated set of news values adapted to the digitalized network society (Harcup & O'Neill, 2017).

In order to combat news deserts, local and hyperlocal media provide information to all social groups and encourage civic participation, forming basic social institutions for these communities (Neff & Pickard, 2023). But these media are challenged to find new ways of interacting with users to be as close as possible to citizens and their needs and concerns (Jerónimo et al., 2022).

The current challenges of local journalism encourage a great deal of experimentation in the different product models. Some examples are the development of pieces through data journalism (Veglis, 2025), investigative journalism (Turkel et al., 2021) or constructive journalism (Rotmeijer, 2019). Recent research suggests that users value these efforts and pieces that offer solutions, as long as the journalists producing them maintain a “suitable distance” from sources and sponsors (Mellor & Nguyen, 2023).

### *Conceptualising local public service journalism*

Local journalism is reshaping itself through renewed audience engagement practices and strategies and news formats (Mota, 2023) in order to meet the challenges ahead. Despite the profound changes in the sector, the usefulness of local information continues to be a crucial element (Jenkins & Nielsen, 2020), which is linked to the idea of quality. In this respect, news quality is related to classic principles of local journalism, such as reflecting the needs of all citizens, addressing issues of public interest or fostering political commitment (Urban & Schweiger, 2014).

In the multimedia and cultural context of recent decades, authors such as Deuze (2005) reinterpret the classic values of journalism towards key ideas: public service, objectivity, autonomy, immediacy and ethics. However, in the local sphere, certain differences emerge. Information is established as civic journalism, in which the function of monitoring power is still relevant for the audience, but more so for older people (Heider et al., 2005). Moreover, these authors detect how the contribution of solutions is more valued by communities traditionally distanced from power (African-Americans, Hispanics, adults with low income and education, women, etc.).

The notion of quality in proximity journalism intermingles with more popular information, and away from traditional standards of quality, to give rise to so-called “service journalism”, which is defined by its commitment to day-to-day problems and solutions to them (Eide & Knight, 1999; Heiselberg & Hopmann, 2024). The prioritisation of everyday life issues also explains the genesis of new journalistic roles such as service provider, connector and guide (Hanitzsch & Vos, 2018).

To understand audience needs, it is of interest how Rintamäki et al. (2007) describe the value of a product or service along four dimensions: functional (follow-up), symbolic (everyday stories), emotional (unique content: avoiding missing out) and economic value. Moreover, incorporating a solutions perspective once again challenges the boundaries between quality and popularity, forcing the reconciliation of editorial and commercial objectives.

Hermans and Gyldensted (2019) point out the following approaches to constructive journalism, as shown in Serrano-Puche (2020): mentioning solutions, forward-looking pieces, including diverse voices, providing context or encouraging audience commitment. In any case, local media have their own democratic functions, such as informing citizens and representing their opinion within the community (Barnett, 2009). Therefore, the media agenda contributes to creating a sense of community and consequently social cohesion (Costerá Meijer, 2010).

Based on the above, several ideal approaches for community journalism are defined (Costerá Meijer, 2020): reciprocity and responsiveness of the audience, learning about the area, telling stories from the inside, facilitating regional orientation and dealing with complexity. She suggests that these approaches, coupled with addressing issues of special interest such as the environment or security, result in a more satisfying experience for the recipient.

In a historical moment of audience centrality, what is truly innovative is discerning audiences' information needs (Lewis et al., 2024). To find out to what extent a local news piece responds to the interests of its audience, Napoli et al. (2017) designed a model based on whether the content was original and dealt with issues important to the local community. The SEI (Social Engagement Indicator), which assesses the extent to which local media serve their community, is also along the same lines (Caro-González et al., 2024). The SEI is organised into three main blocks to measure the degree of compliance: formal structure, audience relations and transparency.

All these contributions reveal that quality local journalism is linked to the idea of public usefulness. This function is the result of the relationship of interdependence between local media and the community they serve, which justifies the application of case studies on specific territories to examine their news performance.

## **Methodology**

This research analyses the reporting activity of various European local media. To do so, a content analysis is applied to their news pieces, with the aim of finding out the composition of these messages (Igartua Perosanz, 2006). Specifically, our study seeks to systematically describe the contents published by five outlets: two in Spain (Somos Madrid and Xornal de

Lemos), one in Italy (Genova24.it), one in Portugal (Mensagem de Lisboa) and one in France (Rue89 Lyon). Two media outlets were selected in Spain because it is a country with a significant gap between rural and metropolitan media, due to the existence of news deserts (Negreira-Rey et al., 2023). Besides that, it has an abundance of digital initiatives (Newman et al., 2024), so an inner comparison was sought.

To ensure the representativeness of the news pieces sample, a constructed week is used during the months of January and February 2025: Tuesday 7 January, Wednesday 15 January, Thursday 23 January, Friday 31 January, Saturday 8 February, Sunday 16 February, and Monday 17 February. The constructed week is commonly used for news content analysis (Stempel & Westley, 1989) because the sample is usually less affected by fluctuations that may be caused by breaking news or celebrations that periodically alter the agenda, such as Christmas or Carnival –although it lacks the ability to monitor continuously, especially in low-frequency publication media.

At the end of each day, 10 pieces of information were made available on the front page of the medium's website. If such a volume of publications was not reached, texts from previous days could be selected. The sample consisted of all those front-page news items that were not repeated among themselves (n=306). These units were analysed by two coders, who applied non-dichotomous variables to respond to the values and approaches involved in proximity reporting. The media were also subjected to the SEI categories, with the aim of analysing their audience relations and transparency in advance.

The quantitative data study is based on eight blocks of variables: authorship, main topic, news values, sources, location, constructive approach, proximity value and journalistic value. The items of authorship and main topic are related to the production of original content, which is an essential characteristic of local journalism (Napoli et al., 2017). In addition, classic variables, such as sources, are included, as well as more novel variables that overlap with the value and constructive capacity of the information. All categories are derived from previous literature (Table 1) and, apart from authorship and number of sources, accept multiple responses, which are analysed statistically.

