

Focusing on dialogue and a connection with the target audience: DW host Edith Kimani discusses issues with young people in Nairobi, Kenya, as part of the series *The 77 Percent — Street Debate*.



Strategic Plan 2022–2025



Made for minds.

Agreed by the Broadcasting Council with the agreement of the Administrative Board on March 17, 2023.

Foreword

There has been a sharp increase in conflicts and crises around the world over the past few years—posing an acute danger to peace and stability in the global community. The factors of upheaval already mentioned in the previous strategic plan—geopolitical tensions and wars, extremism and terrorism, displacement and migration, populism and nationalism—continue to shape international relations and have been intensified by both the coronavirus pandemic and the very tangible impact of the climate crisis. A range of countries are home to dangerous social polarization, leading to a growing frequency of opposing opinions, parties and ethnic groups that are more or less irreconcilable. Racism, group-based hostility and anti-Semitism are increasing worldwide. Deutsche Welle (DW) is countering this development with its content and with an unequivocal commitment to Israel's right to exist, a key element in combating anti-Semitism.

A large number of countries are seeing an erosion of democratic principles. Hungary, for example, is on the way to becoming the first autocratic member state of the European Union (EU). Poland is ignoring the EU's common system of values. Turkey, Serbia and other immediate EU neighbors are among the countries with the strongest autocratic tendencies. In Belarus and Russia, democracy and the rule of law are concepts that now exist only on paper. India and Brazil and other large economies are seeing significant steps backward in terms of civil liberties and political rights. At the same time, there is increasing political and economic pressure on the media in a growing number of countries. Authoritarian rulers around the world are striving to assert authority over regional and geopolitical issues. The media are subject to increasing political instrumentalization, serving both anti-democratic propaganda forces and the dissemination of misinformation—in some cases beyond the respective countries' own borders. New dimensions of disinformation spreading rapidly via social media are exerting a destructive influence. The flood of misinformation makes it increasingly difficult for people to find reliable sources of information.

DW is countering this development as Germany's international broadcaster with independent, credible and reliable journalism. DW represents the values that Germany stands for: human rights, democracy, freedom, the rule of law and social equality. Germany advocates these values as a member of the EU and the United Nations (UN), as is reflected in DW's programming mandate. The focus of DW's programming includes issues concerning freedom and human rights, democracy and the fight against terrorism, exclusionary policies, racism and anti-Semitism. Its most important task is therefore to provide people with factually sound information and in the process enable them to

form their own free opinions. A strong civil society needs independent journalism and unfettered access to credible information for the formation of open opinions and decision-making. DW's academy projects and its journalistic content as detailed in this strategic plan for 2022–2025 enable it to strengthen the human right to freedom of expression. DW reaches millions of people on a daily basis both digitally and on demand, both of which audiences increasingly prefer. DW wants to reach even more people and provide them with the information they need both on the basis of regional competence and presence, and with an efficient and sustainable deployment of resources. This will make an important contribution to a more peaceful and stable global community.

Summary

Section 4a of Germany's Deutsche Welle Act requires DW to prepare a strategic plan covering a period of four years on its own responsibility and using all the information and assessments that are important for its mission.

DW's strategic planning involves setting out objectives and priority projects and their respective importance for the purpose of fulfilling tasks, which are broken down according to target areas, target groups, distribution channels and types of programming. Strategic planning also details how DW contributes to providing training for media professionals, especially in the context of international development cooperation and promoting foreign relations. The strategic plan is agreed on by DW's *Rundfunkrat* (broadcasting council), with the approval of the administrative board and incorporating opinions from the German parliament, the German government and interested members of the public.

This strategic plan includes the results and findings from the 2021 evaluation report. The latter also provides the basis for strategic targets and measures for strategic planning, which will be described in greater detail later on in this report.

DW is setting itself three overriding strategic operational **goals** (see section 1) for the new planning period covering the years 2022–2025:

1. **Expanding its audience reach from 289 million to 400 million weekly user contacts.**
2. **Increasing the relevance of its programming.**
3. **Promoting dialogue.**

For 2022–2025 DW has also identified **areas of focus** intended to make a significant contribution to fulfilling the strategic operational objectives. The following priorities define which activities are to have a high profile over the next four years:

1. **Increasing its regional competence and presence.**
2. **Producing *on-demand first*.**
3. **Making efficient and long-term use of its resources.**

Media markets around the world are changing at a rapid pace, with both new and established outlets endeavoring to expand their area of influence. In a growing number of DW's target markets, the target groups are primarily using digital and on-demand content as a source of information—a trend that is set to intensify. Classic media, by contrast, are losing their importance as news providers—above all in highly developed nations. This trend is also becoming evident in emerging and developing countries, especially as

the behavior of the younger target audience is geared towards forward-looking media. The creation of a digital public sphere is both a chance and a challenge for international news providers. In light of these changes in media usage, DW and DW Akademie are assigning increased importance to digital and on-demand programming.

In all target regions and media forms, DW primarily aims to reach individuals and organizations involved in forming political opinions, as they are multipliers of new ideas in politics, society and culture. DW fulfils its mandate by providing in-depth and dependable information in 32 languages. In addition to conventional news from politics and current affairs, coverage of the arts, business news, science, the environment and sports also play a central role.

DW's dynamically evolving digital strategy actively focuses on users and their needs and expectations, in the process equipping DW for the challenges of the digital age. In light of the constantly accelerating changes in media use, DW will continue to monitor usage trends concerning its linear content and adapt the latter when needed. In view of linear content's likely decrease in importance, DW will develop scenarios for a gradual reduction of linear broadcasting while maintaining its audience reach. In this context, it may be necessary to perform redeployments into digital programming—also in the interests of efficiency and sustainability. Given the growing importance of on-demand content and the *on-demand first* principle applying to the production and distribution of journalistic content, DW is currently incorporating this usage scenario into its strategy. With the goal of adapting its TV, video and audio formats to on-demand usage, DW will further optimize existing and new formats. It will provide more unique content and stories to its target group by tailoring its journalistic content even more effectively for on-demand. At the same time, *news and current affairs* will maintain its prominent position across all content. In order to increase relevance, reach and dialogue and the impact of its content, DW will continue to reinforce **regionalization**. To this end, DW will pursue the expansion of its presence in target regions—and to a greater degree than previously for individual, strategically significant countries and regions. This will enable DW to enter into dialogue with its target group in an even more direct and intensive manner. The implementation of its on-demand strategy, the enhancement of its regional competence and presence and the sustainable and efficient deployment of the resources at its disposal will ensure DW's future viability in an exceedingly dynamic international media environment.

DW's organizational structure and technical infrastructure are likewise being continuously developed in order

to enable DW to respond rapidly and flexibly to changing market conditions and technologies. In order to improve its defenses against cyberattacks, DW is investing — also in cooperation with ARD — in modern detection and response systems. In addition, risks for IT security are identified more systematically and minimized with the help of appropriate technical and organizational measures. DW staff are also informed about security risks through extensive communication and training measures on IT security awareness.

A consistent **digital transformation** strategy requires major investments in innovative technologies (e.g. the use of artificial intelligence/AI for journalistic content or business processes) as well as in best-possible technical solutions. Considering the increasing threat situation, DW will also continue investing in IT security and raising awareness among staff. Further to the technical innovations mentioned — e.g. in the area of AI and on-demand production and distribution — a range of technical renewal projects are in the pipeline. These are explained as part of the 2022 – 2025 IT strategy. At the same time, DW is committed to making concrete progress on the accessibility of its journalistic content. A priority here is increasing the provision of subtitles for audiovisual content.

In order to make it easier for target groups affected by online censorship and digital filtering to access digital information content (text, audio, video) on dw.com and IP-based partner platforms, DW needs to step up the expansion of censorship-resistant digital systems.

This includes the existing successful cooperation with providers of censorship circumvention software such as Canada's *Psiphon*. DW will also enable simple and secure access to DW's entire information services with its own *Onion* website in the censorship-resistant and anonymous network *Tor*. Expanding cooperation with the open-source *Tor* project will enable DW to consolidate its position as a trusted brand for freedom of information. Multilingual communications and marketing measures concerning the circumvention of censorship and blockades will also be carried out for this purpose. The aim is to enable people in autocratic countries and those affected by internet censorship to gain a better understanding and implement appropriate censorship circumvention measures.

Growing competitive pressure and the increasing challenges in target countries are seeing **strategic partnerships** become more and more important. Where potential and synergies exist, DW continues to secure cooperative ventures with suitable media partners around the world. Impressive examples here — in addition to the EU cooperation project *InfoMigrants* launched in 2017 — include the Turkish-language +90 project, a close partnership be-

tween DW and the leading western news providers *BBC*, *France Médias Monde (FMM)* and *Voice of America (VOA)* as well as *ENTR — What's Next*, the digital and multilingual media project for young people in Europe recently co-launched with *FMM* (see section 4). At the same time, DW is focusing on locally based cooperative ventures in its target countries. It is now already able to use the reach of over 4,000 distribution partners to distribute its content via all media formats, in the process creating the conditions for this content to develop its relevance in the local regions. DW is therefore eager to gradually expand successful forms of cooperation, such as the co-productions *EcoIndia*, *EcoAfrica* and *Her — Women in Asia* in all target regions.

With the goal of closer relations with distribution partners and strengthening its own competitiveness, DW also provides a specific range of content for cooperation with distribution partners with a wide reach: **DW Premium**. This form of distribution offers its most important and highest-audience distribution partners a free-of-charge premium-level service for TV and online content — with great success, as the current usage analysis shows. *DW Premium* live crosses alone, for example, currently account for 17 million weekly user contacts. In the case of live crosses connected to *DW Premium*, DW journalists from Germany are featured on news shows produced by national TV broadcasters, in which they comment on politics, business news, the arts and sports. In addition to live TV crosses and news reports for TV and online, the *DW Premium* portfolio also contains specialized video series. Given the huge success of *DW Premium*, DW is planning to expand this form of distribution (see section 4). In the interests of improving protection against possible reputational risks arising from business relations, DW will monitor its partnerships more closely with a view to values and identity, in particular via a new third-party-risk-management program that identifies blatant deviations from DW values on the part of distribution partners. The likewise newly created *Declaration of Values* will enable DW to make its values an integral contractual element.

Cooperation with Germany's public TV broadcasters (*ARD*, *ZDF* and regional stations) and *Deutschlandradio* is being continued and, where possible, expanded. Program acquisitions, joint productions and cooperation with local employees at the relevant correspondents' bureaus help to facilitate an efficient and sustainable use of funds.

