Radio Wrocław in a Politicized Environment

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ABSTRACT
The aim of the study is to analyze the determinants of political parallelism in the context of professionalism and independence of journalists in Radio Wrocław. It was assumed that the political influence of the Law and Justice party [Pol. Prawo i Sprawiedliwość] after 2015 has been significantly reflected in the functioning of the public Radio Wrocław, and the principles determining the professionalism of journalists of this station, including the attitudes of impartiality and objectivity, are at risk. Significant dependent variables were the values with which journalists identify themselves (including professional success and independence) and the mechanisms of the personnel policy.

Research methods: quantitative research, conducted by the author in 2011–2012 and 2020 using the survey method on two samples. The analysis also included focus studies carried out in 2015 by the Wrocław-based BEELINE Research & Consulting. Results and conclusions: the changes introduced at Radio Wrocław in 2016–2019 were of a comprehensive nature. In the political context, those concerning the management staff and the editorial program line after 2017 were particularly important. Empirical research carried out in 2020 shows the consequences of these changes, in the form of a decrease in listenership and the emergence of new—compared to the research from 2011-2012—preferences in the hierarchy of journalists’ values (related to the Christian worldview).

Cognitive value: an attempt to diagnose the phenomenon of political parallelism in the regional public radio may be a valuable introduction to the issue of political communication with the participation of public media. In the process of building social capital, the professional orientation of journalists is of key importance, as they constitute an important component of knowledge about the use of public media in participatory management. The results of the analysis of this issue may help in formulating recommendations regarding legislative and strategic solutions at the regional and national level.

KEYWORDS
democracy, journalism, objectivism, political parallelism, politics

1 Important parts of this article, including the characteristics of Radio Wrocław and the changes introduced in it, were previously published in the article “Pionierska Cyfryzacja Radia Wrocław,” Studia i Perspektywy Medioznawcze, 2, 2020, pp. 97–113.
Introduction
Engaged journalism has long, pre-war traditions in Poland. After 1989, the legal framework of a democratic state ruled by law was created, characterized by, among other things, journalistic impartiality and objectivity. There was no discussion at the time that public service broadcasters should create and distribute programs that respond to the democratic, social, and cultural needs of local communities—what was commonly referred to as public mission². However, the analysis of the structural, normative, and economic aspects of their activities indicates a dysfunction in the implementation of this task. It is not known to what extent the public media—including Radio Wrocław—inherited certain structural and functional elements of public media from real socialism (culturally resistant to change), and to what extent the traditions of engaged journalism.

According to the fundamental theory contained in the work *Four Theories of the Press* by Fried S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson, and Wilbur Schramm (1956), the media system always takes the form and characteristics of the social and political structures within which it operates. The author’s long-term observation³ shows that during the transformation period after 1989, journalists adapted to the expectations of the State Treasury as the owner of the media entities employing them, while observing the principles of social responsibility of the media. The disturbing tendency of a clear deviation from the previously accepted standards towards bias has deepened after 2015, especially on public television.⁴

A special political role in the Polish media space is played by the National Broadcasting Council⁵ and the National Media Council established in June 2016—instiutions that in practice implement the media policy of the political party in power. The statutory powers of the National Media Council in terms of shaping the composition of management boards and supervisory boards of public radio and television companies and the Polish Press Agency, as well as shaping the content of the statutes of these companies and obtaining information and documents relevant to the entirety of their program activities, constitute an effective instrument of political influence. This leads to appointing politically available persons to the governing bodies of these companies.

In the institutional sphere, therefore, the supervisory bodies and the system of financing public media⁶ are opaque (the context of compensation of around PLN 2 billion for public television). Moreover, they are strictly regulated in accordance with constitutional standards only formally, in practice being dependent on the interests and goals of the ruling political party. In a way, it is legitimate to think that the parties “colonize” the public media through appropriate targeting of media resources, such as public subsidies, allocated frequencies, advertising of State Treasury

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² Missionary functions (educational and cultural) mean high professionalism, program, ethical and aesthetic standards.

³ In the years 1992–2001 the author, as a legal advisor, served the regional daily *Polish Word* [Pol. *Słowo Polskie*] and in the years 2007-2018 Radio Wrocław S.A.

⁴ The accusation of the lack of objectivity of public television journalists appears in the 2019 Report of the National Broadcasting Council (pp. 70–71). In the audited year, 18 complaints were filed about the lack of objectivity of TVP S.A. journalists (p. 72).

⁵ The tasks of the National Broadcasting Council include: designing, in consultation with the Prime Minister, the directions of state policy in the field of radio and television broadcasting, determining the conditions for conducting activities by media service providers and exercising control over this activity, making decisions on concessions and subscription fees, issuing opinions on draft legislative acts and international agreements. The current 6-year term of this body began on September 12, 2016.