**Table 1.** Variables for news content analysis.

<b>Authorship</b>	Journalist; agency; newsroom; abstract terms; no authorship.	Napoli et al., 2017 (original content)
<b>Main topic</b>	Arts, culture and entertainment; social affairs; disasters and accidents; science and technology; sports; riots, conflicts and wars; economics, business and finance; education; lifestyle and leisure; environment; weather; police and justice; politics; religion; health; urbanism.	International Press and Telecommunications Council (Del Valle & García, 2002). Napoli et al., 2017 (original content)
<b>News values</b>	Exclusivity; bad news; conflict; surprise; audiovisual; shareability; entertainment; drama; following; elite and power; relevance; magnitude and impact;	Harcup & O'Neill, 2017

	celebrity; good news; media agenda; proximity.	
<b>Sources (cited)</b>	Number and identification; classification (institutional and official -public administrations-; political -parties, parliamentary groups-; economic -companies-; alternative -scientific experts-; civil society -citizens, trade unions, associations, NGOs-; media system; cultural; other).	Casero Ripollés & López Rabadán, 2013
<b>Location</b>	International; national; regional; local and hyperlocal.	Rivas-de-Roca et al., 2020
	Places cited	
<b>Constructive approach</b>	Offering solutions; future-oriented; explanation and context; user collaboration	Serrano-Puche, 2020; Hermans & Gyldensted, 2019
<b>Proximity approach / value</b>	Reciprocity and responsiveness of audience; learning about the area (learning); telling stories from the inside; facilitating regional orientation; addressing complexity.	Costera Meijer, 2020
<b>News piece value</b>	Functional (follow-up; update; explanation; context; practical information); symbolic (everyday stories); emotional (unique content; timeliness; positivity); economic.	Heiselberg & Hopmann, 2024; Rintamäki et al., 2007

Inter-coder reliability was calculated through Krippendorff's Alpha, based on a pretest on 10% of the sample. Acceptable values (Krippendorff, 2011) were achieved for each of the variables (between .65 and 1), with an average of .88. Items with low scores were further developed in the codebook to ensure reliability. Our study data were processed using SPSS statistical software, version 29.

The objectives of this research are addressed through case studies (Norander & Brandhorst, 2017) of digital native media with local and hyperlocal reach in the context of the polarised pluralist media system of Southern Europe (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). The five selected cases share their digital native origin and their proximity reach, confronting local and hyperlocal media that operate in both metropolitan and rural environments. They also represent the diverse and innovative models that can be found among local digital media.

Regarding their editorial and business models, they belong to media projects that expand as part of a network, maintain alliances with national outlets, are supported by social initiatives and groups, and diversify their funding sources—subsidies, subscriptions, reader donations, etc. Some have been recognised for their innovative nature through competitive funding calls and develop different strategies for connecting with the local community and

engaging the audience. In addition, the trajectory of media outlets that have been operating for more than a decade is compared with others that, despite being only five or six years old, have established themselves in their local markets. The particularities of each news outlet are detailed below.

**Rue89 Lyon** was launched in 2011 by three journalists, a salesman and a graphic designer who previously worked at Lyon Capital magazine. They started using the name Rue89, working together until it was purchased by Le Monde and integrated into Le Nouvel Obs. The medium covers the city of Lyon and is defined as a project of investigative reporting and in-depth articles, committed to social, environmental and anti-right-wing issues, but non-partisan (Rue89 Lyon, n.d.).

**Genova24.it** started its activity in 2010, covering the metropolitan city of Genoa and its 67 municipalities, located in the Italian region of Liguria. It is the first digital native media in the city (Splendore, 2020) and is part of the Liguria News media network, composed of other local newspapers that cover the whole region since 2016. Genova24.it is managed by Andrea Chivelli and the team is made up of 16 other professionals.

**Mensagem de Lisboa** was established during 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, and started its activity in 2021 driven by the business group O Valor do Tempo in order to promote the café A Brasileira do Chiado, the project's headquarters (Mensagem de Lisboa, n.d.; de Oliveira, 2023). Although it is a recently created medium, it has already become one of the digital natives with the highest audience engagement in Portugal (Pinto-Martinho, Paisana & Cardoso, 2024). The project defines itself as a medium "about Lisbon, from Lisbon and for Lisbon" (Mensagem de Lisboa, n.d.).

**Somos Malasaña** was one of the first hyperlocal digital natives in Spain, giving coverage since 2009 to the neighbourhood of Malasaña, in the Centro district—with more than 139 thousand inhabitants (Ayuntamiento de Madrid, 2023)—of the city of Madrid, the country's capital. The project has been growing as a network of hyperlocal outlets for different neighbourhoods of the city, which ended up as the Somos Madrid group. In June 2019, they set up a partnership with elDiario.es, a digital native with national reach, benefiting from its greater projection and reader base (Negreira-Rey, 2020).

**Xornal de Lemos** started its activity in 2019, positioning itself as “the first large digital media in Galician in the south of the province of Lugo” to give visibility to the demands of the citizens and to claim more institutional support for the development of the area (Xornal de Lemos, n.d.). The media has a local scope, covering the areas of Terra de Lemos, Chantada, Quiroga and Sarria, a rural space in the region of Galicia, in north-western Spain, inhabited by some 80 thousand people. Although the project has its own business entity, it is associated with Galicia Confidencial, one of the first and longest-lived digital natives in the region.