DW's highly qualified and motivated staff are of paramount importance; without their dedication, the diverse range of tasks and challenges would be insurmountable. In addition to the recruitment of new, suitable staff, the valuable expertise of long-serving professionals is consolidated through targeted training. As a modern and competitive **employer**, DW places great value in strengthening

the self-reliance and self-organization of its staff. In accordance with the *Digital Workplace* concept, DW is constantly improving the opportunities afforded by a digital, mobile, interdisciplinary and collaborative system of work. DW focuses here on the mindset and approach of management figures and other staff—in accordance with *Digital Leadership*. The concept also includes preventive measures against deviations from DW values. Ensuring compliance with both legal requirements and DW's brand identity is the responsibility of the director general's office for Compliance and Brand Integrity. In the interests of all staff members knowing and incorporating company values, DW reworked its Code of Conduct, which commits all staff to refraining from all forms of sexism, racism and anti-Semitism in both internal communications and content produced. DW has in addition introduced a value-based recruiting system, in the process making it clear from the recruitment process onwards its opposition to racism, anti-Semitism and all other forms of discrimination. DW will in the course of these measures recruit external expertise, while also consulting with the Federal Commissioner for Jewish Life in Germany.

On the gender equality front, DW will continue its efforts to pave the way for more women in senior positions—an area where it has already made great progress; the proportion of women in such positions was already 43 percent in 2020. DW is increasing its focus on diversity with a dedicated organizational unit and a package of measures for the continued promotion of the issue at all levels. DW takes guidance from the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in its fundamental orientation for programming. Germany's history forms the background for presenting current developments both in their historical context and from different perspectives. In this way, DW conveys Germany abroad as a nation with its roots in European culture and as a liberal, democratic and constitutional state based on the rule of law. In doing so, it supports the appreciation of and the necessary exchange between cultures and peoples. DW's approach here is based on a broader concept of culture that first and foremost relates to everyday-life scenarios. The range of subjects ranges from religion, ethics, law and education systems to environmental and climate-related issues. DW also communicates how people deal with sociopolitical debates in Germany to adopt positions and reach a consensus on contemporary challenges. As a public broadcaster, DW fulfills its programming mandate free from government influence. Culture is a pan-divisional subject in the content of DW, which also takes into consideration the significance of religion when people exchange cultural ideas. In view of the unstable and increasingly crisis-ridden international situation, ensuring security—especially of employees on foreign assignments—is an absolute priority for DW.

In order to achieve their operational objectives, DW and DW Akademie will be further strengthening their efforts during the strategic planning period to ensure free access to information, freedom of expression and democracy around the globe, particularly in the face of the increasingly virulent geopolitical challenges described. This will involve the two bodies interconnecting their areas of expertise. While DW's journalism-related departments provide quality-assured information and dialogue-promoting content and publish these in target regions on all available channels, DW Akademie works with its partners in Africa, Asia, Latin America, MENA (Middle East and North Africa) and Eastern Europe on improving legal and political frameworks. DW Akademie advises government agencies and NGOs that work to defend freedom of expression, helps media outlets to develop long-term business models and innovations, counteracts disinformation and promotes media and information literacy among users. The objective here is to provide DW Akademie with dependable personnel-related and financial foundations in order to ensure its independence and capacity to act. This requires agreement with the government on the requisite financial resources.

After a protracted period of stagnation and financial cutbacks, DW has for many years enjoyed the appreciation of significant sections of parliament and the government, and is recognized as an important player in the communication of values such as freedom of speech, press freedom and democratic principles. This appreciation is manifested in the significant **financial strengthening and turnaround in DW's permanent staffing levels** by the government in the period covered by the last two strategic plans, especially by the *Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media (BKM)* and the parliament. Most encouragingly, there were long-term increases in the operating budget, which has risen every year in the period 2018—2021, most recently by around €15 million. Compared to the 2018 budget year, additional funds amounting to more than €66 million were made available to DW through 2021. Over the course of the past strategic planning period, DW was provided with around €30 million of additional funds, to compensate for pandemic-related additional expenditure. Furthermore, in 2020 the government increased DW's staffing plan again for the first time in years. This resulted in DW having 1,412 permanent posts in 2021. At the same time, the government promised DW a further 156 positions for the years 2022 and 2023. This increase in staff positions strengthens DW's credentials as an employer, as it can offer employment prospects to highly qualified individuals. In light of the increased budget and the job growth plan on the basis of the 2018 budget, permanent staffing levels at the same time remain a challenge for DW, especially for the requirements of the project-funded DW Akademie. DW will continue its commitment to this challenge together with

its financial providers, in order to guarantee dependable career options for its staff members in the future.

In the interests of fulfilling its mandate in the context of existing global challenges and requisite, continuous development of digital technologies (“Digital Transformation”) in accordance with the new strategic plan, DW requires sustainability in its financial development. DW has shown how a moderate four-year annual increase of the current grant has enabled it to further enhance the impact of content by optimizing its scope and quality. One prerequisite for demonstrating a positive effect is that DW’s services are used as widely as possible—a factor that increased notably, by around 84 percent from 157 million (2017) to 289 million (2021) weekly users. From DW’s perspective, the audience reach potential of digital transformation is far from being fully utilized. This first and foremost requires the dependable implementation of the new and already launched program strategy and technical measures planned for the 2022–2025 strategic plan. At the same time, audience reach is merely one indicator of DW reaching a maximum number of people so that its content can have sufficient impact (see appendix for the criteria concerning the assessment of content and its impact). During the target period, DW will set up a program-monitoring process to enable the systematic evaluation of its content. To ensure further success in the years to come, DW must adapt its activities to new challenges as they emerge.

In addition to the support provided by the *BKM*, DW receives project funding from the *Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)*—in particular for DW Akademie projects connected to media development—as well as yearly project funding from the *German Foreign Ministry (AA)*. At the same time, the *German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV)* has committed funding to a project over a number of years.

The following chapters provide further details of both the goals and measures related to the journalistic content and DW Akademie’s activities for the 2022–2025 period.¹

¹ After expiry of the period in question and in conjunction with the legally required evaluation report, DW reports transparently and in detail on the extent to which it is meeting the objectives formulated here and on which measures are taking effect. DW draws on international expertise for evaluating its services, e.g. by consulting target groups and media experts. For the most important target markets it also uses representative surveys and methods of technical usage measurement to ascertain audience reach. The criteria used to evaluate services and their impact are set out in the appendix.

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1 Deutsche Welle Goals for 2022–2025

Mission

Deutsche Welle (DW) is Germany's international broadcaster and a trusted source around the world for reliable news and information with content in 32 languages. It conveys a comprehensive image of Germany, while covering important events and issues with journalistic independence and a unique perspective. DW works to strengthen the right to freedom of expression around the world, while advocating democratic values and the rule of law. In its efforts to derive a viable strategy for sustained competitiveness as required by its mandate, DW adjusted its content during the period of the last strategic plan and reinforced its position by means of a new organizational **concept** and the sharpening of both its target group definition and its featured topics.

This concept, based on DW's mandate, is the starting point for all the company's activities, with its journalistic content opening up further perspectives especially in target regions beset by religious and ethnic conflicts. On the basis of its statutory mission, its "Unbiased information for free minds" **brand essence** and its core brand values i.e.

"rational", "straightforward" and "open-minded," DW's provision of comprehensive information contributes to enlightenment, freedom of expression and the strengthening of civil societies—and increasingly on an interactive basis. The media are experiencing what is sometimes a dramatic loss in credibility and confidence in a growing number of countries and to an unprecedented degree find themselves confronted with the charge of providing disinformation. This particularly affects regions where state control, censorship and blocking measures are increasingly restricting the room for free media to maneuver. DW believes that it has an important duty to provide independent, credible reporting to strengthen people's resilience to propaganda, fake news and disinformation, and to help them form their own free opinions. There is a particular onus here on DW to find ways of optimizing access to its content for civil society. With censorship becoming increasingly severe in a number of target markets, DW is stepping up its efforts to enable target groups to access its digital content with the help of censorship circumvention options and censorship-resistant systems. In light of the growing significance of dependable, independent and balanced reporting, DW is continuing to successively expand



Figure 1: DW's guiding principles.
Source: Compiled and designed by DW

its expertise in the areas of research and verification. In the wake of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, DW is also expanding its activities in European target areas in order to counter disinformation there. DW will use its own one-time budget funds in 2022 to strengthen its Polish, Romanian and Hungarian language services. The other European editorial teams and DW's English and German services will also benefit. DW Akademie is, as an integral part of DW, reinforcing this with its work geared toward promoting constructive dialogue and freedom of expression. As far as freedom of expression and media development are concerned, the DW Akademie is a strategic partner of the *Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development*. It advises the ministry, makes the latest findings available, illustrates ways of internationally highlighting the issues of freedom of expression and the media and is operating long-term projects in 50 partner countries.

Looking at the destabilization of political, economic and social conditions in a range of countries and the resulting increase in the pressure to migrate, DW's presence in the refugees' countries of origin is significant. It covers the causes of flight and explains the risks involved in embarking on such a journey while also — in keeping with its focus on constructive journalism — highlighting prospects. DW's high linguistic and regional expertise enables it to make a contribution towards integration in Germany through balanced reporting, in the process also conveying a realistic picture of Germany to interested professionals abroad. The educational facilities provided by DW Akademie, e.g. its diverse and modern German courses, are particularly important in this process. In addition, DW Akademie promotes dialogue in the countries of origin between refugees and host societies, and helps to improve the supply of dependable information to individuals.

Target group

DW has also redefined its target group in accordance with its mission. Its high-quality journalistic content is aimed at figures involved in the formation of political opinion. They are not passive media consumers; not least because of the significance and wide reach of social media, these are people who now themselves exert influence on opinion-making among broad sections of the population. Members of the target group therefore act as multipliers of new ideas on politics, society and culture. In a digital media environment, this description most aptly fits young people, who constitute a significant and growing portion of the population in most target countries. Many are not even 18 when they begin actively participating in debates about the environment, minority rights and changing social norms. They are in many cases also actively engaged in civil society from an early age. For this reason, DW is now primarily focusing on the 14-40 age group as its target group.

