

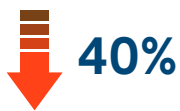
Country fact sheet

Czech Republic

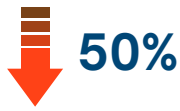


Context

Sub-national media in the Czech Republic follows a traditional structure resembling pre-1989 socialist media, with regional newspapers covering regions and local weeklies focusing on districts. However, this structure is swaying, with a **steady decrease in the number of local newspapers, without a corresponding rise in online local media**. Despite this, there is no significant public discussion about the emergence of news deserts in Czechia.



Drop in revenues since the Covid-19 pandemic



Drop in local newspapers from 2009 to 2019



Drop in subscribers and newspapers sales every year



of journalists are not satisfied with their remuneration



journalists in the Czech Republic work as freelancers



Indicators recorded high risk levels in the LM4D research

Worrying local media market dynamics

Local press revenues are notably declining, exacerbated by crises like the 2008 financial downturn and the recent energy crisis. Traditional business models heavily reliant on advertising face intense competition from regional chains and municipal press. The Covid-19 pandemic further slashed advertising revenue, exacerbating closures of local media outlets and a decline in the number of local journalists.

The audience willingness to pay for news is low, despite recognising the importance of independent regional journalism.



Political pressure challenges editorial independence

Political ownership poses a high risk to editorial independence, illustrated by cases like **ZAK TV** owned by a local politician, funded significantly by public institutions.

Independent print media outside major cities are exceptions, often facing financial struggles. Commercial and political influences pervade editorial content, with **regional media heavily reliant on advertisers, leading to compromised journalistic integrity**.

Lack of self-regulatory rules exacerbates these issues, with limited enforcement of ethical codes and ineffective press councils. Overall, the absence of effective regulations and the dominance of political and commercial interests threaten the diversity and quality of local media in the Czech Republic.



Challenges faced by local journalists

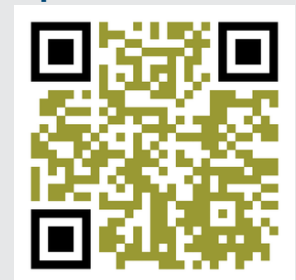
The safety of local journalists is at high risk. Many local journalists work as freelancers without job security or social benefits, with dissatisfaction over remuneration.

Attacks on media and journalists have increased, especially online, with limited awareness and no anti-SLAPP legal framework in place. Moreover, **economic pressures and fear of legal threats hinder critical journalism at the local level**, with weak economic and personnel resources for regional and local media.

Czech journalism is characterised by the absence of a respected professional organisation that would represent an authoritative platform for a significant part of the journalistic community. Local journalists often lack information about organisations able to provide support.



Access the full report with sources



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