## Results

### *Social and thematic trends*

As one of the strategies of this research is to further our understanding on the level of social commitment in terms of audience, we early focus on the analysis of the SEI as an indicator, which has shown us the strategies of the analysed media in the dimensions of their

relationship with the audience and transparency. First, all the media provide options for the user to share the news through social networks or other channels such as email, while only Mensagem de Lisboa and Rue89 Lyon allow comments on their news, requiring registration or user identification. In terms of content production, Genova24.it allows news to be sent—headline, text, image—or information on current events, and Rue89 Lyon has an opinion section open to contributions, a mailbox for sending anonymous complaints securely and the space Le Place de Gones, where registered users can comment on and discuss current issues in community, with personalisation options.

For its part, Mensagem de Lisboa also has a mailbox for suggesting topics for journalistic coverage. In addition, three of the outlets studied—Somos Madrid, Mensagem de Lisboa and Rue89 Lyon—have invitations for the user to subscribe in different places on their websites, giving the option to register and receive a newsletter. These sharing tools can be assessed as means of participation, but also as ways to increase web traffic.

With regard to transparency, all the media have some kind of corporate information, although with different levels of depth—for example, Genova24.it only provides some information in the footer of the website, while the others have one or more pages with information about their journalistic principles and organisational structure. Among this information we find data on the staff (Xornal de Lemos, Somos Madrid, Mensagem de Lisboa and Rue89 Lyon identify their journalists and some allow contact by email), their editorial line and principles (which we find in Xornal de Lemos, Mensagem de Lisboa and Rue89 Lyon), or identification of donors, sponsors or data on economic income (Mensagem de Lisboa identifies the aid received from European projects, large technological companies and other collaborators). Finally, it is noted that only Mensagem de Lisboa states its adherence to codes of ethics (the Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists and the AI Code of Use) and that Rue89 Lyon is the only media member of a professional union (Spil, the independent online news press union).

It is interesting to note that despite the fact that the sample was designed to obtain 70 news items, some media publish fewer front page stories: Rue89 Lyon (67 news items), Somos Madrid (63) and, above all, Mensagem de Lisboa (36), which produces less news linked to daily current events and it is common for these pieces to remain on the front page for days. Therefore, it is found a tendency to keep certain news items on the front page for days, which seems to be a joint practice of some of the media considered.

Moreover, the texts are usually signed by journalists, with the exception of two media: Genova24.it (44.3% of the total produced by editorial staff) and Xornal de Lemos (78.6% of the total produced by editorial staff). This denotes a lack of transparency about who writes the news, particularly evident in the Galician digital newspaper.

According to our analysis, there are also notable differences in the thematic composition between media (Table 2), within a relatively fragmented agenda. Art, culture and entertainment is the most frequently covered topic in Mensagem de Lisboa (44.44%) and Xornal de Lemos (28.57%), even though the agenda is more diverse in the latter, where several items reach relevant percentages, such as politics (24.28%). In Mensagem de Lisboa, on the other hand, the second most popular topic is lifestyle and free time (38.89%).

**Table 2.** Thematic distribution of news by medium (%).

	<i>Xornal de Lemos</i>	<i>Somos Madrid</i>	<i>Mensagem de Lisboa</i>	<i>Rue89 Lyon</i>	<i>Genova24.it</i>
Urbanism	10.00	41.27	13.89	1.49	25.71
Health	0.00	3.17	2.78	2.99	5.71
Religion	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.86
Politics	24.29	23.81	16.67	31.34	10.00
Police and Justice	4.29	7.94	0.00	11.94	28.57
Weather	0.00	6.35	0.00	0.00	2.86
Environment	8.57	6.35	2.78	13.43	7.14
Lifestyle and free time	15.71	6.35	38.89	4.48	1.43
Education	2.86	1.59	8.33	14.93	2.86
Economy	10.00	3.17	0.00	7.46	11.43
Disputes, conflicts	0.00	6.35	0.00	2.99	4.29
Sports	12.86	1.59	0.00	0.00	2.86
Science and technology	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Catastrophes and accidents	1.43	1.59	2.78	0.00	18.57
Social affairs	7.14	31.75	16.67	47.76	11.43
Art, culture, entertainment	28.57	20.63	44.44	11.94	10.00

The two most popular topics in Somos Madrid are urban planning (41.27%) and social issues (31.75%), while these same social issues are the most popular in Ru89 Lyon (47.76%), along with politics (31.34%). Urban planning (25.71%) also appears in Genova24.it, followed by police and justice (28.57%), although the Italian medium is characterised by a greater volume of topics. Beyond these differences in the focus of media coverage, art, culture and entertainment, and politics, are the only two categories that reach at least 10% in all the media analysed.

#### *Articulation of news articles*

Journalism must construct its news offer based on a series of news values, which determine what is newsworthy according to public interest. Following Harcup and O'Neill (2017), Table 3 shows that all the media prioritise proximity as the most important factor in the selection of news, with percentages above 90% except for Genova24.it. This finding makes sense in the context of local media, specialised in one specific territory. Proximity is followed by the more generic criterion of relevance.

**Table 3.** News values present by medium (%).

	<i>Xornal de Lemos</i>	<i>Somos Madrid</i>	<i>Mensagem de Lisboa</i>	<i>Rue89 Lyon</i>	<i>Genova24.it</i>
Proximity	97.14	95.24	94.44	92.54	78.57
Media agenda	2.86	0.00	13.89	13.43	4.29

Good news	18.57	9.52	41.67	7.46	12.86
Celebrity	1.43	0.00	5.56	0.00	0.00
Magnitude and impact	17.14	20.63	19.44	26.87	21.43
Relevance	45.71	53.97	16.67	56.72	64.29
Elite and power	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.48	4.29
Follow-up	1.43	19.05	2.78	28.36	7.14
Drama	0.00	1.59	0.00	0.00	2.86
Entertainment	8.57	9.52	0.00	1.49	2.86
Shareability	0.00	3.17	0.00	2.99	2.86
Audiovisuals	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.99	0.00
Surprise	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.49	5.71
Conflict	15.71	30.16	13.89	38.81	17.14
Bad news	4.29	4.76	0.00	11.94	11.43
Exclusivity	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.49	0.00

Some of the most relevant include the high percentage of good news (41.67%) in Mensagem de Lisboa, demonstrating a positive approach, while Rue89 Lyon shows a notable inclination towards conflict (38.81%) and follow-up (28.36%). On the other hand, Xornal de Lemos and Genova24.it show a certain diversity of opinions. Overall, it is noteworthy that values related to elite and power, exclusivity, audiovisual elements and entertainment, which was present as a theme, are scarcely found in the sample. Therefore, traditional news criteria (proximity, relevance, magnitude) predominate over more sensationalist or commercial factors.