Many of them live in urban areas, have a progressive and open-minded outlook and are actively looking for new topics and perspectives of personal relevance. They tend to be more highly educated, but often have no significant prior knowledge of international issues. It is important to bear in mind here that the definition of education can vary significantly depending on the target country. DW's target group above all uses digital media as a source of information.² Considering the focus on this group, it is important to strengthen diversity in programming and to emphasize the variety of perspectives. This focus on a core target group is necessary for reasons related to resources and efficiency. At the same time, DW does not exclude anyone from its content, and whenever possible endeavors to also reach people outside the core target group and with lower levels of education. DW Akademie's development cooperation programs take special consideration of the concerns of disadvantaged population groups and minorities. In Africa, in particular, the rural population is the focus of activities — but in eastern Europe, Asia and the MENA region, the goal is likewise to give large parts of the population access to information and involvement in public discourse. In both Latin America and in other regions, DW has selected projects aimed at indigenous population groups. Radio remains an important medium in these regions — and as such also in DW Akademie's projects.

Due to regional differences, DW details this target group for each of its 32 language programs as part of its ongoing strategy process. This is done on the basis of criteria such as age structure, education, the range of different needs in terms of information, dialogue and interaction, and media consumption. Changing needs and usage habits require continuous adaptation of programming in terms of content, design and distribution. With a clear focus on a distinctly young target group, DW will configure its programming accordingly in terms of content as well as their platform preferences and usage habits. In light of the preferred use of digital media for acquiring information and the increasing desire for flexible media consumption, DW will continue to expand its digital content and make it available via the platforms most relevant for on-demand use in the respective target countries.

Women have to date been underrepresented in the use of DW's content. Given its importance to civil society and the varying legal status of women around the world, DW will give this target group even greater focus than previously. DW already has content that is primarily aimed at women, and addresses subjects from the everyday world of this group. An example of this is the project-funded web video service *Because I'm a Woman*, which features Arab

² cf. 2021 evaluation report

women with their personal stories and experiences. A further example of this content-related focus is *Fuerza Latina*. This weekly Spanish-language TV program portrays socially involved women in Latin America, who are active in various fields ranging from politics to environmental protection and the arts. In many regions of the world, women continue to be particularly impacted by oppression, poverty and discrimination. DW can contribute in various ways to reducing discrimination against women: through the increased employment of female presenters and experts in DW's programming, the conscious use of female DW journalists as dialogue partners in social media, and giving greater priority to the legal status of women in existing and new formats. Furthermore, as part of its diversity management DW is participating in *50:50 The Equality Project*, which was initiated by the *BBC* and has the aim of achieving the long-term equal representation of women in media content.

Target countries for journalistic content and areas of linguistic focus

With the issue of freedom becoming an additional focus of its mission in 2019, and in light of the significantly changed situation in the target markets since the last prioritization of the latter, in 2020 DW updated the prioritization of target countries for its journalistic content. The re-prioritization of target countries was based on transparent criteria³ derived from DW's tasks as formulated in the Deutsche Welle Act:

- the need to communicate democratic and liberal values
- the need for freely available information
- political significance
- the economic importance of a region for Germany

Further criteria used to prioritize regions are: population size, past increase in usage and potential for future increase, online propaganda, market dynamics, partner network, immigration to Germany and geopolitical significance. In this context, countries with large populations and low levels of press freedom have a particularly high priority. DW will therefore focus its journalistic content on 70 of the 197 countries evaluated and divide them into groups A, B and C:

Based on the prioritization criteria described, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo have top priority for DW in Africa, while in Asia this applies to China, India, Indonesia, Iran and Pakistan. In the Arabic-speaking

world, Egypt, Iraq and Syria are Priority A countries, while top priority in the Americas is assigned to Brazil, Mexico and the United States. Russia has gained in importance in recent years, especially against the backdrop of tremendous restrictions on media freedom and diversity, and will continue to assume a top position as a target country for DW's content in the future. There has also been a stronger focus on European countries such as Poland and Turkey.

The prioritization of the target countries influences the orientation of the language departments and content divisions. Where a language service covers several countries, the immediate focus of its resources and activities is on Priority A countries, before B and C countries follow. In addition to journalistic content, this also applies to the development of new formats and to distribution.

The explicit aim is to provide content for the prioritized countries. Also reporting on countries that have not been prioritized is possible and makes sense in this context. Countries such as Israel and Namibia, which for historical reasons have a special significance for Germany, are given special attention in DW's coverage. Coverage should include that content which is relevant for the target groups in the prioritized countries. In accordance with its mission, DW is focusing more strongly on the issue of freedom. A central aspect of coverage is the target group's need for information, which is reflected in the following **featured topics**: Freedom and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, World Trade and Social Justice, Technology and Innovation, Environmental Protection, Nutrition and Health Education, and Culture and Life in Germany and Europe. Accordingly, DW's reporting tackles global challenges that will, especially in the global South, determine public debates in the near future: the consequences of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic, food and energy security, and significant conflicts such as those between Russia and Ukraine or between China and Taiwan.

Checks are performed regularly on the prioritization of target regions for programs to give DW flexibility in its response to changes — e.g. the political situation in the target markets. In order to be able to guarantee this flexibility, DW includes the creation of a strategic reserve in its budget plans. In light of the escalating situation following the Taliban's seizure of power, DW is currently examining whether Afghanistan should be included in the group of Priority A countries. In non-priority countries, DW's presence is based not only on its reporting on these countries, but also on the services offered by DW Akademie. The latter consults with the *Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development* to select partner countries where projects are to be implemented and partners are to receive priority support. For the eventuality of funding being increased, DW plans to focus even more on particular

³ DW used indicators such as the *Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI)*, the *Human Development Index (HDI)*, the *Press Freedom Index of Reporters Without Borders (RSF)*, economic growth, gross national income (GNI), audience reach and the DW partner network to operationalize the criteria.

countries on the basis of the criteria described for prioritizing target regions and to provide greater funding for content for these areas (see section 5).

This regional prioritization provides the basis for the **major focus in terms of language**; in line with its mandate and DW's image of itself, German retains its special significance in DW's language portfolio. The most important content language continues to be English as a lingua franca. Due to their higher level of education compared to the average within the population, many people within DW's core target group are English-speakers or possess sufficient English skills to enable them to use English-language information services. This means that Africa and Asia remain a focus for DW's English-language content. English often has the status of being a common language here, and in many countries is an official language. In addition, the USA will also be a crucial target market for DW's English-language content—which is already used by around 100 million people weekly. Given that around one billion people speak English

around the globe⁴, DW's English-language content continues to provide the greatest usage potential for DW, particularly in the DW target group. Looking at the extremely heterogeneous markets that the English-language content is geared to, DW endeavors to tailor content to the target audience in the relevant countries of the two continents. This is because—especially when it comes to regional issues—the target group naturally has very disparate areas of interest. DW has therefore clustered the target countries prioritized for English content into target regions: East Africa, West Africa, the USA, South Asia and Southeast Asia, as well as South Africa as a further priority target country. English content is regionalized to these areas and also provides adaptation templates for the regional languages spoken in the prioritized target countries.

In target regions where English is not so widespread, DW reaches its target group with content in the relevant regional languages. In Africa, these are the major

⁴ cf. 2021 evaluation report

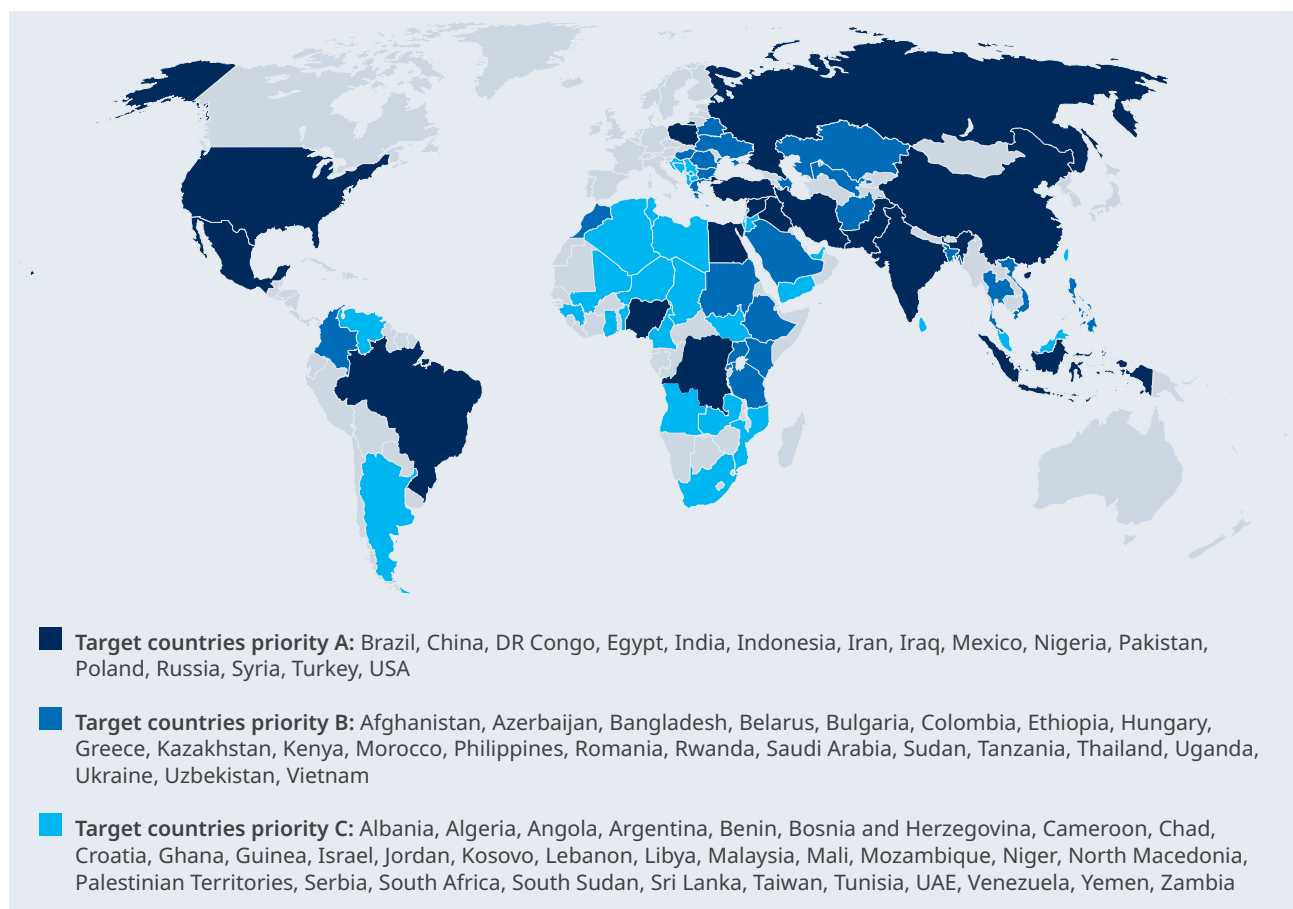


Figure 2: DW's prioritized target countries.

