

## Country fact sheet

# France



### Key findings

The debate about news deserts in France is absent, there are instead discussions on media concentration, which strangely spares local media, even though it is the most concentrated media sector.

Being a highly centralised country, the notion of local media is not defined in France, and 'local' media are those whose territory of coverage is smaller than national. **Community media** lack legal recognition.



Despite of the lack of debate, as far as the print media are concerned, a decline in the regional daily press is observed.



More than **100 local branches of regional daily press newspapers** have **closed** over the last ten years in mainland France. Most closures affect rural areas.

### Long-standing state support for the media

The **12 largest regional press groups capture the lion's share of direct aid and distribution aid** (the top 12 groups shared € 24m in 2021).

But, in addition, there is specific aid for local social information media (€1.8m in 2021), aid for titles in overseas territories (€ 2m), a support fund for local radio associations (€ 32m in 2021, shared between 720 radio stations) and support for online press services (€8m shared by local and national online media). In recent years, these **amounts have remained stable or even increased** slightly.

## Journalists' working conditions



**Local journalists** are **paid less** than journalists working in national media.



Open-ended contracts are still the rule for the majority of local journalists.

While **precarious contracts**, particularly long internships, are on the rise.



More than half of the 432 safety **incidents** reported between 2018 and 2023 by Mapping Media Freedom involved local journalists.

This can be partly attributed to their close proximity to the subjects they cover and their visibility within the local community.

## A look into social inclusiveness

Although there is no official recognition of ethnic or cultural minorities in France, **public radio and public television** broadcast some entertainment and news programs **in the country's various regional languages**.

However, there are no programmes in the languages of immigrants aired on the French public service broadcasting.

**Minority languages spoken by immigrant populations are mainly present on associative radio** (e.g. *Radio Gazelle* in Marseille, *Radio Orient* in several French cities) or media produced abroad, which are now easily accessible via the internet or satellite.

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