⁶ Annual subsidies from subscription revenues and the compensation from the National Broadcasting Council.
companies. Radio broadcasting—a socially useful and completely free service—is therefore under the control of state authorities, implemented through the licensing and financial system, and above all, the personnel policy.

If management structures are overly politicized, questions about political parallelism in the media become justified. Are the above determinants of political influence reflected in the public Radio Wrocław and to what extent? Does this radio still feature the attitudes of impartiality and objectivity, introduced with difficulty after 1989? What values do journalists identify with and who do journalists mainly represent, and what are their views on constitutional democracy? This case study, based on participant observation from 2006–2018, quantitative empirical studies from 2011–2012 and 2020, and focus groups from 2015, attempts to diagnose the phenomenon of political parallelism in regional public radio in the context of journalists’ professionalism. Considering the varied pace of development of the media system in Poland after 1989 (especially in the case of regional media), the political influence of the Law and Justice party and the staff changes made in Radio Wrocław in 2017, this empirical analysis may be a valuable introduction to the issue of political communication with participation of public media. In the process of building social capital, the professional orientation of journalists is of key importance, as they constitute an important component of knowledge about the use of public media in participatory management. The results of the analysis of this issue may help in formulating recommendations for legislative and strategic solutions at the regional level.

Case Study

Radio Wrocław is one of the 17 public radio stations with a regional character. It broadcasts the program around the clock in the Lower Silesian Voivodeship, also reaching neighboring voivodeships and the border areas of the Czech Republic and Germany. It has local branches in Legnica, Wałbrzych, and Jelenia Góra. In addition to the main program, which mainly broadcasts rock music, it maintains Radio RAM (city antenna—Wrocław) and the Radio Wrocław Kultura channel broadcast on the Internet and digital radio.

The CEO is headed by the president of the management board, who, however, holds a double function—on the one hand, he is the executive body of the supervisory board, supervising individual positions and organizational units, and on the other—the editor-in-chief. As the head of the workplace, he directly supervises the work of the program departments and the program directors.

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7 Political parallelism—the degree to which the media pursue political goals.
8 Quantitative research conducted by the author on two targeted samples using the survey method. The first sample, examined between April 2011 and March 2012, included 106 journalists from various Wrocław editorial offices, including 31 journalists from the radio; the second attempt, tested between March and May 2020, involved 19 journalists from Radio Wrocław.
9 Focus research conducted in 2015 by the Wrocław-based BEELINE Research (Bujko, 2015).
10 Journalistic professionalism—the degree to which journalists are autonomous and act in accordance with professional standards and ethical principles.
11 On December 7, 2017, Tomasz Duda was dismissed from the position of the president of the board–editor-in-chief (both functions are combined), and Jolanta Piątek (recommended by the Law and Justice) was appointed in his place. By the resolution of the National Media Council No. 174/2019 of August 26, 2019, J. Piątek was laid off; in her place, Marcin Rosiński was appointed, and the newly created position of program director was Jarosław Broda.
12 The station began broadcasting on September 29, 1946. On December 1, 1993, the Minister of Finance, acting on behalf of the State Treasury, created a sole-shareholder company of the State Treasury under the name Polskie Radio—Regionalna Rozgłośnia in Wrocław “Radio Wrocław” S.A. from the property of Regionalna Rozgłośnia in Wrocław.
secretariat. His tasks include defining the directions and principles of programming activities or approving radio broadcasting plans and the program framework. He is also responsible for discipline and observing media law. The editorial offices of information (which absorbed the former field editorial offices), music, Internet, and sports information are directly subordinated to the deputy editor-in-chief. Journalists form a team of journalists operating as part of an information editorial office serving two antennas. The program secretariat and the tape recorder, together with the producers and the training center, are responsible for supporting radio production. An important technical role is played by the departments subordinate to the technical director: operation, technical service and transmission, and IT. The Internet editorial office is created by a team of the youngest journalists.

The president of the board—editor-in-chief, as a rule, reports to a political center; “By participating in the political process, he must understand it […] in a fully conscious, discursive way” [translation] (Kaczyński, 2011, p. 62); “If this cultural factor does not exist, then in fact democracy can only act as a pure procedure” [translation] (Kaczyński, 2011, p. 62). This phenomenon has a cascading character—lower levels of editorial management adjust (often without enthusiasm) to top-down expectations. The above determinants of political influence are expressed in Radio Wrocław in resolving everyday dilemmas such as: to speak—not to speak; disclose—not disclose (and in what context). In journalistic practice, it is common to use selective editing, which is justified “in the face of the need to reject part of the context and mitigating reservations in order to shorten the interview to an appropriate length” [translation] (Boyd, Stewart, & Alexander, 2011, p. 266). Decisions on what to leave out and what to cut are made both under time pressure and in a specific political context. The excessive involvement of a journalist on one side of a political conflict distorts the other side’s arguments and is unethical. However, despite the aforementioned editing practices, it is very difficult to identify substantive examples of unethical attitudes of journalists in RW. Therefore, the study of these attitudes and the disclosure of their political context should be preceded by a diagnosis of individual values and preferences embedded in editorial reality.