Source: Compiled and designed by DW

regional languages of Hausa (Nigeria, Niger), Swahili (East Africa) and Amharic (Horn of Africa). At the same time, DW also offers content in French and in Portuguese for its French-speaking and Lusophone target groups in Africa.

Geopolitical and media law developments mean that the now nine regional language programs for Asia—Chinese, Dari, Pashto, Farsi, Urdu, Indonesian, Hindi, Bengali and Tamil—have a high strategic significance for DW’s content. Tamil, which is spoken as a mother tongue by around 75 million people in southern India and Sri Lanka, was introduced by DW on the basis of the new prioritization of target countries. By introducing social media content in the Tamil language, DW is contributing to the free formation of opinion in a further region where freedom of information and expression are severely restricted. DW is also significantly improving its presence in Southeast Asia while making efforts to leverage synergies with the new DW production hub in New Delhi, which already serves as a multilingual presence for English-language coverage as well as the regional languages Hindi, Bengali and Urdu.

The Arabic-language services are continuing to grow in importance, particularly in light of the worsening political, social and media law situation in many countries in the

Arab world—as shown by marked increases in usage during the previous strategic planning period. The Arabic-language service’s digital content has seen it achieve the highest usage of all DW language departments.⁵

In light of political developments and increasing restrictions on press and media freedom, Russia has gained further importance for DW and will continue to do so in future. Given the similarly worsening political and legal situation in Belarus—the media markets of Russia and Belarus are among the most unfree in the world—DW wants to ensure that the Belarusian population has access to independent information via its Russian-language content. Given the new war context, media freedom in Ukraine is possible only to a limited extent and under difficult circumstances. Furthermore, the population is exposed to targeted disinformation campaigns. Ukrainian content will as a result play an important role for DW.

In Latin America, Spanish and Portuguese (for Brazil) will maintain their high importance because of the huge potential for audience reach, crisis-ridden political develop-

⁵ cf. 2021 evaluation report



Figure 3: Headquarters, studios and offices of DW and DW Akademie.
Source: Compiled and designed by DW

ments and the worrying media legislation situation, and the continent’s political, economic and cultural importance for Germany.

As far as European languages are concerned, DW will — also due to the strategic importance of these countries for Germany and Europe — continue to have an especially strong focus on Turkish and Polish as languages of Priority A target markets. Greek and the languages of the Western Balkans continue to play a significant role in DW content. Given the drastic transformation of the constitution and media landscape in Hungary and the accompanying increased undermining of the rule of law and democracy, DW has introduced Hungarian as an additional broadcast language. Both newly introduced language services — Hungarian and Tamil — were launched in 2021 as pure social media ventures in conjunction with a two-year pilot phase.

DW now has many studios and offices around the world. In addition to the large studios in Brussels and Washington, it maintains bureaus in e.g. Jakarta, Jerusalem, Kyiv, Lagos, Nairobi, New Delhi and Bogotá; the Jerusalem office is currently being further expanded. Following the closure of the Moscow studio by the Russian authorities in 2022, DW has continued its reporting from the Riga bureau. The expansion of offices in the prioritized target countries is only one element in the regionalization process. A further element is the expansion of co-productions and live feeds as well as cooperation arrangements in general within DW’s strong network of distribution partners. DW is also planning to expand its network of correspondents. In addition, the DW Akademie has offices in Bogotá, Beirut, Tunis, Islamabad, Kyiv, Windhoek, Kampala, Accra and Yangon/Rangoon. Complementary to these activities, the DW Akademie is expanding its external structure while also seeking to establish additional academy bureaus and satellite offices.

Goals

DW is aiming for the following **outcomes** in terms of the primary goals formulated in section 4 of the DW Act:

DW aims to enable people around the globe to form their own opinions based on independent information, reliable facts and a free exchange of ideas in order to advance social debate.

To meet this goal, DW’s services need to be used as extensively as possible. Content must therefore be available via platforms preferred by the users. Moreover, they will only be used if the target group believes the content is

relevant, credible and of a high quality. This is in particular the case where the content relates to users’ everyday reality. DW content that is widely used and accepted within the target group creates confidence in independent media and supports the formation of free opinions. Another major precondition for this is enabling people to consume media and its content without any problems. Communicating these media skills is a priority at DW Akademie. DW and DW Akademie are contributing to improving people’s ability to discuss and initiate dialogue in the target groups through these means and the strengthening of media systems, particularly in regions exposed to terror, propaganda and disinformation, displacement and migration.

DW specifies its legally required tasks on the basis of target regions, target groups, mission and vision, and is setting itself the following **goals** for the 2022–2025 planning period:

1. Expand its reach from 289 million to 400 million weekly user contacts.
2. Increase the relevance of DW content.
3. Promote dialogue.

In setting these goals, DW is building on the results of the 2021 evaluation report:

Here it becomes evident that DW—despite increasing challenges and a clearly intensifying competitive situation in the target markets—is reaching more and more people with its content. DW managed to significantly exceed its target reach of 210 million weekly user contacts by 2021; 289 million people worldwide now regularly use DW’s content every week. The highest growth in reach was attained with **digital** content via external platforms and distribution partners. Here, DW was able to increase its reach from 36 million (2017) to 122 million weekly user contacts compared. The importance of moving image and mobile content remains unbroken, with platform-specific videos being the most important usage drivers; video content now accounts for around 90 percent of online consumption. The biggest social media platform for DW continues to be *Facebook*, with *YouTube* gaining in significance. Both here and via strong *Instagram* collaborations, DW saw its strongest digital growth to date. This provides further confirmation that, in light of increasing digitalization in all target markets, DW has set the right course for the future viability of its content with its constantly evolving digital strategy.

For the first time, the use of DW’s digital content exceeded TV consumption. That said: TV continues to play a significant role as a news medium in many of DW’s target regions; Africa and North and Latin America remain strong TV

markets, and consumption of DW content also increased slightly in Asia. While 85 million people used DW's TV content in 2017, that figure increased by around 38 percent to 117 million viewers each week.

DW also continues to achieve a high level of usage with its **radio** services, of which around 90 percent is via distribution partners. This means it reaches 50 million listeners a week—around a quarter more than in 2017; usage is concentrated predominantly in Africa, where radio content continues to play an important role in the procurement of information. In light of the drastic change in the political situation in Afghanistan since 2021, DW has relaunched its radio programming for the target group in that country. It broadcasts daily radio programs in Dari and Pashto via shortwave to deliver dependable information to listeners in the target region.

This evaluation of its programming also revealed that DW is used and appreciated as a credible source of information. The majority of users surveyed in said evaluation regarded DW as an impartial source with no agenda of its own—which makes its coverage all the more effective. What users in particular appreciate are independent information and sold facts providing them with a reliable source of orientation in times of increasing misinformation and disinformation. DW continues to communicate values that Germany represents in the wider world, contributing to the country's reputation while also promoting the German language and culture. It also reinforces the **capacity for discourse** and promotes the concept of a liberal consensus—as is confirmed in the current evaluation report; DW gives users a stronger position to speak in favor of civil society. DW's target groups recognize German and European points of view and values, have a better appreciation of how world events are connected, know more about democratic principles and can form an independent opinion for themselves. Together with its partners in 50+ countries of the "Global South", DW Akademie develops individual, innovative, forward-looking and long-term solutions on the ground for the purposes of strengthening constructive dialogue.

Furthermore, the current evaluation report identified a need for optimization. DW has expanded its **dialogue** formats in recent years, and formats such *JaafarTalk* and *The 77 Percent — Street Debate* serve as models in that they focus on issues that are taboo in target countries for political or religious reasons. With content that addresses the perspectives of minorities and the marginalized, DW even reaches users who are critical of the latter—solely on the basis of trusting the integrity of the broadcaster. At the same time, however, the evaluation report showed that DW has yet to place sufficient emphasis on dialogue-oriented content. In order to further intensify the impact potential of its content, DW assigns prominent importance



Figure 4: Number of weekly user contacts according to media type as of 2021. Source: Extrapolation by DW

to strengthening dialogue and expanding formats that are explicitly oriented to debate and dialogue during the period of the current strategic planning.

In order to increase the **effectiveness and relevance** of its programs, DW is as part of the strategic development of its services continually examining which content is being broadcast and in which form and via which media and platforms. With this goal in mind, the evaluation report also showed that DW was able to increase the relevance of its content in recent years with specifically regionalized content such as the environmental magazine *EcoIndia*, and its multimedia project for the young African target group: *The 77 Percent*. In addition to more pronounced regionalization, the continued optimization of its digital content in all languages was also one of the key success factors that ultimately also saw an extensive increase in audience reach. In order to remain competitive, however, DW must increase its commitment to increasing the relevance of its content in the immediate future. This can be achieved primarily through content that has a very close proximity to the everyday lives and realities of the target group, i.e., produced locally in the target countries. Co-productions

and live feeds are another important element for increasing content relevance. In addition, feedback from distribution partners helps to boost the relevance of existing content. Distribution partners also provide valuable input when it comes to developing new formats. DW enjoys a high level of credibility among its target audience and is perceived as an impartial intermediary that constantly sheds light on different perspectives, e.g. in its frequent addressing of minority and marginalized perspectives. As the current evaluation of DW content showed: even users who are critical of these groups adopt DW content due to their fundamental basic trust in its integrity. Another finding was that DW consumers have a higher level of media competence than non-users. DW offers its users independent information and dependable facts for countering misinformation. On this front, the evaluation showed that DW content is credited with a high potential for exposing misinformation.

Given the framework conditions outlined above in the target regions, DW wants to in particular continue meeting its commitment to providing users with independent information and reliable facts as well as a wide range of perspectives. To this end DW will, together with DW Akademie, focus on the strategic measures outlined in the following chapter.

2 DW's areas of focus for the 2022–2025 period

DW has agreed on three areas of priority for the strategic planning period. The section below outlines the basis on which these were defined.

The following **Mission** was formulated as the basis for DW's strategic orientation:

As an unbiased, German media organization, we provide news and information to people worldwide, giving them the freedom to make up their own minds.

This incorporates the **Vision** for DW as of 2025:

By 2025, DW will become an essential source of digital information that inspires its target groups with regionally relevant, on-demand content that encourages dialogue. The DW Akademie will be the leading European institution for media development.

Considering its mission and vision, DW has formulated the three goals mentioned above for the period of the current strategic planning period. In order to achieve these goals, DW is gearing its activities to the following **areas of focus**:

1. DW increases its regional expertise and presence.
2. DW produces *on-demand first*.
3. DW makes efficient and sustainable use of its resources.