Concerning the type of sources cited (Table 4), the results show significant differences in the five media analysed. Mensagem de Lisboa (100%) and Rue89 Lyon (83.58%) stand out for their strong presence of civil society, to the extent that the Portuguese daily always incorporates this perspective of society. In both media, alternative sources exceed 40%, which suggests an interest in integrating a community vision. However, there is also a more traditional strategy underlying the sample, which prioritises political sources (71.43% in Genova24.it, 55.22% in Rue89 Lyon), or institutional ones (71.43% in Somos Madrid, 65.71% in Genova24.it).

**Table 4.** Types of sources by medium (%).

	<i>Xornal de Lemos</i>	<i>Somos Madrid</i>	<i>Mensagem de Lisboa</i>	<i>Rue89 Lyon</i>	<i>Genova24.it</i>
Cultural	11.43	26.98	47.22	10.45	14.29
Media system	4.29	20.63	13.89	29.85	5.71
Civil society	12.86	34.92	100.00	83.58	8.57
Alternative	10.00	26.98	41.67	46.27	15.71
Economics	10.00	14.29	5.56	34.33	15.71
Politics	40.00	39.68	0.00	55.22	71.43
Institutional and official	37.14	71.43	36.11	55.22	65.71

Economic sources have a moderate presence in most of the media, even less in Mensagem de Lisboa (5.56%). Likewise, the media system is not a major source of information, although it is used extensively in Somos Madrid and Rue89 Lyon. The fact that the latter, together with the Portuguese daily, uses more alternative sources possibly reflects a critical position in the management of information.

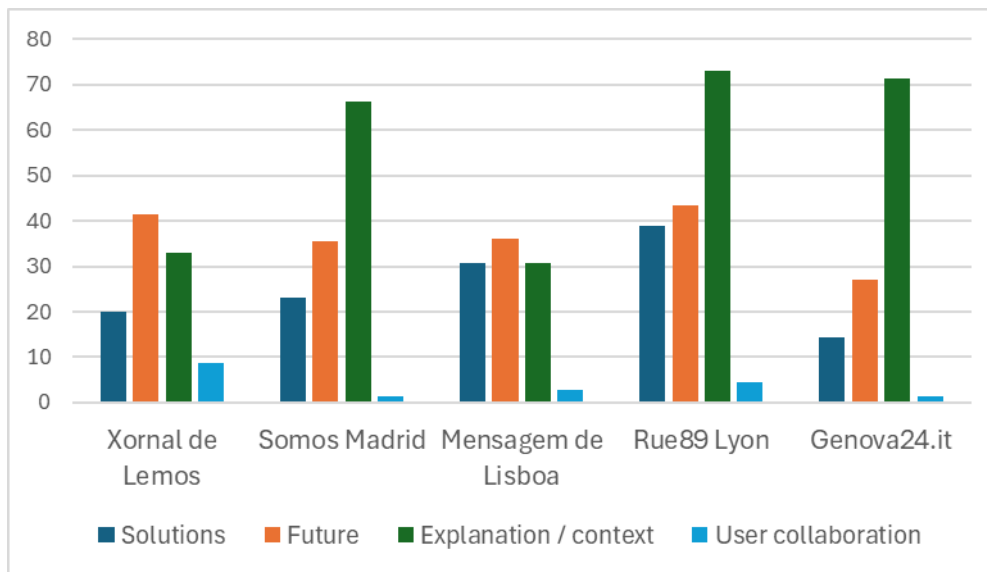
Hence, in relation to the purpose of analysing the social commitment of the media they all share a proximity-oriented approach, avoiding commercial news criteria. Conversely, the use of sources presents differences within the sample. Civil society is only massively employed in the Portuguese and French cases, while political and institutional sources are highly referred. This shows a trend to produce news items with a value of proximity, but from the perspective of official sources with a political character, which has implications since they can serve their own interests rather than the interests of citizens.

#### *Constructive approach and service journalism*

The usefulness of local information has to do with the fact that it deals with issues to citizens' daily lives. On this matter, our research detects that the predominant focus of the news is local, which is to be expected, although in Somos Madrid (52.38%) and Mensagem de Lisboa (52.78%) half of the pieces also have a hyperlocal orientation. This means that attention is paid to information on neighbourhoods, in this case in large cities such as Madrid and Lisbon.

The service role is also linked to constructive approaches, which present different degrees of implementation among the analysed media (Figure 1). Rue89 Lyon leads in providing solutions (38.8%) and providing explanation/context (73.1%), indicating an orientation towards journalism that not only informs, but also seeks a deeper understanding by readers. Genova.24.it (71.4%) and Somos Madrid (66.2%) also make frequent use of explanation/context, which has become the most usual solutions journalism formula in the sample.

**Figure 1.** Use of the constructive approach by medium (%).



**Source:** own elaboration.

The most balanced use of several strategies is found in Mensagem de Lisboa, with three categories of around 30%. Its most frequently used formula is “future”, as in Xornal de Lemos, so that these two media show a willingness to analyse future events. On the other hand, user participation is very low in all cases, with only the latter Galician daily standing out (8.6%). Thus, the application of constructive journalism formulas is slightly different between media, but there is a clear predominance of explanation and context.