Technology is a key factor in the development of any media organization. Digital technology (website, cloud data, artificial intelligence) influences social changes and the recipient’s profile. Radio Wrocław is forced to fight for the interest of the audience and to show the ability to adapt to development trends. Currently, the Internet competes with television as a means of contact with the mass audience and is a tool for influencing their opinions and decisions. The competitive advantage in the nationwide media network and international corporations (Amazon, Google, Apple, Facebook and others) lies in the possession and management of data. Big online platforms are a public infrastructure that even governments have no control over. Radio Wrocław, like other regional stations, uses the available network infrastructure to a limited extent (resulting from the format and geographic market).

Radio Wrocław does not actively participate in the information fight, especially during election campaigns, however, government decision-making centers and national media, as well as, for example, uniformed services, i.e. institutions that influence the information resources of this radio, participate in these campaigns. Regional RW, using the provided platform and Internet infrastructure (owned by Emitel), including the allocated frequencies, depends on the human resources policy of the state (the current government) and its political tools. Regulatory technological challenges and the struggle for access to information sources make this dependency even worse.

Considering the globalization processes and the concentration of capital in the media, it can be stated that the ideology of liberalism—a free market in which “capital has no nationality”—has
not worked. The ownership structure and values professed by decision-makers are of significant importance in the media; in this context, the protection of the public interest and the relative sovereignty of the state is guaranteed by the preservation of the public property of the media and legal protection of the market. Moreover, in view of the challenges of globalization on the media market, the preservation and development of the regional social structure is a mission of the editorial office of public media. By using its resources (personal, information), knowledge and experience, RW, by providing properly prepared information, directs the perception of its listeners. The empirical research of RW journalists shows that they are aware of their responsibility towards the recipient and feel that they first and foremost represent the entire population of their region / voivodeship / poviat, and only then the entire population of Poland.13

The structural and technological facilities of RW have been modernized over the last dozen or so years. The diagnoses formulated by the radio authorities and the development strategies implemented by them after 2006 meant that the station changed its character to a large extent. The flattening of the organizational structure, combined with a more effective use of material resources and employees’ potential, brought measurable benefits in the form of increased revenues and keeping the costs of production and operation of the station in check. An important role in this respect was played, apart from public subsidies,14 by developing their own sources of income. An example of a rational modification of the organizational structure was the establishment of a newsroom, i.e. a joint editorial office of information, in place of two separate teams. This allowed not only to reduce costs, but also to better plan media event support and increase the possibilities of the journalistic team created in this way.15

In the case of RW, the professional rotation of journalists was rather not related to the employment restructuring process and was natural (retirement age, change of profession, personal decisions).16 Over the course of several years, there have been systemic changes to the program, including the liquidation of specialized editorial offices or teams and the inclusion of all journalists in the information editorial team (with the exception of journalists from sports, music and IT editorial offices). Many experienced journalists did not adapt to technological changes and left the editorial office voluntarily; it is difficult to indicate to what extent, for ideological reasons. There were individual conflicts over the program line (new scheduling) or cases of transition to the profession of a press spokesman (e.g. spokeswoman for the Lower Silesian voivodeship Sylwia Jurgiel or spokesman of the Wrocław Miejskie Przedsiębiorstwo Komunikacyjne Tomasz Sikora). Few of those representing the journalistic profession were able to adapt to the “news culture,” in which there is basically less and less space for journalistic forms. This was accompanied by conformist attitudes consisting in submitting to the former decisions of superiors (successive presidents-editors-in-chief).