The guiding principle for the future configuration of work and cooperation at DW is:

DW actively creates a diverse and digital organizational culture.

2.1 DW actively creates a diverse, digital organizational culture

DW will focus on the following spheres of activity:

Modern working environment via *New Work* and *Digital Leadership*

New Work comprises the umbrella for a large number of initiatives, impulses and projects that help to expand digital, mobile and collaborative activities and further advance cultural change at DW. DW is as such drawing conclusions from changes in the core journalistic business—where networking, transparent communication and the availability of information have over the years become indispensable success factors.

In a digital working world too, *New Work* is the way for DW to continue providing a working environment in which the potential of staff can be optimally deployed in accordance with DW's goals. Staff should be motivated and continue to enjoy working for DW—and this should be noticeable for our users.

When it comes to the culture of cooperation, DW has been investing in *Digital Leadership* for several years and as such in cooperation across hierarchical levels. In the course

of digital transformation, this role concept of senior and regular staff on equal terms provides new opportunities for the interdisciplinary and cross-hierarchical shaping of productive working environments. Cooperation in the age of digital leadership is characterized by personal responsibility and constructive feedback—as well as by the visibility and networking of (expert) knowledge and productive learning from mistakes.

The same applies to changes in the digital and physical workplace; DW's *Digital Workplace* project is creating the technical, structural and organizational conditions for enabling people to work both flexibly and independently of time and location.

As part of this process, DW also has plans to expand its mobile IT infrastructure and connect it to DW's central systems in a way that enables the decentralization of content production and distribution. This is being done, for example, via technical innovations in the area of on-demand production and artificial intelligence (AI). The promotion of innovation is in general an important component of DW's organizational culture and a prerequisite for its future viability.

Participatory management culture through digital leadership supported by conflict management, preventive services on health and resilience training

In the context of a participative organizational culture of this kind, constructive conflict resolution is an essential component. DW has agreed with staff associations on a conflict management system in which staff representatives and various points of contact in DW conflict management work together efficiently. At the same time, DW presents itself as an employer with modern, comprehensive preventive health measures; these were expanded in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic to include information and exercise programs for increasing resilience and on the subject of mental health/prevention for regular and senior staff.

Diversity: DW distinguished by a range of different perspectives

Cultural diversity has always been a high priority at DW with its global range of programming. Both DW and DW Akademie are shaped by staff from over 150 countries, who constitute a great opportunity for the future viability of the company. The establishment of diversity management in 2019 saw the creation of the prerequisite for developing DW into one of the most diverse and inclusive media organizations in Germany. With this goal in mind, a comprehensive diversity strategy will be developed during this strategic planning period. This will involve the creation of concepts to promote the idea of diversity at DW, break down systemic barriers, and in the process help to maximize the potential of diversity for DW's work.

The newly formed *People* Department is giving an in-depth focus to the requirements of a diverse company. With an eye on forward-looking human resources planning, diverse criteria will also play an important role in the recruitment of new specialists and managers. In connection with diversity measures, support for permanent employees and freelance staff, previously located in separate areas, will also be discontinued as such and brought together in a new *People Management* department. A higher degree of standardization will increase processing speed and transparency. As part of this process of change and as a clear commitment to the values anchored in the DW Act, the People department has reorganized and improved the entire recruiting system and the onboarding program for new staff members in Germany and abroad. An important component here are standardized interview guidelines containing value-related issues on all dimensions of the *General Equal Treatment Act (AGG)* and fundamental principles. DW will in the process provide systematic support for ensuring that that new personnel in Germany and abroad comply with company values. All new staff members undergo an onboarding program that clearly communicates

both the basic values DW stands for and the absolute requirement for all staff to identify with them.

Expansion of systemic knowledge management

The pandemic-related increase in the number of mobile workplaces has seen the handling of digital knowledge management assume growing importance. The expertise of many staff is enhanced through the effective sharing of relevant information, data and experience. DW has already established a range of methods and structures throughout the company for sharing knowledge, and will continue to expand these through 2025.

In endeavoring to network knowledge expediently and to be able to optimize the use and expansion of its staff's expertise, DW has taken further measures to expand its knowledge management. *DW Minds* events, for example—in which colleagues present their work or give talks about specific topics—are provided as webinars via video conferencing and can be accessed on demand. In addition, DW actively promotes Communities of Practice. *DW Circles* gives staff the opportunity to network across all directorates, exchange best practices and share their knowledge with each other. A number of these *Circles* are already up and running, e.g. on subjects including cybersecurity, sustainability, constructive journalism and search engine optimization.

The *DW Lab*, where innovative journalistic products are successfully developed, has now likewise become a place of knowledge transfer. Its special structure means it is available for projects across all directorates, and therefore able to promote staff exchanges from different areas. Together, they develop innovative journalistic products and test opportunities from new information technologies for use in DW and DW Akademie.

These pan-divisional issues will be incorporated into the configuration of the three priority projects for the 2022–2025 strategic planning period.

2.2 Focus 1: DW increases its regional expertise and presence

The re-prioritization of target countries described in section 1 will enable DW to tailor the coverage provided by its 32 content languages even more precisely to the target markets. Digital playout channels, in particular, enable the editorial departments to conduct timely analyses of information needs in the prioritized target countries. Journalistic content enjoys particularly heavy usage in target countries when the regional relevance is clear to the audience. For this reason, during this strategic planning period DW will give many editorial departments a closer geographic proximity to their prioritized target markets. An on-the-ground presence enables user interests to be identified faster and with even greater precision, and content to be distributed more effectively. DW is in the process of significantly increasing the volume of exclusive and regionally produced content.

The development of new offices as well as the expansion of existing ones will be carried out according to preset criteria in line with the strategic guidelines. The evaluation of suitable countries and cities will take into account various factors including the respective political situation, possible restrictions due to censorship, and underlying legal and security-related conditions. DW will reinforce its presence in offices assigned the highest priority level. Should this not be possible due to the threat environment in the priority target country, DW will operate from safer neighboring countries. The security of local staff is a key concern for DW. This also includes ensuring that local DW staff are treated in the same way in crisis situations as staff employed locally by the German government. Multilingual production hubs are also being established to strengthen editorial synergies. The example of the DW hub in New Delhi shows how effectively it supplies the regional-language teams in Hindi, Urdu, Bengali and Tamil in addition to English programming. While DW has set up another studio hub in Kyiv, its operations are limited due to the war in Ukraine. Activities at other locations are outlined in section 3.

In the prioritized target countries DW will be recruiting additional local staff with specific expertise in modern video production and relevant digital playout channels. In order to secure DW's technical and journalistic standards, training opportunities (digital/video/on-demand) will be expanded for staff in the language departments. By closely interconnecting content divisions and regional language teams, programming will be further aligned to the needs of target groups in the prioritized markets.

In addition to establishing and expanding its regional presences, DW will focus on gaining new cooperations in

the prioritized target regions, e. g. via new, high-audience-reach live-feed partnerships. Meanwhile, DW also plans to increase the share of co-productions with regional and national partners.



Figure 5: DW journalist Juliana Gonzalez Rios in a live cross with Mexican TV channel ADN40.

All regionalization projects entail higher capital expenditure. As, however, local production costs in many target countries are significantly lower than in Germany, both production output and the quality of content are set to increase in the future. At the same time, competitive payrates ensure that DW attracts competent professionals for its content and meets its social responsibility as a tax-funded media institution.

In order to increase its regional presence, the DW Akademie is expanding its regional activities in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. This will involve strengthening external structures and recruiting local experts for developing media strategies and concepts for a more complex, more digital and also increasingly polarized world. In the area of film funding, DW Akademie supports filmmakers in the realization of high-quality productions. In doing so, it helps to highlight the potential of local film industries in the face of global competition while enabling open debate on social issues.

2.3 Focus 2: DW produces on-demand first

Between 2017 and 2021 DW more than tripled its digital usage from 36 million to 122 million weekly user contacts. This increase shows the great growth potential of DW content, which can be used on demand, i. e. anytime, anyplace, anywhere. DW currently generates around 58 percent of its audience reach via TV and radio programming. These linear playout channels will for the time being remain important for the reach, relevance and impact of DW. Due to global changes in the media market, however, the usage of linear playout channels is set to decline in the future; this is due to DW's young target group in particular already preferring on-demand content. In order to ensure an efficient deployment of resources DW continuously evaluates the respective potential and usage scenarios of its playout channels in the various markets—in the process considering the costs, reach, and relevance of individual content in order to remain competitive there in the future. Starting in 2022, this is being done with the help of program portfolio management in order to identify both low-performing or low-quality playout channels and broadcasts as well as gaps in the portfolio. By reallocating resources accordingly, DW intends to increase the flexibility of its response to market changes, while at the same time maintaining audience reach.

DW faces a major challenge on the satellite distribution channel front. In many target areas, the introduction of the 5G mobile communications standard is changing the conditions for TV broadcasting the C-band satellites. In Asia and in North and South America, for example, the overlapping use of frequencies causes disruption to the broadcast of the DW signal. In the interest of broadcast security, DW must switch to more cost-intensive alternative supply channels here. DW will continue to monitor this market development, and is also developing a definitive technical solution for distribution that is both reliable and economical.

Over the next four years, the production of new programming will be focused primarily on on-demand platforms. In addition to the company's own content on dw.com, the media library and B2B platforms, these will also include social media and streaming platforms hosted by third-party providers. This digital multi-platform strategy has the aim of securing DW content usage in the future as well. All editorial, technical and administrative areas are modifying their processes, workflows and content for the digital transformation process. The technical distribution channels are to be set up in a competitive position, with new challenges and changes in the company being clearly communicated. *On-demand first* is also increasingly being selected for basic and further training; both DW and

DW Akademie have made many learning materials available for use via e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Knowledge of data-based working remains key, as does an appreciation of the adaptability of content for foreign language departments. This applies equally for the requirements of partners and third-party platforms. The respective technical infrastructures are also taken into account for all target markets; video streaming, for example, is far more prevalent in most Asian target countries than on the African continent. Data analyses are used to precisely tailor content to the respective usage preferences of the various target groups and where necessary modify it. For example: the use of DW content on *YouTube* has increased markedly compared to established the usual top platform *Facebook* in the past evaluation period.⁶ DW will in future also be producing more audio content for distribution via on-demand platforms. New podcast formats have already been developed for the target countries of India, South Africa and Nigeria, and are designed to meet the needs of young and diverse target groups.

