

Radio Orange 2

Author of the case study

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Abstract in English

Radio Orange 94.0 is a free and independent radio station, located in Vienna. It tries to achieve an open access for different ethnical groups to media by two means. Firstly, a considerable part of the broadcasting at Radio Orange is foreign-language programmes (about 15 %) or programmes which deal with migration topics. Secondly, the Radio tries hard for more direct participation of migrants and minorities in the field of moderating the radio and within the internal structures of the Radio itself.

Area

Media

Kind-category of project

Radio

Kind-category of actor

Registered association

Country

Austria

Year

The association exists since 1994, on-air since 1998

5 key-words

radio, free radio, Vienna, participation, media representation

1. THE PROJECT

1.1. ACTOR

Verein Freies Radio Wien
Klosterneuburger Str. 1
1200 Wien
AUSTRIA

Website: <http://o94.at/>

1.2. Objectives

Radio Orange 94.0 was one of the first free radio stations in Austria. The basic principle of free radios in Austria is the non-governmental and non-commercial character. This independence enables them to focus on special target groups such as migrants, which are usually not interesting for the state or the economy. To ensure diversity and open access for different groups is another basic principle of free radios. These principles can also be found within the directives of Radio Orange as well as in the Charta of the Austrian Association of free radios.

<http://o94.at/info/richtlinien>

http://www.fro.at/show_ueberfro.php?show_n_id=33

The main goals of Radio Orange in short are:

- to offer a programme of diversity and openness as wide as possible
- to compensate the deficits in the mainstream media concerning representation, especially in minority communities, and thus to better reflect the social reality in the media landscape
- to strengthen identities by perceiving themselves represented in medial spheres
- to confront people with multicultural reality in order to reduce internal resentments
- to contribute to a change in the political discourse
- to support possibilities of participation on a broader level, which means also the general composition of the staff and to consider the intercultural aspect as an universal principle in every structural element
- to teach members of minority communities media skills

Komentár: maybe body or constitution

1.3. Activities

THE PROGRAMME:

In order to achieve these goals, the programme of Radio Orange offers a wide variety of broadcasts, which refers to intercultural topics.

I. Programmes made from members of an ethnic community addressed to members of their own community

For example:

- Radio Africa (English/German/French)
- Ada vapuru (Turkish)
- Radio Dersim (Kurdish)
- Radio Nachtwerk (Serbian)
- Viennahu – Becs magyar hangja (Hungarian)
- Sedaje Aschena (Persian)

There are about 13 different programmes altogether.

An important fact can be seen in the Turkish and Kurdish community. They are represented by more than seven programmes, which reflect to a good extent the diversity within the big community; for example rather conservative or rather progressive political and cultural attitudes.

II. From migrants addressed to everybody

Examples are the programmes "Arabischer Morgen (Arabian Morning)" or "Afropa Literatur", which are both about literature in foreign countries. Altogether, there are about 8 programmes working in the same way.

III. Programmes from people with minority background without being migrant

These programmes are mainly held in German. For example programmes of the so-called second generation, younger people born in Austria but with parents, who had immigrated to Austria.

IV. Programmes from members of Austrian majority about migration topics

For example "Radio Stimme" deals with minorities in general – not only ethnic minorities, but also people with different sexual orientation other than "normal" or disabled people.

SELECTION OF THE PROGRAMME:

In general, diversity is the basic principle. Thus a cultural or ethnic group which is yet not represented in the programme has better chances to get a programme place.

Furthermore, a permanent reflection means to keep in mind that not everybody has the same possibilities and abilities to apply for airtime. Although there is no need for the well known Radio to search for applicants, they make efforts to ask certain groups directly; for instance the second generation "migrant" youth. Inner diversity and non-monolithic views on single minorities is an important point, which is demonstrated by the broadcasting of a migrant-women-lesbian radio.

Beside the main goal of supporting a large variety of different views especially within one ethnic group, every group has to be aware of some principles of the radio, what means not being sexist, racist, fascist or to hurt human dignity in any way.

STAFF AND INTERNAL ORGANISATION:

The second principle is to give an opportunity and allow participation. The aim is to fix it on every stage and position itself within the organisation and to keep it in mind in every activity. The idea is comparable to some extent to the idea of the so-called "gender mainstreaming".