13 Quantitative research conducted by the author in 2020 on a sample of 19 RW journalists (see footnote 8), i.e. 61% of professionally active RW journalists. As many as 14 of them decided that a journalist should first of all represent the entire population of the region / voivodeship / poviat.
14 RW is maintained from a radio and television subscription (the purpose of which is to finance activities related to the fulfillment of the public mission within the meaning of Article 21 (1), 1a and 2 of the Broadcasting Act). The remaining revenues come from the advertising market (own revenues).
15 In 1992, the journalistic team had 33 job positions, on July 1, 1997—43.5 job positions, in 2000—36.5 job positions, in 2011—31 job positions. The full-time employment status from 2011 remained until 2019, and in this period, additionally, several journalists cooperated with the broadcasting station as part of a sole proprietorship, and three in the form of contracts for a specific task (with an online editorial office). In 2020, the aforementioned specific work contracts were converted into full-time employment.
16 At the same time, the reduction of employment to a greater extent affected administrative employees—the number of full-time jobs in administrative positions decreased from 34 in 2000 to 11 in 2011.
Since owners are the source of power in the media (radio), editors and journalists have obligations to their employers (Jaskiernia, 2018, p. 43). In the public media, the model of journalism has changed, from the model of active “keeping an eye on power” (after 1989 the ideology of “a dog watch”; Hallin & Mancini, 2007, p. 260; McQuail, 2007) to the model of approving power, associated with a conservative attitude (passive model after 2015). Journalists involved in the political narrative, rather than dialogue, focus on constructing responses to the other side of the political conflict. As Tadeusz Kononiuk (2018) notes:

“The journalistic ideology is essentially determined by the sender’s discursive orientation, as it contains a coherent set of meaning values concerning the perception and description of reality. Journalism is an extensive and clearly separated field of discursive practice serving the interests of broadcasters” [translation](p. 27).

According to the ideologies of the currently ruling party (Kaczyński, 2011): “it is a myth that there are completely apolitical people” [translation] (p. 112); “Approving historical policy, affirming the nation and its history, although critical, is a huge task” [translation] (p. 85); the goal is “to create a new state and establish a new social hierarchy (the former used its influence and advantages to dominate the property sphere)” [translation] (p. 73). The empirical research presented below shows that journalists of Radio Wrocław declare democratic (ideologically impartial) attitudes. However, the declarative sphere is not always reflected in the complex media reality having a specific political and economic context.

**Audience Volume Criterion**

Audience volume is a measure of the judgment that broadcasters give to potential respondents. The changes made in 2017 and 2019 to the positions of the president and head of the news editorial office and the introduction of a new program director resulted in the modification of the existing schedule, change of the hosts and unfavorable fluctuations in the audience outcomes. While at the end of 2017 there was a significant increase in audience—from 4.56% between December 2015 and February 2016 and 4.58% between December 2016 and February 2017 to as much as 7.28% between December 2017 and February 2018 by as much as from 2018, an unfavorable downward trend can be observed. In the period from June to November 2018, the average daily share of the station was only 3.2%, from December 2018 to May 2019—3.4%, from June to November 2019—3.5%, from December 2019 to May 2020—2.7% (Radio Wrocław in Radio Track, Kantar Millward Brown). Apart from the change of management, it is difficult to clearly diagnose the reasons for this decline, due to the influence of many factors (the audience conditions are multifaceted), while the breakdown of audience in 2020 should generally be attributed to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is easier to diagnose the reasons for the increase in audience volume in 2017. The focus research conducted in 2015 by BEELINE Research & Consulting from Wrocław prompted the radio to verify its image in terms of audience. One of the problems defined in these studies was the main aging group of respondents—people aged 60–75, and in addition poorly educated (Bujko, 2015, p. 9). The resulting suggestion of directing a stronger and more expressive message to younger audiences prompted the management of the radio to introduce changes in the programming, the method of communicating the content on the air and in the music profile. The research also indicated the need for wider use of Internet tools in order to attract new recipients. The awareness of the pressure exerted by Internet competition was one of the factors behind changes in the structure and organization of work, it also forced the redefinition of the scope of journalists’ duties. The necessity to use new media in order to increase the attractiveness
of the offer was also the cause of many technological changes,\textsuperscript{17} and even changes in the infrastructure.

Music and words are the basic means of expression that the radio uses to influence its audience. The high quality of both of these factors and the right proportions between them constitute the unique character of a given station. Assuming the need to change the main audience, the management of RW decided to change the way of communicating with the audience and the music profile of the station (radio playlist).\textsuperscript{18} This was reflected in the new programming, introduced in January 2016, and resulted in an increase in audience outcomes.

After 2017, despite the change of management, the program offer did not develop significantly, but increasing politicization was noticeable. The political influence, which translated into the atmosphere in the editorial office, was manifested, inter alia, in more frequent visits by the Law and Justice representatives to the radio (talks with management, participation in broadcasts). The diverse and changeable worldview of journalists, which is reflected in their attitudes and behavior, each time influences the content of the message. Therefore, in the context of many variables, even a professional analysis of the content would not be a sufficient basis for any generalizations. Apart from the staffing of key decision-making positions, which in turn had a certain impact on the behavior of journalists, there is no evidence of a significant mechanism of political parallelism. The possible description of the political influence is basically limited to indicating the data on the decline in audience. In the longer research perspective, it would be necessary to analyze the program content, focusing on the presence of a specific world-view narrative in individual programs.