In many markets, distribution via cooperation partners and websites is crucial for the digital distribution of DW content. DW therefore plans to intensify the expansion of digital partnerships. *Tandem content sourcing* has proved productive in this context, especially for Arabic and Spanish-language content; with the help of a targeted needs assessment with distribution partners, tailored content from DW's services is identified and translated/adapted. Due to its success, this model has already been transferred to other language services and is set for further expansion. DW will also renew and standardize the playout channels on its own platforms for efficient delivery to distribution partners. A further focus is on cooperation with streaming and *over-the-top* platforms—which, especially in the heavily populated Asian target markets, promise high usage. In order to reach the young target group, *Sales and Distribution* will in future assign an even greater focus to cooperation with social media platforms such as *TikTok* and *Snapchat*. DW will also seek to embark on more collaborations with high-reach influencers, provided the latter meet DW's standards of journalistic quality.

⁶ cf. 2021 evaluation report

2.4 Focus 3: DW makes efficient and sustainable use of its resources

During the period covered by this strategic plan DW faces a range of challenges, which must be overcome while dealing with limited financial resources. Steadily rising operational costs and wage increases significantly limit the financial room for maneuver. At the same time, decisions related to strategic changes will require investments in many areas. This also applies to the strategic goal of sustainability, which DW attaches great importance to. To this end, central processes and structures are being evaluated on a pan-directorate basis and optimized for efficiency and sustainability. DW will maintain its capability for performance and innovation by making efficient and economical use of the resources at its disposal.

Efficiency

DW's concept of efficiency is based on best applying resources to improve the quantity and quality of all productions and processes. Processes are efficient if they achieve the greatest possible effect with the lowest possible use of resources. Improving the rational management of cost-benefit ratios across the board requires the incorporation of all departments and staff.

DW identifies several points and processes relevant for optimization. For example, increasing efficiency at the **personnel level** is closely linked with *Digital Leadership*, which allows for independent, cost-conscious working. Highly qualified and motivated staff are of paramount importance in this context. In addition to recruiting additional qualified personnel, advancing the valuable expertise of long-standing staff with skill-specific training programs is an important component of DW's success and competitiveness.

A key factor here is optimizing the efficiency of the **business management systems** of DW and DW Akademie; the *(D)ein SAP* project currently used in Germany's *ARD* broadcasting network will allow for the efficient organization, acceleration and clearer arrangement of both business management processes and DW's digitalization projects across the entire company. DW also expects an increase in efficiency from standardizing processes and the structure of production and IT.

On the process optimization front, advance calculations are made to determine the extent to which the anticipated savings and efficiency gains will lead to additional costs in other parts of the company, for example in IT infrastructure.

DW is intensifying use of **artificial intelligence** to achieve its efficiency target. AI will be integrated into DW's journalistic

practice with all interests in mind, while corresponding risks are to be countered with ethical guidelines. DW aims to make selective improvements to the quality of its programming and content with the help of artificial intelligence.

Examples of this are automated translation and text-to-speech systems, which reduce time-consuming editorial tasks and in the process provide staff with new capacities for valuable research and production tasks. In the interests of quality assurance, each working step offers the option of editorial corrections through to final approval. In 2020, DW already conducted cross-departmental tests on options for working with artificial intelligence on a prototype basis as part of the *HOLA!* project. *HOLA* stands for *Human-oriented Language Applications* — a technology project that was initially developed with DW's Russian, Hindi and Brazilian language departments. Furthermore, in 2020 DW joined the "Artificial Intelligence against Disinformation" research and development program funded by German government. This involves the development of AI-based digital forensics modules. AI can accelerate the journalistic process of fact checking and content confirmation — both as stand-alone applications and as part of DW's *Truly Media* verification platform. The focus in development terms is on detecting manipulated content and on automated network analyses that visualize the spread of disinformation on social media. There is also scope for numerous fields of application for artificial intelligence in business and administrative processes.

Employees and freelance staff are the pillars of DW and must as such continue to have sound working conditions at the company. DW's profile as an information broadcaster means that a higher proportion of the overall budget is allocated to human resources. At the same time, DW regularly faces major challenges in light of geopolitical crises, changing situations in target countries and changing media consumption habits — which it has to respond to at short notice with its content. Digitalization and new concepts on organizational concepts such as *New Work* and *Digital Leadership* likewise require a higher degree of flexibility in employment. In the opinion of the management, there are excessive restrictions on DW's operational flexibility due to the fixed types of employment and the automatic increases under collective bargaining agreements. DW therefore actively approaches its social partners on the **flexibilization of employment** in a socially responsible manner. But especially with regard to management positions, which are consciously and consistently assigned on a temporary basis, and also in the "automatic" salary level increases every two years, DW would — while incorporating employment protection rights — like to come to agreement

with the unions on more modern, more flexible and more performance-related conditions. The latter should constitute a better reflection of the legitimate interests of staff members and Deutsche Welle than which is presently possible under the current collective bargaining agreements. Among the objectives here is being able to assign management positions in the future on a rotating basis and according to changing technical requirements. This should also be reflected in the remuneration system. Another important point is to modernize DW's collective bargaining arrangements and in the process further improve both employer branding and DW's situation when it comes to the challenging recruitment of specialist personnel and managers and securing DW's competitiveness in a fluctuating media environment. The reorganization of the new People Department as described in section 2.1 enables forward-looking HR planning by taking an overall view of the workforce regardless of employment status.

Sustainability

DW aims to be one of the most sustainable media organizations in Germany by 2025—a plan that involves three levels of sustainability, with a focus on basic ecological principles as well as economic and social contexts. The accompanying assessment is carried out by *Sustainability Management*, with DW compiling a sustainability report every two years. Furthermore, DW is currently reviewing the requirements for certification in accordance with the EU's *Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)*.

On the ecological sustainability front, DW will focus on a climate protection strategy with a reduction target based on both scientific findings and its 2019 eco-performance assessment. Steps to be taken range from reducing business trips to active sustainable practices in the entire production process chain (*green production*).

Many of these aims are also sustainable in economic terms. For example, quality management methods are already being used to ensure that sustainability is continuously monitored in the diverse range of processes at DW and the DW Akademie.

DW is already in a good position regarding social sustainability. It has e. g. now expanded both collective bargaining agreements and claims to include freelancers. This has significantly improved conditions for the latter, e. g. in the event of illness or with regard to vacation pay. Furthermore, DW offers part-time training, sabbaticals and numerous health-related services. Flexible forms of working also enable a better balance between family and professional life.



Figure 6: Sustainability Report 2020.



Training to become a community reporter: Babirye Lilian takes part in a DW Akademie program in Uganda.

3 Programming goals and strategic measures for each region

Over the next four years, DW will be continuing the course adopted in the previous strategic planning period — albeit with new, distinct emphases. In order to remain internationally competitive, DW will maintain a strong focus on English as its programming language with the widest reach. As a lingua franca, English content enjoys the greatest distribution worldwide, and as such constitutes the flagship service of all international news providers. In order to increase the relevance of its English programming while facing extreme competition, DW is placing a special focus on sharpening the profile and intensifying the regionalization of its English content, especially for Africa, Asia and the USA. Given the very disparate range of specific information needs in other target regions, this also applies to regional-language content with which DW reaches target groups regardless of their level of English language competence. On the basis of existing, successful collaborations and co-productions, such as *JaafarTalk* or the *Eco* magazines for Africa and Asia, DW also incorporate local partners even more than previously in the conception and production of content. With regard to its language portfolio, DW is ensuring that German continues to play an important role in its content. At the same time, the competition and the allocation of resources make it necessary for this content to be adjusted to the changes in user habits and potential developments in the target markets.

The usage behavior of people around the world is continuously changing, with a growing number of people using digital media to acquire information. The rapidly changing usage preferences of target groups in numerous target countries require corresponding adjustments to payout channels. Given the growing importance of on-demand content, the planning, production and distribution of journalistic content is subject to the “*on-demand first*” principle. DW will therefore adapt its TV, video and audio content to the usage scenario preferred by target groups in a growing number of countries. In light of these serious changes in the target groups’ media consumption behavior, DW will continue to monitor the usage figures for its linear content and, where necessary, make corresponding adjustments. For example, it is trying to reduce the currently high costs of TV production, e.g. by increasing standardization, automation and digitalization in the production of content. The medium-term aim is to explore and utilize synergies between linear and digital content. Further adjustments will be required according to the orientation of content toward a particularly young target group. DW is, for example, aiming to increasingly support young people in the target regions with independent, balanced reporting and reliable facts in connection

with their ability to form opinions and engage in social debates. Furthermore, DW’s content should both reflect a diversity of perspectives and highlight opportunities for action among a young and increasingly diverse target group. As women have to date been an underrepresented user group, DW is intensifying its efforts to address them more directly. DW has introduced new formats in various languages to focus more on gender equality, and already has numerous productions in its portfolio that are specifically tailored to women. The newly launched multimedia series *HER — Women in Asia*, which presents women across all social classes on the continent together with their differing perspectives, is a further example of this intensified content focus.

In the process of realizing its programming goals, DW will pay particular attention to efficiency and sustainability. Expanding production in target areas primarily via local staff will reduce travel costs, while also increasing the pace of production. Exactly which measures DW is planning in this context and how the programming objectives outlined above are to be developed in the global language products as well as the regional languages and the content divisions are described below.

3.1 Global journalistic content: English and German

3.1.1 English

English is the most important international language, and 378 million people speak English as their mother tongue. Over one billion people use this lingua franca as a second language for international and intercultural communication⁷. It provides the greatest usage and impact potential for DW because of its widespread use in the core target group of the prioritized countries in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa and the USA. This is why DW has reorganized its English content in recent years and expanded it to become the most comprehensive language product. A broad, platform-compatible portfolio of regionalized digital and linear content and a clear focus on *news and current affairs* has sharpened the profile of English content—and in the process given it a significant boost in appeal and relevance for the target groups. In light of this development, *news and current affairs* will continue to constitute a cornerstone of linear and non-linear content in the immediate future. Alongside platform-specific production, diversification of social media content and a significant expansion of community management, search engine optimization measures were among the success factors for English online content. The TV channel likewise underwent reprofiling and reprogramming during the strategic planning period. Among the most significant strategic measures were expanding round-the-clock news coverage and introducing the regional formats *DW News Asia* (weekdays) and *DW News Africa* (weekly). DW continues to achieve stable audience reach figures with its English radio content, which has a clear regional focus on sub-Saharan Africa (see section 3.2.1).