In doing so, Radio Orange tries firstly to place at least one member who would represent the migrants' perspective in important panels; for example in the case of the panel, which has to decide about new programmes to be broadcasted.

Moreover, everybody who wants to create a programme in order to broadcast it has to attend an obligatory workshop. Consequently, radio contributors are advised to raise awareness of intercultural topics. This demonstrates the thought that it might not be enough to take care of the formal possibility of participation, but rather to introduce reflection about this topic everywhere, every time and from the very beginning.

1.4. When and how long: structure and steps of the project

Radio Orange has its roots in the pirate radio scenery, which opposed the state's monopoly in broadcasting. Austria was one of the last states, which abolished the state monopoly. The association Verein Freies Radio Wien was founded in 1994. At this time they tried hard to get a license in order to broadcast regularly. Then, Radio Orange 94.0 could go on-air in the beginning of 1998.

As already mentioned, the idea of diversity and open access, especially in case of different cultures, existed from the beginning. But of course, according to Helga Schwarzwald from Radio Orange, the radio today comprises of many more different programmes and more programmes than in the beginning.

1.5 Place and context

To understand the role of Radio Orange 94.0 in its context, it seems to be necessary to briefly introduce the social context and the situation of the media in Austria.

Population Austria:

In 2005 Austria had a foreign population of 9.6 %. Mainly foreigners are from the former Yugoslavia (about 4 % of the whole population) and Turkey (about 1.6 %).

[<http://www.migrationinformation.org/>]

But there is also a considerably high number of people with origins from Africa or the former Soviet Union. The last mentioned are relatively "new" ethnic groups compared to the Turks or Yugoslavs. Altogether, people who speak more than one language or are non-German speakers constitute about 20% of Austria's population.

Population of Vienna:

In 2005 the city administration indicated 309.184 people as foreigners. The total number of habitants was 1.651.437. That means about 18 % of the total population are foreigners in Vienna.

The main groups here are from the former Yugoslavia, Turkey and Poland.

[<http://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/daten/bevoelkerung.html#bev>]

Considering the situation in the media, there can be found two problems. On the one hand, mainstream media show a rather negative attitude on migration topics. According to Tulay Tuncel, the Vice-President of the Foreigner Integration Council of the City of Linz, exists to some extent a xenophobic attitude and in every case a deficit in neutral reporting about ethnic minorities in Austria.

On the other hand "ethnic minorities almost do not exist in media at all, although they live in Austria already for years", criticises Helga Schwarzwald from Radio Orange.

This contradiction between social reality and media sphere appears on different fields.

Not only in the field of the broadcasted programmes which deal with ethnic communities, but also within the field of staff and participation of minorities itself.

According to Helga Schwarzwald, it would be still a huge exception to see someone, who is not "white" on television. Strongly criticised are public media, which would not fulfil its role to supply adequate information, cultural themes and entertainment according to society's diversity. Currently, the public media station ORF was sharply attacked by one of its own well-known reporters because of its inner structure lacking of plurality and standing under permanent pressure of politicians (see

<http://derstandard.at/?url=/?id=2450151>

<http://www.stol.it/nachrichten/artikel.asp?KatID=ba&ArtID=77162>).

Unlike the Turkish communities, which have already managed to release their own newspapers, especially the newer and smaller ethnic communities, for example from African countries, would be in need of possibilities to be represented in medias in order to keep their identity and not cutting their roots completely, whilst living in a very alien environment.

1.5 Targets

According to the different design of the programmes (see 1.3 Activities), the listener ship consists either of members of the minority communities or of a broader public. This shows again the two goals of Radio Orange: to deliver ethnic communities and to influence public discourse.

The rate of audience rating is not known in exact numbers, but Radio Orange is said to possess a very high brand awareness in Austria (about 36 %). Especially within

some ethnic communities it has a good reputation. For instance, for the Turkish community it is one of the most frequented media at all. Nevertheless, it is not the intention of Radio Orange to reach as many listeners as possible, but they would like as much diversity as possible what includes also very small groups.

1.6 Methodology

The methodology should be repeated by some catchwords:

- independence (see 1.2 Objectives)
Thus no commercial interests, no dependence on ruling political interests

- confrontation and influencing majority's view
"People call us and complain, how it can be possible to listen local radio in Vienna in a foreign language," told us Helga Schwarzwald.