In the report of the National Broadcasting Council on its activities in 2019 it was shown (p. 88) that RW planned and implemented shares in the verbal layer and in regional broadcasts at a lower level than other editorial offices. Especially, which is surprising in the context of the preferences of the audience, the share of regional themes was lower (only 23–30\% of this type of content; this may indicate the loss of loyalty to the audience). No airtime has been planned for programs devoted to civic education, where representatives of the highest state authorities could present and translate their policy, or for programs for national minorities (Raport..., p. 89). This may mean that there were no expectations or pressure from the central authority in this regard. If the radio were to develop national civic education, the Law and Justice party could benefit from this kind of political influence, and it did not.

**Modification of the Program**

Based on the analysis of the results of the surveys and focus group studies, changes were made to the music profile of the radio station—it became “light” and more “go-getting”. At the beginning of 2016, local content became a priority, supplemented by neutral, energetic adult contemporary music, i.e. contemporary and slightly older pieces, selected for listeners aged 40+. The research conducted by the BEELINE studio also indicated a very important circumstance related to the place of listening to the radio—for 75\% of respondents, such a place was the car (Bujko, 2015, p. 15). These results prompted the management of the radio station to launch a special service for motorists.

\textsuperscript{17} One of them was the website www.wroclaw1945.pl, launched in 2016, and a free smartphone application related to it, showing one around selected historical sites in Wroclaw. At some locations, photos from the era, archival radio recordings, copies of the pages of the then newspapers are displayed.

\textsuperscript{18} All the listeners surveyed by the BEELINE Research opted for the radio which is more focused on local topics and plays popular music and has an overall mood adapted to the time of day. The need to put more emphasis on the musical layer, as well as the appropriate proportions between music and non-musical parts within individual programs, was emphasized.
In order to broaden and slightly rejuvenate the audience of Radio Wroclaw and find its way to the “short list” of stations, to which the listener switches during the day, it is worth introducing a few changes:

1. Presenting timeless, known and liked, music, reminiscent of nice and important moments in life, especially for the 40+ age group.

2. Matching the music to the time of day: in the morning—stimulating, stronger; noon—variety; afternoon, evening—calmer, original.

3. Changing the emphasis of information and comments to a more positive one—short and factual news.

4. Less of the word layer, more music. Less politics and sports coverage, more (positive) voice from the audience on the air.

5. Strengthening the local and regional character of the radio—short information from the country and the world, longer, more detailed information about Wroclaw and the region.

Figure 1. Conclusions and Recommendations from the Focus Group Research.
Source: Bujko, 2015, p. 6.

Another programming challenge was the distribution of aerial content. In January 2016, a new schedule was introduced, which, in the opinion of the originators, was to be clearer and give listeners certainty about what to expect at a specific time of the day.\(^\text{19}\) A system of clocks, i.e. pie charts, describing each hour of the program, developed by a team dealing with the work of presenters, led by Tomasz Sikora, was also supposed to contribute to better content and air time management. This solution was based on the belief that airtime is one of the most valuable resources available to a radio station. For this reason, it cannot be wasted on poorly planned presentations, poorly chosen music or production errors. The rigorous approach to airtime management was also due to technical reasons—the new sound emission system launched in 2016 forced the producers and presenters to plan the program very carefully, taking into account the prior mixing (combining) of musical pieces, jingles and reportage recordings. This solution provided new possibilities for the musical setting of the broadcast, but at the same time obligated the band to maintain discipline in time.

The implementation of a comprehensive project of changes in 2015–2017 meant a reorganization as well as an expansion of the program offer.\(^\text{20}\) All the new programs, apart from the attractive form and the highest standards of preparation, had one characteristic feature—encouraging listeners to interact via phones, radio or social networking sites. The combination of changes in aerial content with the expansion of Internet content and direct communication

\(^{19}\) The schedule was divided into music and information bands (6:00–9: 00 am, 3: 00–6: 00 pm), music bands (9: 00 am –12: 00 pm, 1:00–3:00pm, 6:00–8:00 pm) and current affairs programs filled with words only (12:00 –1: 00 pm, 8:00–11:00 pm).

\(^{20}\) Among the programs that appeared in the schedule in response to the expectations of the audience, there were, among others Reakcja24—a daily intervention program, TOP 5—a weekend magazine where listeners can vote for the best attractions of Lower Silesia, and Saturday’s Hamburger for breakfast—a culinary program by Michał Hamburger.
with recipients was to increase the scope of the broadcasters’ influence thanks to the synergy effect. To achieve this, it was necessary to change the organizational structure and convince the journalistic team to use online tools.