Given the growing challenges and opportunities presented by increasing digitalization and the accompanying effects on linear content, DW will make further adjustments in order to make better use of the high reach and impact potential of its English content. In line with its guiding principle of **on-demand first**, DW has initiated a transformation process that requires a range of new strategic directions—especially with regard to format development, production and distribution of content. This requires stronger interdisciplinary cooperation within DW. DW is, however, setting a central strategic course primarily through a significantly more differentiated **regionalization** of its English-language content; DW's English programming creates content for extremely disparate markets and very different target group needs. Priority target countries for DW's English content are the USA and countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia where English is a common language or a language of education. In order to meet the differing information

needs of the target groups on the three continents with more precisely tailored content, DW is regionalizing its English content for the following priority regions: East Africa, West Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia and the USA. At the same time, its English-language products serve as a basis for adaptation by a range of language departments. In the case of regional topics, in particular, the interests of the target groups in the respective target regions will inevitably differ significantly. With a view to giving its English-language content greater regional appeal and as such greater relevance to the respective target audience, DW will create a larger amount of regionalized content for individual, strategically important countries. To this end DW will expand its presence on the ground, which is an essential measure considering the field of competition. The expansion of its network of correspondents and the relocation of production to strategically focused countries aim to boost the quality and authenticity of DW's regionalized content while meeting the needs of its target groups for more locally relatable content.

As the current evaluation report clearly demonstrates, DW has, given the enormous growth potential of **digital content**, laid the right strategic foundations for its English content. Its consistent focus on high-reach platforms has translated into considerable usage increases. In addition to growth on DW and partner platforms, DW achieved the greatest growth on social media platforms, seeing the most success on *Facebook* and *YouTube*. The tangible increase in the importance of video-on-demand content is currently manifested—in addition to *DW News*—in the extremely successful English *YouTube* channel *DW Documentary*. DW will therefore further optimize its English-language video content towards the respective region-specific information interests and to the preference for on-demand usage. This will involve expanding its network of video journalists and consolidating on-demand production. In order to meet the target groups' need for flexible media use, products will be made available via the most relevant platforms in the respective target countries. More content will in the process also be made available for platforms such as *Amazon Prime*, *Netflix* and successful regional providers. DW also plans to make greater use of data analysis tools to acquire increasingly concrete information about users' needs. This is also intended to identify success criteria vis-à-vis competitors' products.

In regions of the world such as Africa and Asia, linear content still has high audience potential despite the increasing appeal of on-demand use in the target group. Here too, however, linear programming must also respond to the growing demand for region-specific content. DW

⁷ cf. 2021 evaluation report



Critical questions for prominent guests: Sarah Kelly hosts DW's political interview program *Conflict Zone* from the German capital.

will therefore be gearing its English TV content even more closely to the needs of Asian, African and US target groups. As part of the ongoing regionalization process, DW will place a particular emphasis on expanding its cooperation with distribution partners. It already has a large number of them in the priority target regions, with which it regularly conducts live crosses (*DW Premium*). In the interests of further improving its distribution situation, DW plans to both expand this success model and boost digital distribution. Given the partners' specific market knowledge, which enables the production of content that is particularly relevant to the region, DW also plans to expand co-productions. The on-demand-compatible video format *Art.See.Asia*, newly introduced for South Asian markets, can be broadcast both via on-demand platforms and in linear form on TV. Following this example, DW is planning a similar format for Africa. In the future, further on-demand formats are to be created in the areas of politics, culture, society, sports, business, science and the environment, which have a particularly high relevance to the everyday life and information interests of the target group. With an eye on the younger target group, DW plans to further develop the content and structure of successfully established cross-media formats such as *The 77 Percent*, which explicitly addresses the concerns of young people in Africa.

Likewise with an eye on the increasing usage of on-demand content, DW is supplementing its radio portfolio with a range of digital audio formats. Examples include the environmental podcast *On the Green Fence*, the Indian-produced *Love Matters* podcast, and news summaries for various voice assistants. This content form is already firmly established in the North American market and is gaining traction in other countries, such as Brazil and Mexico. DW will continue to explore the potential of a range of different audio content services and incorporate its insights to date into the development of new products.

Despite the transatlantic relationship cooling down, the continuing differences in positions on crucial foreign and economic policy issues make it increasingly important to communicate German and European points of view and positions to the target audience in the USA. DW is proving to be particularly successful here with its online English services within a challenging, highly professionalized and extremely competitive media market. DW will consistently organize its TV, audio and online services to meet the needs and interests of the target group in this target region in line with its mission, with a clear thematic focus on transatlantic and bilateral relations. DW has already incorporated the growing importance of the region with expanded coverage in the strategic planning period; in addition to 24/7 bulletins, DW will also present breaking news to its American audience.

3.1.2 German

DW clearly understands that its mandate is to give its audience a greater understanding of Germany and promote German as a language. DW is addressing a relatively small target group with its German content. The number of people who speak the language as their native or second language in the world is estimated to be 103.5 million—of which only five million live in DW's target regions outside Europe.⁸ At the same time, DW addresses around 15.4 million learners of German with its language courses in target countries.⁹

DW's German content involves the challenge of productions targeting an extremely small and at the same time highly dispersed target group, which in addition has worldwide access to the German-language online content of Germany's public broadcasters. In the TV sector DW offers its target group a range of cultural programming (*DW Deutsch*) that is also distributed via partner broadcasters, *dw.com* and *YouTube*, and can in addition be picked up via a second channel called *DW Deutsch+* in North and South America. In order to consistently harmonize the costs and benefits of content in the future, the successful cooperation with the ARD regional broadcasters and ZDF will continue to grow, for example, by featuring more of their new programs and airing live reports from other domestic public broadcasters in DW's German content. Furthermore, DW produces a comprehensive range of German-language online information content. In addition to culture, a large amount of programming is taken up by international politics communicated from a German/European perspective. By narrowing the featured subjects of its digital content and consolidating its portfolio of social media accounts and channels, DW was able to increase the use of its German-language content during the period of the past strategic plan. In light of users' expectations, it will in the future strengthen its dialogue-based content and integrate more high-quality videos and visual elements into its content.

Promoting the German language is part of DW's statutory mandate. The multimedia German courses created and overseen by DW Akademie have already been successfully established worldwide and are to be further expanded. DW will in this way intensify its activities for promoting the German language. In order to meet the needs and wishes of German learners and teachers to an even higher degree, DW will continue the technological modernization of its German language courses—both in terms of expanding

⁸ Ammon, Ulrich: *Die Stellung der deutschen Sprache in der Welt*. De Gruyter Mouton (2015). This is the latest dependable source on the subject.

⁹ Survey by the German Foreign Ministry (2020)

their mobile availability and with a view to expanding the language portfolio. DW set the goal for all language learning services to be made available on a single platform (*learngerman.dw.com*) by the end of 2022. In addition, the content, technology and structure of the services will be successively enhanced in order to support both self-learners and to a growing degree course-based work with the help of clear user navigation and new functionalities. The proportion of videos and innovative multimedia formats will likewise be expanded. New learning material and social media content as well as the option of various support services will help to remove potential access barriers for beginners. The young 14+ age group is to be addressed via learning formats specifically tailored to this group, in particular on *YouTube*, *Instagram* and *TikTok*. In addition, DW Akademie plans to expand its range of educationally adapted news content—an important and unique feature in this competitive environment—and to provide content specially created for learners about living, studying and working in Germany.

As far as language promotion is concerned, DW will continue to intensify its excellent cooperation with the Goethe Institute and other intermediary organizations such as the *Pädagogischer Austauschdienst (PAD)* and the *Zentralstelle für Auslandsschulwesen (ZfA)*. It will also expand its close links to the *Internationaler Deutschlehrerverband (IDV)* and other German teacher organizations.

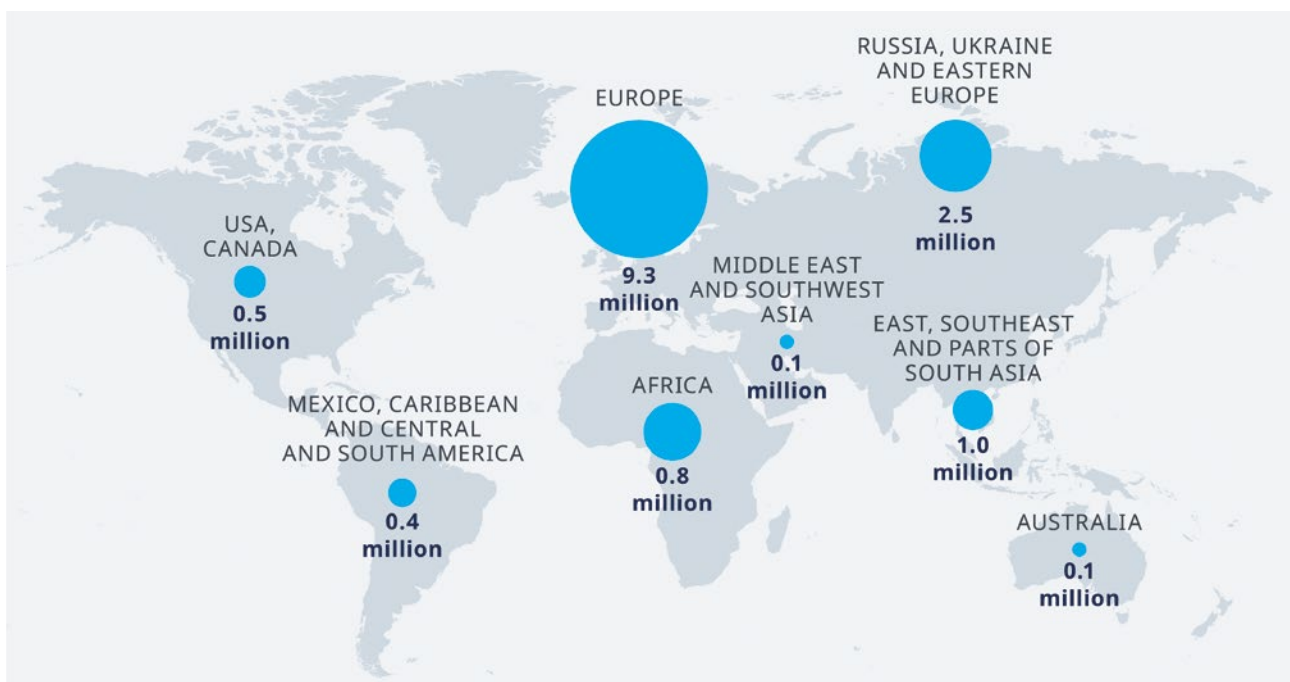


Figure 7: Number of German language learners worldwide.
Source: Compiled and designed by DW in acc. with *Goethe-Institut* data (2020)



She wants to empower young women in Africa: Teen reporter Silvia Odhiambo on behalf of DW in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi.



