



Key findings

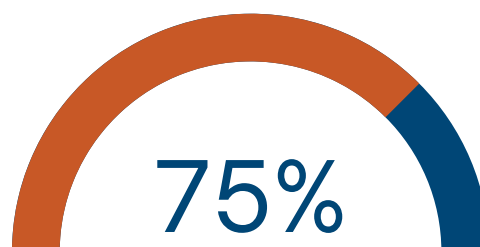
77.5% of the total number of municipalities in Spain lack local media or regular news coverage, affecting 24.5% of the country's population. The most impoverished regions in Spain coincide with news deserts.

The use of internet and access to local news

Internet usage varies across the country. Even in regions with lower rates, the presence of online local media suggests that **internet penetration does not necessarily equate to a lack of access to local news.**

For instance, despite lower internet usage rates, regions such as Galicia, Extremadura, and Cantabria exhibit substantial local media presence online.

Spaniards relying on local journalistic sources for their news



Reports show that approximately 75% of Spaniards rely on local journalistic sources for their news, and 63% have a high level of interest in local and regional news. However, this interest decreases to 34% among individuals between the ages of 18 and 24.



The infrastructure of local media in Spain

According to the law regulating state-owned radio and television in Spain, the Public Service Media (RTVE) is required to establish a regional centre managed by RTVE in each of the 17 Autonomous Communities in Spain and broadcast in the specific language of the community. These centres employ journalists dedicated to covering local and regional news. Furthermore, **12 Autonomous Communities have their own autonomous public broadcasting corporations**, being part of the *Federation of Autonomous Radio and Television Organisations* (FORTA).

Being a journalist in rural and small urban areas



Traditional media have **gradually reduced their presence in depopulated regions**. The profession in these areas is characterised by a stable but potentially decreasing number of journalists, with disparities between provinces.

These professionals play a vital role in reporting on local communities. However, they face challenges such as **instability, precariousness, low wages, and limited prospects** for the future.

The decline of press and the growth of the digital sector

The press landscape in Spain has witnessed substantial changes in recent years, with a **24% decline in the number of press points of sale (PoS)** between 2018 and 2021.

The distribution of media subsidies shows a declining trend from 2018 to 2020, with the press sector receiving the largest share.

Despite this trend, there has been **significant growth in online local media outlets**. Moreover, subscriptions to regional and local titles have increased from 5% in 2022 to 9% in 2023.

Community media at a high level of risk

Community media, particularly free and community radios, face economic, organisational, and legal precarity.



In the late 1970s, following the fall of Franco's regime, community radios began to emerge as crucial spaces for citizen engagement and expression.

In addition to being a platform for different sectors and showcasing realities overlooked by mainstream media, **they play a significant role as community-building tools for marginalised groups**.

Publication date 28.02.24



Access
the full
report
with
sources