It turned out that change should be viewed as an evolutionary, consistent process, not a one-off, short-term revolution. In addition, introducing changes should be preceded by a professional diagnosis and analysis of data that will set the directions of activities and allow them to be implemented according to a strictly defined plan, as expected effects of the adopted strategy. Only taking into account the results of empirical research, which is an emanation of power, the management of the editorial office could effectively pursue political goals (which, however, in the case of public media, no one should care about).

**Investments in New Technologies**

Radio Wrocław took a pioneering action by launching the first broadcast of digital radio signal in the DAB + standard in the country on August 1, 2014. Technical director Miroslaw Ostrowski played an extremely creative role in this process. The European Broadcasting Union EBU recommends this standard as a successor to analog FM broadcast, which cannot develop further, inter alia, due to increasing interference and the lack of free frequencies (Recommendation for Digital Radio Deployment in Europe, 2017, p. 3).

Another technological change was the project “Tu Polskie Radio Wrocław,” aimed at disseminating and preserving for future generations the cultural heritage contained in the digitized resources of the RW audio archive.21 A natural continuation of the implementation of the DAB + technology in Lower Silesia was the project called “Single-Frequency Network Using the DAB + Broadcasting Platform for the Needs of Local Broadcasters in Poland.”22

The implemented projects and the need to improve the main broadcasting studio (Broadcasting Group 4, ZE-4) resulted in a number of further modernizations related, inter alia, to the allocation of additional space for journalists to work. The new studio and newsroom required new technical equipment (including computers, monitors, a mixing console, microphones). The task of migrating the digital mixer system to the new platform partially coincided with the task of modernizing the ZE-4 and the task of the integrated radio production and emission system. It was also necessary to purchase the DAVID system software and train the entire team. The rules for importing, editing, and archiving recordings have changed, as have the way they are presented on the air. The new studio has also been equipped with the MULTICAM system, i.e. a set of specialized cameras that enable recording and transmission of images in television standards. As a result, it has ceased to be only a radio studio, and has become a place for creating multimedia content that can be transmitted via the Internet. Thus, RW, until now only seen as a radio station, has become a (multi) media company.23

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21 Project No. RPDS.06.04.00-02-018/12, implementation period: April, 1, 2013–December 28, 2014, beneficiary: RW. Project implemented under the Regional Operational Program for the Lower Silesian Voivodeship for 2012–2013, priority axis (priority) No. 6: Use and promotion of the tourist and cultural potential of Lower Silesia, action No. 6.4: Cultural tourism.
23 New, multimedia capabilities in the field of image recording, processing and transmission—visual radio, video podcasts, the possibility of returning to the program, used in the weekly Video Report of Radio Wrocław (an online magazine produced by the ZE-3 video studio).
Modernization and deep restructuring were complex processes and managing them at different levels was a big challenge for the broadcasting management. Ultimately, however, mainly thanks to the actions taken by the then presidents, Paweł Majcher and Tomasz Duda, as well as the lower-level staff, the balance of changes turned out to be positive. RW was the first and so far the only Polish radio station to be honored with the prestigious title of International Radio of The Year at the Paris conference on radio stations Salon de la Radio 2017.

Professional Status of Journalists
An extremely important element of the transformations of recent years is a new approach to the tasks of journalists—multitasking. The possibility of remote work is also of great importance. New recording formats and methods of sound editing, as well as the Internet as a channel for sending ready-made recordings, have meant that journalists no longer rely on technical facilities available only in the broadcasting station. In practice, this means that the entire process of creating materials to be presented on the air may take place outside the editorial office:

“All you need is a laptop and a good Internet connection. Apart from the obvious advantages, the greatest of which is cost reduction, the proper organization of work is a big challenge. It means the necessity to change the method of managing and supervising the team, efficient communication and effective planning of the antenna content” [translation] (Litera, 2019, p. 26).

According to J. Kaczyński (2011), “the ability to convey one’s own arguments is very important, and this is a kind of art” [translation] (p. 30). Assuming that the public perceives the Law and Justice’s policy mainly through media coverage, the key to effective information management is staff and operating systems.

One of such systems, introduced in RW, is the Navigator. Its unquestionable advantage is (precisely) systemic operation—journalists from various departments cooperate closely with each other and remain in constant contact, which ensures the efficiency and consistency of their work. The entire team is kept informed about projects and important matters via newsletters sent by the president of the board. Thanks to Navigator, journalists have gained not only a tool for faster and more efficient performance of their current duties, but also access to knowledge and information resources and the ability to interact with recipients.