As for the proximity value given to the news, it is quite heterogeneous (Table 5), although certain trends can be observed. Mensagem de Lisboa clearly stands out in the indicator “telling from inside” (69.44%), which suggests a strong connection with the local voices that are the protagonists of the news in the Portuguese capital. On the other hand, Genova24.it has a high volume of “learning” (51.42%), which indicates a commitment to content that empowers audiences, to which the regional orientation item also contributes.

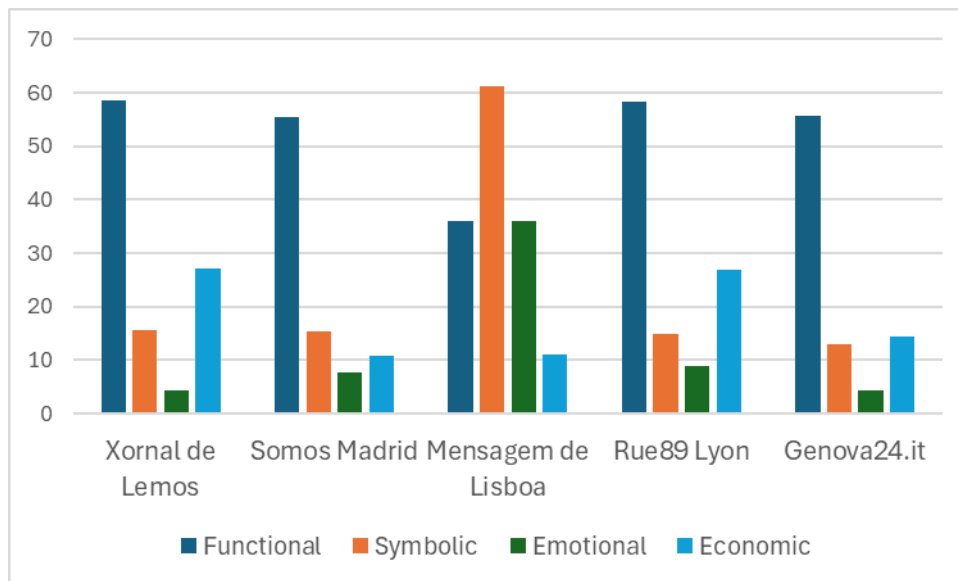
**Table 5.** Distribution of the proximity value by medium (%).

	<i>Xornal de Lemos</i>	<i>Somos Madrid</i>	<i>Mensagem de Lisboa</i>	<i>Rue89 Lyon</i>	<i>Genova24.it</i>
Reciprocity	15.71	1.53	11.11	7.46	1.42
Learning	24.28	32.30	25.00	28.35	51.42
Telling from inside	18.57	15.38	69.44	37.31	11.42
Regional orientation	18.57	21.53	30.55	34.32	27.14
Approach complexity	10.00	29.23	22.22	38.80	17.14

The use of the various categories is balanced in Rue89 Lyon (with the exception of reciprocity) and, to a lesser extent, in Xornal de Lemos and Somos Madrid. The highest percentages of values in these two media are found in “learning”, with 24.28% and 32.30% respectively.

From a more general perspective, journalistic value is examined (Figure 2). Functional and therefore more pragmatic journalistic value predominates in most of the media, except for Mensagem de Lisboa. This online newspaper again shows a pattern that departs from the generic trend, materialised here through a strong symbolic (61.1%) and emotional (36.1%) content that has an interpretative style. This means to provide unique content that goes beyond follow-ups and focus on news with a significance for the public, which can increase audience engagement.

**Figure 2.** Distribution of journalistic value by medium (%).



**Source:** own elaboration.

In the sample as a whole, a more symbolic than emotional style is observed, which is reserved for specific moments. As for the economic value, its informative value is lower than that of the “functional” variable, although the cases of Xornal de Lemos (27.1%) and Rue89 Lyon (26.9%) are noteworthy. These two media reflect a greater willingness to provide news that is of some kind of economic interest to their audiences.

Summing up, the news production is marked by a constructive approach that prioritizes the provision of contextual information. This links to the use of a functional service to the public, but the presence of proximity values is diverse. When reporting, there are different values that are attributed to local information.

## Discussion and Conclusions

Local digital journalism involves much more than the use of a particular technology, insofar as it is journalism itself that gives it purpose, form, perspective and meaning (Zelizer, 2019), incorporating new dimensions that maintain the traditional values of the profession. The question is to what extent these digital native media are more reflective or foster a higher commitment to society. Although the literature considers local media as a space for innovation, stemming from their audience orientation (Olsen & Furseth, 2023), there are few studies comparing the coverage of different local digital native media, therefore our

research aimed to shed light on this issue in a transnational territory that shares political, social and media characteristics, such as Southern Europe.

Two interrelated contributions are presented, which respond to the objectives set out. Firstly (S.O. 1.), the analysis of media social commitment (SEI, according to the indicator defined by Caro-González et al., 2024) reveals important differences in terms of transparency and citizen participation. Even though all their websites allow content sharing, only some of them enable more robust interactive mechanisms, such as comments or collaborative spaces, which hinders two-way communication. The cases of Rue89 Lyon and Mensagem de Lisboa are the most notable, as they have channels for public participation, either through complaint boxes, open opinion sections or community forums. In terms of institutional transparency, most provide basic information on their structure and staff, but only Mensagem de Lisboa provides comprehensive data on funding and adherence to international ethical codes. Although local media tend to be more reliable than those with a wider reach, they should improve their transparency capital, as this will be one of their greatest assets in maintaining trustworthiness with their audiences (Lewis, 2025). For this purpose, they should also strengthen their adherence to ethical codes and publish their ethical principles, something that is rarely found in the digital editions of local media.

Our study also explores news production (S.O. 2.). In this area, the results show a predominantly local coverage and a widespread use of the proximity criterion as the main news value, which is aligned with previous expectations. However, there are relevant variations in the narrative approach and newsworthiness of the content. While most of the media prioritise a functional perspective, focused on immediate utility, Mensagem de Lisboa opts for a more symbolic and emotional style, in line with interpretative journalism. Both this publication and Rue89 Lyon make frequent use of civil society sources to construct their news pieces, as opposed to the predominance of institutions and politics in Somos Madrid.