- participation of minorities also in internal structures, not only regarding the broadcasted programme

- raising of awareness of the topic of individual disadvantage of members of minorities on every level

1.7 Authors

This depends on the single broadcastings. There are people from ethnic communities, younger or older. There are also programmes about migration topics directed by the majority of Austrians. And there are mixed teams with people from different backgrounds. Altogether, including the non migration focussed programmes, about 600 people work at Radio Orange 94.0 every month. Besides eight full time jobs, mainly freelancers contribute to the programme.

1.8 Funding

Problems of financing rapidly increased when the rather right winged coalition came into power in 1999. The new government under Chancellor Schüssel cut off the financial support from the federal administration.

Now the main source is the city of Vienna, which provides basic supply. Furthermore, Radio Orange 94.0 receives money from the European Union, which supports different single projects. Another source is the voluntary contribution by private persons.

According to its principles, the Radio refuses commercial advertisement. Altogether, the financial situation is an ongoing problem for the whole radio project.

1.9 Networks

Radio Orange 94.0 is an active member of the Free Radios Association of Austria. On an international level, it takes part in AMARC, the World Association of Community Radio broadcasters. <http://www.amarc.org/>

The connections and partnerships between different independent radio projects not only in Austria but also in other countries might provide the single radio with experience and ideas.

Furthermore, participation in different European Union projects means of course regular cooperation with other organisations. Especially in the field of migration topics there exist single cooperations with organisations like the "Initiative Minderheiten" from Vienna, which has its own programme on Radio Orange.

2. COMMENTS AND HINTS FOR AN EVALUATION

2.1. Strengths

“To some extent, we prove that there does not happen anything dramatic, if one gives a piece of its resources - public or medial power – away”, said Helga Schwarzwald from Radio Orange. Filling a gap in the whole media scenery in order to give otherwise unrepresented groups in society the chance to reach public, can be seen as a big strength of Radio Orange. The large variety of different ethnic and language groups within the programme underlines this success evidently as well as its high acceptance in society.

Moreover, according to Helga Schwarzwald, the radio is an instrument to strengthen identity of minorities, when it provides the possibility to express oneself and to get the feeling of truly existing in this society. Especially for “new” ethnic groups the possibility to use such a handy instrument like a radio in order to listen to familiar sounds and language is an important thing. It can help to cope with the whole rather unpleasant situation in the new environment.

This process is supported by teaching media skills in order to cope better with the disadvantages in the majority dominated society.

Another positive aspect is the fact that moderating radio actually means being active and creating autonomously, instead of receiving help from above like a more or less passive object. Furthermore, the “poly-ethnic” view, what means diversity also within single ethnic groups is to some extent reflected by the radio’s program.

Although real intercultural projects are rather rare, the whole radio is to be seen as a meeting place for different cultures. Thus intercultural exchange and communication takes place on a very informal level, without institutionalised structures.

However, institutionalisation of participation of minorities and prevention of exclusion of several groups within the internal structure is a practice, which has to be highly appreciated.

The radio’s contribution to influence the public opinion and discourse is another point referring to the idea of filling the gap in the media scenery. The continuity of radio broadcasting contributes also to a perception of medial reality, where other languages and other cultures are normality.

Finally, this is all based on the conception of free radios which guarantees far-reaching independence.

2.2. Critical points

As Helga Schwarzwald admits, in spite of the efforts to achieve more participation of migrants on the important organisational levels inside the radio, there is still a lack of involvement; especially on higher levels like the managing board.

Really intercultural practises do not take place very often. But from the radios perspective it does not seem to be necessary to force it directly. This could rather effect refusing reactions, whereas meetings by chance deliver a much more unconstrained atmosphere.

Due to the principle of independence, financing remains an ongoing problem of the whole organisation.

2.3 What is exportable?

The idea of giving an opportunity to minorities to express themselves and to acquire a place in the media scenery is in every case recommendable.

Moreover the conception to try for participation of every structural level is an approach that should be considered by other organisations, too.

3. LINKS

www.asvl.at

The site delivers background information, statistics and comments about request for asylum in Austria.

<http://www.freie-radios.at/>

Umbrella association of independent radios in Austria