The Navigator system is also an effective instrument of corporate control and supervision, and it makes ideological influence possible in the political context. As Maciej Mrozowski (2001) notes, in the case of each broadcaster, it is necessary to take over some kind of control measures creating a coherent mechanism for regulating the operation of a given broadcasting institution (p. 226). So far, there is no evidence of political pressure being exerted to make specific changes to the content of the RW message. However, this does not change the fact that the leadership of the RW has an effective instrument of influence in this area (so far not used politically).

The internal communication system, however, remains secondary to external sources and influences that constitute the basis for obtaining information (possibly valuable, objective and verifiable). In this regard, the standards of independence and professionalism of journalists still count, including personality predispositions (talent), experience and a database of reliable contacts.

24 The journalist, apart from recordings and audio reports of events, prepares texts, photos, and videos for the website. In addition, it makes these materials available on social networks, and often on a blog or in the form of a special podcast.
Journalists’ Value System

“The high quality and content of media coverage is influenced by the professionalism and personality of journalists as well as modern methods of information management in media organizations” [translation] (Goban-Klas, 2011, p. 480). The empirical research conducted by the author in 2011 and 2012 shows that independence is a fundamental value for journalists25 (Szot, 2013, pp. 153–156). In the political science context, important are the reasons why the journalists surveyed at that time felt the need to emphasize their own autonomy and independence, and from what, or from whom, they wanted to be independent. In response to the question “For whom or for what do you feel responsible as a journalist?” Almost all respondents (94 journalists, 88.7%) indicated, as the greatest responsibility (the highest rating in the measurement scale) responsibility towards their own conscience. 65 journalists (61.3%) indicated the greatest responsibility towards journalistic standards (of course, this concept could be understood very differently), 62 (58.5%)—towards information sources, 48 (45.3%)—towards the target audience, as much as against democratic values. Other values were placed further down the list.

Based on the results of the survey, the following hierarchy of journalists’ values can be constructed:

Table 1. The hierarchy of journalists’ values according to the responsibility criterion (indicating values or entities towards which journalists feel the greatest responsibility).

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<tr>
<td>my conscience</td>
<td>88.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>journalistic standards</td>
<td>61.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my sources of information</td>
<td>58.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>target audience</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>democratic values</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>media recipients as a whole</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>editor-in-chief</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>publisher</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colleagues from the editorial office</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>religious organizations and their leaders</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advertisers</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>government and political party</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own research (Szot, 2013, p. 162).

The above list shows that journalists are committed to journalistic standards and their need to be loyal to information sources and recipients. Only then did journalists feel responsible towards editorial decision makers. In their opinion, external influences (politicians, advertisers, religious organizations) were not significant. The results indicate a sense of relative world-view

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25 Quantitative research carried out in the environment of journalists of Wroclaw editorial offices between April 2011 and March 2012 (see footnote 8). They covered 106 journalists, i.e. 80% of all professionally active Wroclaw journalists, including: 31 radio journalists (29.2% of all respondents), 27 television journalists (25.5%), the same number of journalists of daily newspapers (25.5%) and 21 journalists (19.8%). The study was conducted using an anonymous questionnaire consisting of 33 closed questions divided into three parts—8 questions related to journalistic culture, another 19 to other substantive issues, the last 6 were of a record nature. The measurement scale was adopted from 1 (lowest grade) to 5 (highest grade).
independence (responsibility towards one’s own conscience and system of values), attachment to professional standards (including respect for the recipient) and democratic values in the state.

Analogous empirical research conducted by the author in 2020 among RW journalists confirmed their adherence to journalistic standards and independence. The largest number of respondents—11 people—indicated the greatest responsibility to their own conscience, then 5 respondents—responsibility towards journalistic standards, 2—responsibility towards the media audience as a whole and towards the target audience. Democratic values came 5th (as in the original survey), responsibility towards “my sources of information”—6th. Responsibility towards the publisher was only 7th, responsibility towards the editor-in-chief was ranked 8th, responsibility towards the editorial staff was 9th, followed by the advertisers (10th), government (11th), political parties and ideas (12th), and the last—towards religious organizations and their leaders (13th) and God (14th). Despite a certain analogy of the results, in individual cases different world-outlook preferences related to the role of Christianity appeared.

The current model of journalism approving power, associated with a conservative attitude towards it (passive model) and characteristic of public television, is only partially reflected on the radio, mainly in managerial positions. However, in editorial practice, the hosts of current affairs programs agree to changes in the composition of guests (a kind of subjective censorship) and focus on constructing questions that enable presenting views and providing partial replies. Therefore, it is the lack of commitment to defend the principles of objectivity and impartiality that should be seen as a cultural change. Journalists declaratively (in the questionnaire) show democratic, ideologically impartial attitudes, but in editorial practice, courage, uncompromising attitude and objectivity are relegated to the background. The complex political reality that they try to understand and to which they try to relate and adapt is constantly changing. A slight strengthening of loyalty to the external environment—advertisers, government, parties, and political ideas—is reflected in the deepening process of politicization of public media.