Likewise, media such as Rue89 Lyon and Genova24.it stand out for their use of a constructive approach (Hermans & Gyldensted, 2019), adding explanations, solutions and learning elements that enrich the understanding of the issues addressed, especially those linked to social problems close to the audiences. All this contrasts with the more traditional treatment of Xornal de Lemos, providing the least explanation and context in its texts, which are also mostly signed by the editorial staff.

In conclusion, the findings of the study point to the existence of a diverse local digital media ecosystem in these southern European cases, in which traditional editorial models coexist with more innovative and socially committed ones. The strategies of openness to citizens, the degree of institutional transparency and the quality of journalistic content are not homogeneous, but they allow us to identify practices of interest. Mensagem de Lisboa shows the highest degree of editorial responsibility and alignment with ethical principles. Its special ethical dimension to reach the public from a participatory approach was already found by the literature (de Oliveira, 2023).

The media examined have in common their commitment to the news value of proximity, which is in line with objectives of local journalism (Gulyas & Hess, 2024). This value materialized in a different way within sample, ranging from learning to regional orientation. The selected media outlets belong to the same polarised pluralist media system (Hallin &

Mancini, 2004), but they might be determined by different journalistic cultures, in which the embeddedness of journalists in a singular community play a role (Vos & Hanusch, 2024).

However, this article has limitations that must be taken into account, as a result of the application of the case study itself. Our sample analyses five media from four countries during a constructed week, so larger samples would be interesting in order to confirm our findings. Moreover, the news treatment is probably influenced by internal factors that could be examined, such as the number of workers or the way newsrooms work. Nevertheless, the case study carried out makes it possible to gain an in-depth knowledge of the news pieces published, observing their level of proximity to the audience.

Proximity information is essential for the construction of local digital communities. Future studies therefore face the challenge of not only analysing more media and doing so from an insider's perspective, but also of examining the problems and opportunities brought about by the massive arrival of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in these communities. AI is used more in news organisations where it can create value (Wilczek et al., 2024), which is of interest to local news because of the precariousness and small size of their businesses.

In this scenario, it is particularly important to analyse the survival and evolution of the proximity approach (Costera Meijer, 2020). Our study shows that some media focus on citizens' voices and alternative narratives, as opposed to the more institutional or political approach of others. The latter has implications for the partisan use of journalism. It should be noted that prior scholarship highlights the function of local media as a political institution (Barclay et al., 2024). The question is whether some institutional or political actors appropriate this type of media, which requires nonprofit interventions to safeguard their sustainability and independence (Usher & Kim-Leffingwell, 2024).

These cases illustrate a path towards a more participatory, ethical and constructive journalism, in which the link with the community and attention to proximity become key elements in strengthening the social and democratic role of the media in the digital environment. Future research may also consider the funding or the political ties of the local media outlets as explanatory factors of their news coverage.

## **Funding**

- This article is part of the R&D project Digital-native media in Spain: Strategies, competencies, social involvement and (re)definition of practices in journalistic production and diffusion (PID2021-122534OB-C21), funded by MICIU/AEI/10.13039/501100011033 and "ERDF/EU".
- This article is part of the R&D project Artificial intelligence in digital media in Spain: effects and roles (PID2024-156034OB-C22), funded by MICIU/AEI/10.13039/501100011033 and "ERDF/EU".

## **References**

Ayuntamiento de Madrid (2023). *Anuario estadístico 2023*. Retrieved from the statistics of Ayuntamiento de Madrid.

- Badillo, P.-Y., Bourgeois, D., & Lesourd J.-B. (2016). Media Concentration in France. In E. Noam (Eds.), *Who owns the World's Media? Media Concentration and Ownership around the World* (pp. 80-99). Oxford University Press.
- Barclay, S., Barnett, S., Moore, M., & Townend, J. (2024). Local news as political institution and the repercussions of 'news deserts': A qualitative study of seven UK local areas. *Journalism*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/14648849241272255>
- Barnett, S. (2009). *Journalism, Democracy and the Public Interest: rethinking media pluralism for the Digital Age*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism.
- Caro-González, F. J., Rivas-de-Roca, R., Garrido-Lora, M., & García-Gordillo, M. (2024). Indicador de Compromiso Social (ICS) en el periodismo de proximidad: hacia un modelo de calidad en los medios locales. *Profesional de la información*, 33(2), e330219. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2024.0219>
- Casero Ripollés, A., & López Rabadán, P. (2013). La gestión de fuentes informativas como criterio de calidad profesional. In J. L. Gómez Mompert, J. F. Gutiérrez Lozano, & D. Palau Sampio (Eds.), *La calidad periodística. Teorías, investigaciones y sugerencias profesionales* (pp. 73-89). Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Universitat Jaume I, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Universitat de València.
- Costera Meijer, I. (2010). Democratizing journalism? *Journalism Studies*, 11(3), 327-342. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616700903500256>
- Costera Meijer, I. (2020). What Does the Audience Experience as Valuable Local Journalism: Approaching Local News Quality from a User's Perspective. In A. Gulyas & D. Baines (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Local Media and Journalism*, 357-367. Routledge.
- De Oliveira, D. S. S. (2023). *Readers' needs and engagement: how Mensagem de Lisboa is connecting with its readers*. [Master's Degree thesis]. Universidade Católica Portuguesa. <http://hdl.handle.net/10400.14/44837>
- Del Valle, F., & García, A. (2002). Construcción de un tesoro para el Centro de Documentación de Telecinco. *Scire*, 8(1), 103-118. <https://doi.org/10.54886/scire.v8i1.1162>
- Deuze, M. (2005). What is journalism? Professional identity and ideology of journalists reconsidered. *Journalism*, 6(4), 442-464. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884905056815>
- Eide, M., & Knight, G. (1999). Public/Private Service: Service Journalism and the Problems of Everyday Life. *European Journal of Communication*, 14(4), 525-547. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323199014004004>
- Eldridge, S. A., Hess, K., Tandoc, E., & Westlund, O. (2019). Editorial: Digital Journalism (Studies) – Defining the Field. *Digital Journalism*, 7(3), 315-319. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2019.1587308>
- Esser, F., & Neuberger, C. (2019). Realizing the democratic functions of journalism in the digital age: New alliances and a return to old values. *Journalism*, 20(1), 194-197. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884918807067>