The systemic change introduced by the Law and Justice since 2015 in the analyzed journalistic culture is not clearly reflected. To the question “Do you agree or disagree with the statement: ‘There are problems in democracy, but it is a better governance system than any other’?”, the answer “I strongly agree” was selected by 13 respondents, “I rather agree” by 4, 2 rather disagreed, the option “I strongly disagree” was chosen by no one. When asked “There are different opinions about democracy. Do you agree that democracy should ensure political freedoms, e.g. freedom of expression and association?”, 17 respondents answered “definitely agree,” two of them indicated “rather disagree.” The same results were given answers to the question “There are different opinions about democracy. Do you agree that democracy should make it possible to take power from one party (coalition) and transfer power to another party (coalition) through elections?.” In the case of four respondents, during the interview, it was possible to verify that they meant constitutional democracy, in the case of the remaining anonymously completed questionnaires, it should be assumed that the respondents recognized the ambiguity of this concept.

Meanwhile, the currently changed system aspires more to the name of hybrid democracy (also understood in various ways). Democracy as understood by the Law and Justice ideology is correlated with national identity:

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26 Quantitative research conducted from March to May 2020, covering 19 RW journalists, which accounted for 61% of all (31) RW journalists. The anonymous questionnaire consisted of 16 closed questions—6 personal data and 10 questions concerning the journalistic culture and professional standards. The measurement scale was adopted from 1 (lowest grade) to 5 (highest grade).
“You are in favor of democracy, you are referring not to an abstract or even global society, which does not exist and there are no prospects for creating them, then you must also refer to the nation [...] without the nation state you cannot realistically think about democracy” [translation] (Kaczyński, 2011, p. 63); “We must refer to the national idea because there is no other justification for the existence of Poland. Empires are the real alternative” [translation] (Kaczyński, 2011, p. 65).

In principle, however, it is difficult to confirm the thesis according to which political views referring to the national idea are deeply rooted among RW journalists in the results of research and observation.

There were also no cases of politically engaged journalism in the results of the research and observations. The catalog of journalists’ key values, including the independence of the radio (as well as its program line), is the result of many factors, the most important of which are the current the Law and Justice’s media policy, personnel policy, political and economic situation, the beliefs of the radio station team, the views of decision-makers (including president-editor-in-chief) and their attitude to political events, and finally the scope of editorial autonomy and the team’s ability to implement its own policies (by avoiding top-down recommendations and guidelines).

**Conclusions**

“The ongoing technological revolution is so profound that today we are talking about the decline of the old printed and electronic media and the emergence of new ones” [translation] (Jędrzejewski, 2010, p. 160). With the advent of social media, the issue of the legitimacy of power needs to be looked at in a different way than before. The observation of the changes made in Radio Wrocław in 2006–2018 shows that the success of the broad modernization project depended on the awareness and determination of the management staff (including obtaining funds) and the journalists’ conviction to join its implementation. The combination of these factors made it possible to start the process that led to the transformation of the regional radio station into a multimedia company with three radio antennas, two Internet portals (www.radiowroclaw.pl, www.radioram.pl), a set of mobile applications, and a special access system to archive recordings in digital form (www.tu.prw.pl).

From the point of view of the observer participating in the change process, changes in management turned out to be equally important, followed by the schedule and transmission of the station, and finally in the organizational structure and management methods. Easier planning and communication in the team, clearer division of responsibilities, and redefining the rules of work at individual positions, based on the Navigator system, at the same time illustrate the effectiveness of control tools and possible political impact.

From an analytical perspective, the phenomenon of political parallelism however, has not developed enough to warrant an answer to the main research question of this article. On the other hand, empirical research conducted in 2011–2012 and 2020 among RW journalists confirmed their adherence to journalistic standards, the principle of independence and constitutional democracy (in individual cases, ideological preferences referring to Christianity were revealed). According to K. Jakubowicz (2007): “If there is no political parallelism in the media of a given country, then all media orders (including the system of public media) are characterized by systemic parallelism, reflecting the features of the socio-political system, including the degree of democracy consolidation” [translation] (p. 90). It is not known if and when the social and political conditions will arise for greater respect for public media, including Radio Wrocław, and for the establishment of the public service ethos and political impartiality in them. The conducted research shows that journalists are prepared for this public role.
References