- Fernández-Alonso, I., & Espín-Heras, M. (2022). Políticas relativas a la publicidad institucional y comercial del Gobierno español (2016–2021). *Derecom*, 33, 71-85.
- Fernández-Viso, A., & Fernández-Alonso, I. (2024). The Evolution of Government Intervention in the Mediterranean Media System: Spain, France, and Portugal. *Media and Communication*, 12, 7738. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.7738>
- Franklin, B. (2008). The future of newspapers. *Journalism Practice*, 2(3), 306-317. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512780802280984>
- García-Orosa, B., López-García, X., & Vázquez-Herrero, J. (2020). Journalism in Digital Native Media: Beyond Technological Determinism. *Media and Communication*, 8(2), 5-15. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17645/mac.v8i2.2702>
- Gulyas, A., & Hess, K. (2024). The Three “Cs” of Digital Local Journalism: Community, Commitment and Continuity. *Digital Journalism*, 12(1), 6-12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2023.2211639>
- Hallin D. C., Mancini P. (2004). *Comparing media systems: three models of media and politics*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511790867>
- Hanitzsch, T., & Vos, T. P. (2018). Journalism beyond democracy: A new look into journalistic roles in political and everyday life. *Journalism*, 19(2), 146-164. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884916673386>
- Harcup, T., & O’Neill, D. (2017). What is News? News values revisited (again). *Journalism Studies*, 18(12), 1470-1488. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2016.1150193>
- Harte, D., Howells, R., & Williams, A. (2018). *Hyperlocal Journalism: The decline of local newspapers and the rise of online community news*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315561240>
- Heider, D., McCombs, M., & Poindexter, P. M. (2005). What the public expects of local news: Views on public and traditional journalism. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 82(4), 952-967. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107769900508200412>
- Heiselberg, L., & Hopmann, D. N. (2024). Local journalism and its audience. *Journalism*, 25(12), 2543-2563. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14648849231173226>
- Hermans, L., & Gyldensted, C. (2019). Elements of constructive journalism: Characteristics, practical application and audience valuation. *Journalism*, 20(4), 535-551. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884918770537>
- Igartua Perosanz, J. J. (2006). *Métodos cuantitativos de investigación en comunicación*. Bosch.
- Jenkins, J., & Jerónimo, P. (2021). Changing the beat? Local online newsmaking in Finland, France, Germany, Portugal, and the UK. *Journalism Practice*, 15(9), 1222-1239. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2021.1913626>
- Jenkins, J., & Nielsen, R. K. (2020). Proximity, public service, and popularity: A comparative study of how local journalists view quality news. *Journalism Studies*, 21(2), 236-253. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2019.1636704>

- Jerónimo, P., Correia, J. C., & Gradim, A. (2022). Are We Close Enough? Digital Challenges to Local Journalists. *Journalism Practice*, 16(5), 813-827. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2020.1818607>
- Khanom, A., Kiesow, D., Zdun, M., & Shyu, C. (2023). The News Crawler: A Big Data Approach to Local Information Ecosystems. *Media and Communication*, 11(3), 318-329. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v11i3.6789>
- Krippendorff, K. (2011). Agreement and information in the reliability of coding. *Communication methods and measures*, 5(2), 93-112. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19312458.2011.568376>
- Lewis, S. (2025). *The AI and Audience Turns, and Reflections on What We Do: Searching for Conceptual, Normative, and Empirical Paths Forward* [Plenary speech]. Future of Journalism Conference, Cardiff, United Kingdom.
- Lewis, S., Hermida, A., & Lorenzo, S. (2024). Jobs-to-Be-Done and Journalism Innovation: Making News More Responsive to Community Needs. *Media and Communication*, 12, 7578. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.7578>
- Maniou, T. A., Trifonova Price, L., Clark, M., & Papadopoulou, L. (2025). Journalistic role performance in Southern European media systems: Resilience in times of disruption. *International Communication Gazette*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17480485251314613>
- Mellor, N., & Nguyen, A. (2023). Engaging Audiences With Local News: Can Solutions Journalism Be a Solution to Local Media Crisis? *International Journal of Communication*, 17, 6466-6484. <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/21031>
- Memoli, V., & Splendore, S. (2014). Media use and confidence in institutions: a comparative analysis of Hallin and Mancini's three models. *Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica*, 44(2), 176-192. <https://doi.org/10.1426/77646>
- Mensagem de Lisboa (n.d.). *Quem Somos*. <https://amensagem.pt/quem-somos/>
- Mota, D. (2023). A Erosão da Proximidade: Questões e Desafios do Jornalismo Local na Sociedade Contemporânea. *Comunicação e Sociedade*, 44, e023027. [https://doi.org/10.17231/comsoc.44\(2023\).4744](https://doi.org/10.17231/comsoc.44(2023).4744)
- Mitchelstein, E., & Boczkowski, P. J. (2009). Between tradition and change: A review of recent research on online news production. *Journalism*, 10(5), 562-586. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884909106533>
- Napoli, P. M., Stonbely, S., McCollough, K., & Renninger, B. (2017). Local Journalism and the Information Needs of Local Communities. *Journalism Practice*, 11(4), 373-395. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2016.1146625>
- Negredo, S., Martínez-Costa, M., Breiner, J., & Salaverría, R. (2020). Journalism Expands in Spite of the Crisis: Digital-Native News Media in Spain. *Media and Communication*, 8(2), 73-85. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v8i2.2738>
- Negreira-Rey, M. C. (2020). *Cibermedios locais e hiperlocais en España: mapa, modelos e produción informativa* [PhD thesis]. Universidade de Santiago de Compostela.

Negreira-Rey, M. C., Amigo, L., & Jerónimo, P. (2022). Transformation of local journalism: media landscapes and proximity to the public in Spain, France and Portugal. En J. Vázquez-Herrero, A. Silva-Rodríguez, M. C. Negreira-Rey, C. Toural-Bran y X. López-García (Eds.), *Total journalism: Models, techniques and challenges* (pp. 153-167). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-88028-6\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-88028-6_12)

Negreira-Rey, M., Vázquez-Herrero, J., & López-García, X. (2023). No People, No News: News Deserts and Areas at Risk in Spain. *Media and Communication*, 11(3), 293-303. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v11i3.6727>

Neff, T., & Pickard, V. (2023). Building Better Local Media Systems: A Comparative Policy Discourse Analysis of Initiatives to Renew Journalism Around the World. *Journalism Studies*, 24(15), 1877-1897. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2023.2253928>

Newman, N., Fletcher, R., Robertson, C. T., Ross Arguedas, A., & Nielsen, R. K. (2024). *Digital News Report 2024*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford.

Nielsen, R. K. (2016). The many crises of Western journalism: A comparative analysis of economic crises, professional crises, and crises of confidence. In J. C. Alexander, E. Butler Breese, & M. Luengo (Eds.), *The crisis of journalism reconsidered: Democratic culture, professional codes, digital future* (pp. 77-97). Cambridge University Press.

Norander, S., & Brandhorst, N. (2017). Case Study. In Allen, M. (ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods* (pp. 117-119). Sage Publications.

Olsen, R. K., & Furseth, P. I. (2023). Service innovation and value creation in local journalism during times of crisis. *Journalism Studies*, 24(4), 496-514. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2023.2173510>

Papadopoulou, L., Angelou, I., & Katsaounidou, A. (2024). "I love my job, but my job is destroying me". Permacrisis' toll on journalistic practice and perceptions about journalism in Southern Europe. *Journalism*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14648849241272219>

Pinto-Martinho, A., Paisana, M., & Cardoso, G. (2024). *Portugal. Digital News Report 2024*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford. <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2024/portugal>

Rintamäki, T., Kuusela, H., & Mitronen, L. (2007). Identifying competitive customer value propositions in retailing. *Managing Service Quality: An International Journal*, 17(6), 621-634. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09604520710834975>

Rivas-de-Roca, R., García-Gordillo, M., & Caro-González, F. J. (2020). La construcción del periodismo "localizado" en medios digitales europeos. Estudio de casos. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 75, 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2020-1414>

Rotmeijer, S. (2019). 'Words that work?' Practices of constructive journalism in a local Caribbean context. *Journalism*, 20(4), 600-616. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884918770555>

Rue89 Lyon (n.d.). *Qui sommes-nous?* <https://www.rue89lyon.fr/qui-sommes-nous/>

- Serrano-Puche, J. (2020). Periodismo constructivo: una respuesta a las razones de los usuarios para evitar las noticias. *Cuadernos.info*, 46, 153-177. <https://doi.org/10.7764/cdi.46.1714>
- Splendore, S. (2020). The dominance of institutional sources and the establishment of non-elite ones: The case of Italian online local journalism. *Journalism*, 21(7), 990-1006. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884917722896>
- Stempel, G. H., & Westley, B. H. (1989). *Research methods in mass communications*. Prentice-Hall.
- Turkel, E., Saha, A., Carson-Owen, R., Martin, G. J., & Vasserman, S. (2021). A method for measuring investigative journalism in local newspapers. *PNAS*, 118(30), e2105155118. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2105155118>.
- Urban, J., & Schweiger, W. (2014). News Quality From the Recipients' Perspective. *Journalism Studies*, 15(6), 821-840. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2013.856670>
- Usher, N., & Kim-Leffingwell, S. (2024). How Loud does the watchdog bark? A reconsideration of losing local journalism, news nonprofits, and political corruption. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 29(4), 960-982. <https://doi.org/10.1177/19401612231186939>
- Vázquez-Herrero, J., Negreira-Rey, M.-C., & López-García, X. (2023). Research on digital native media: an emerging topic in the field of digital communication. *Profesional de la información*, 32(2), e320202. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2023.mar.02>
- Veglis, A. (2025). Practicing Local Data Journalism: Opportunities and Obstacles. In M. Khosrow-Pour, D.B.A. (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Information Science and Technology, Sixth Edition*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-7366-5.ch066>
- Vos, T. P., & Hanusch, F. (2024). Conceptualizing embeddedness as a key dimension for analyzing journalistic cultures. *Communication Theory*, 34(1), 39–48. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ct/qtad018>
- Wadbring, I., & Bergström, A. (2015). A Print Crisis or a Local Crisis? Local news use over three decades. *Journalism Studies*, 18(2), 175–190. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2015.1042988>
- Wahl-Jorgensen, K. (2023). Origin stories of local journalism entrepreneurs. *Journalism*, 24(10), 2118-2135. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14648849221115223>
- Wilczek, B., Haim, M., & Thurman, N. (2024). Transforming the value chain of local journalism with artificial intelligence. *Almagazine*, 45(2), 200-211. <https://doi.org/10.1002/aaai.12174>
- Xornal de Lemos (n.d.). *Que é XL?* <https://xornaldelemos.gal/que-e-xornal-de-lemos/>
- Zelizer, B. (2019). Why Journalism Is About More Than Digital Technology. *Digital Journalism*, 7(3), 343-350. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2019.1571932>