3.2 Journalistic content by target region

3.2.1 Sub-Saharan Africa

The part of Africa south of the Sahara is home to around one billion people across the—in political, economic and cultural terms—extremely heterogeneous states there. On a global scale, this is the region with the highest demographic growth; the United Nations expects the population to double by 2050. At the same time, nowhere else in the world has a younger population, with almost half of all inhabitants of Africa today under the age of 18. This represents both an opportunity and one of the biggest challenges: offering Africa's youth, who face difficult socio-economic conditions, the prospect of actively shaping their future. In addition to education, an essential prerequisite for social participation is freedom of expression and unrestricted access to independent information that enables people to form opinions and make informed decisions. Many African countries are currently seeing a regression in democratic developments, with authoritarian tendencies (especially in unconsolidated democracies) on the rise and an entrenchment of existing autocracies. There are repeated cases of freedom of expression and the press being drastically restricted, making access to independent, balanced information increasingly difficult. At the same time, the barriers to political engagement are very high. Under these circumstances, in many places young people have hardly any opportunities to play an active role in shaping their society. Poverty, complex crises, ethnic and religious conflicts, social inequality and distrust in the state are often causes for the radicalization of young people and decisive factors for migration movements within the continent and to Europe.

With respect to Africa's geopolitical importance, a growing number of countries find themselves in increasing competition for political and economic influence on the continent. China, in particular, has massively expanded its involvement in recent years. In addition to economic interests, the Chinese government is pursuing the goal of communicating its own narratives and influencing the formation of political opinion on the African continent. In this context, it has an extensive set of tools at its disposal for influencing Africa's media landscape and weakening democratic processes through disinformation and manipulation.

Africa's importance for European policy remains unabated. Cooperation between its constituent countries and Germany is based on universal values and common interests. These include not only democracy, the rule of law and human rights, but also issues such as health, the environment, climate, sustainable development and education—subjects that coincide with the brand values and

featured topics at DW. DW and DW Akademie promote these values with their journalistic and media development content, in the process supporting the efforts of German industry and government. Thanks to its independent reporting geared to information needs, DW enables its target group members to actively shape developments in their society. In media markets in sub-Saharan Africa that are undergoing upheaval, DW Akademie supports media corporations that use digital transformation opportunities in support of open debate in society. For example, it is launching an innovation initiative for the interdisciplinary and pan-national development of future-oriented approaches to media development. The aim is to create new ways of strengthening the impact of the country-specific projects and make it transferrable. To this end, the innovation processes will focus on three core issues: *Media Viability*—for resilient media; *Media and Information Literacy*—for a widespread media literacy impact; *Innovation for Dialogue*—for the voices of vulnerable demographic groups. Digital applications are an important key for meeting these challenges. This is the reason why digital participation and digital media development are a major focus for DW Akademie.

DW promotes communication between countries of origin and reception in regions of sub-Saharan Africa affected by major movements of refugees. It ensures that neutral and professional information is available, in the process making a contribution towards better mutual understanding. The rise of disinformation and hate speech on social media is making the verification of information increasingly important. DW Akademie is therefore intensifying its *Media and Information Literacy* programs. A prime example for combatting disinformation is the *Only Spreading Facts* campaign funded by the German development ministry (BMZ), which has now been launched in a number of African countries and highlights the work of African project partners for fact-based reporting and a constructive culture of dialogue. Projects of this nature likewise help to create a bridge to DW's journalistic content, which in the spirit of balanced and enlightening reporting is assigning an increasingly high priority to research and verification.

DW provides online, social media, radio and TV journalistic content in English, French and Portuguese as well as in the regional languages of Hausa, Amharic and Kiswahili. A further area of focus—in addition to news coverage and daily radio shows covering DW featured topics—comprises content that highlights positive developments on the continent. In line with the focus on a younger core target group and with the aim of increasingly reaching the female target group more effectively, DW has realigned its

existing content and already introduced new formats. These include e.g. *GirlZoffMute*; this project-funded video and audio format is presented by young female reporters in six languages and aimed in particular at girls and young women. As the flagship show of DW's *Programs for Africa*, the trimedial youth format *The 77 Percent* addresses current issues that are of especially acute relevance for young people. In addition to issues that are often taboo in local media, the format also reflects the conflict between the desire for self-realization and social reality. It forms the central pillar of DW's youth content for all African languages and is being constantly developed with the needs of the young target group in mind.

Reflecting the changing usage habits among target groups, DW will strengthen its digital content for Africa across all languages and, in particular, expand its on-demand audio and video content. In addition to strengthening dialogue with the target group, a further focus of editorial activities will be the expansion of regionalized content—which requires a stronger local presence. The following section provides a brief description of the strategic course and the measures taken to achieve these goals in the respective media genre:

Nowhere in the world are the growth rates for internet use as high as on the African continent. In accordance with

the usage preferences of its target groups, DW has significantly strengthened its presence on **digital** platforms in Africa in recent years—and successfully so, as clearly demonstrated by the increases in audience reach for digital content. Selective collaborations with local influencers and high-reach social media partnerships are proving to be particularly effective usage drivers—to the particular benefit of DW's Kiswahili, French and Portuguese content. *Facebook* remains the most popular social media platform, while *YouTube* and *Instagram* are also becoming increasingly important in Africa. DW's digital content enables it to create a bridge to its radio broadcasts and focus on dialogue and interaction with the young target group.

DW's **radio** content in all six broadcast languages for Africa enables it to reach both a) countries with, in some cases, severely restricted freedom of expression and the press and b) those in which the media markets are largely liberalized. Radio continues to play a major role as an information medium for DW's target group in Africa and, despite discernible changes in media usage habits, still enjoys intensive use for obtaining information—in some cases complementing TV content. DW's Hausa, Kiswahili and French services, which are broadcast via satellite and FM partners, posted significant growth in audience reach during the period covered by the strategic plan. DW's Portuguese content for Africa also continues to perform extremely



Figure 8: DW's Kamal Radji (right) with guests on *The 77 Percent* — *Street Debate*.

well in a highly competitive environment; DW is the market leader among international competitors in Lusophone Africa. In addition to content modifications and further developing the link between radio and social media, one of the main success factors is distribution via partners with a strong audience reach. The aim for the immediate future is to further exploit this potential. To this end, DW plans to produce more exclusive content on the ground and intensify direct dialogue with the target group. The intensified focus on greater proximity to the young target group and their need for content that more clearly reflects the reality of their everyday lives requires the selective expansion of DW's network of correspondents. This is the only way to effectively strengthen reporting on regionally relevant issues. In this context, DW plans to send staff to the target region and recruit more young personnel on the ground. In addition, further audio productions are to be relocated to suitable target countries, alongside the features that are already largely produced locally. As a first step, DW is, for example, examining whether the existing office in Lagos can be expanded into a production hub for West Africa in order to pool radio, TV and online activities there. Looking at the prioritized target countries, DW is also assessing the option of opening bureaus in other strategically advantageous locations. At the same time, DW Akademie has been gradually expanding its presence in Namibia in recent years, and currently has three staff members at its Windhoek office.

Alongside the continuing popularity of radio, the importance of TV for obtaining information has been growing steadily for years in Africa, especially in the urban regions that DW focuses on. DW is responding to this development with additional regionalized TV formats for the English TV channel, the expansion of the *DW Premium* live crosses with high-reach distribution partners such as *Channels TV* in Nigeria and, increasingly, regional-language TV formats in all languages served in Africa. The focus of the new regional-language TV products is on content from the fields of science, the environment, society and history. Increasingly, TV magazines are being co-produced locally with cooperation partners in the target countries—such as the environmental show *EcoAfrica*. DW is making efforts to acquire more TV partners for co-productions and in the process continue to successfully implement the strategic course it has set.

Extensive **training courses** for correspondents have enabled the further improvement of video content optimized for mobile usage. With a view to new staff in the target region, selective measures—particularly in the area of video—will remain an important building block for the success and competitiveness of content. At the same time, formats are to be developed that are aimed in particular at a young audience and can likewise be used on demand.

3.2.2 Asia

The target areas in Asia have gained further importance as part of the re-prioritization of target countries. These include China, India, Indonesia and Pakistan—four of the five most populous nations on the planet. All Asian target countries feature a young population and are technologically savvy, especially in how they obtain information. Young, well-educated generations in particular are pushing for economic participation and prosperity.

At the same time, up to 50 percent of the population in countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan live below the poverty line. Social inequality and the suppression of the rights of women and minorities are part of everyday life in most of the target regions, as are restrictions on freedom of expression. The security situation is in many cases fragile; China's disputes with neighboring states and the United States are a permanent threat to the region. The nuclear powers India and Pakistan likewise make regular attempts to assert their regional supremacy, as does Iran. In Afghanistan, the radical Islamist Taliban group seized power after the withdrawal of NATO security assistance troops—destroying all hopes for peaceful and democratic governance. The reality of life for people in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Iran is likewise beset by violent ethnic and religious conflicts.

Two of the world's most repressive regimes are continually expanding their censorship powers: China and Iran. Similarly, the governments of Bangladesh, India and Indonesia are deliberately disrupting communication channels, while the deterioration in the situation in Hong Kong has recently been particularly drastic. With the exception of Taiwan, the media in none of DW's Asian target areas can genuinely report freely. This makes DW's role as an independent news provider promoting freedom of information particularly significant there. In addition to online programming, linear TV continues to play a major role in most markets; only in China, Iran and currently also Pakistan are all of DW's television activities blocked by censors. In order to react even more flexibly to individual market developments in the future, the respective media mix of each language service will be continuously evaluated. This enables different various channels to be set up and removed more quickly in line with demand; most recently, radio services were relaunched via shortwave in Dari and Pashto to provide basic information to the Afghan population following the Taliban's seizure of power. The development of the political situation in Afghanistan suggests a further strengthening of these services is imperative. On the content front, DW continues to focus on the needs of users and discusses relevant featured topics based on regionally significant issues.



Reporting on freedom of opinion and political change: DW's Phoebe Kong covers how young journalists in Hong Kong deal with censorship from the government.

Overall, the regionalized and digitalized coverage for Asia will be significantly boosted, among other elements via the bureaus in New Delhi, Taipei and Jakarta. DW will use these locations to disseminate its content in an even more selective manner during core usage times in the target markets. The network of local staff is also being expanded in order to further optimize coverage in these geographically large countries.

DW Akademie is focusing on pan-regional approaches to strengthening media skills. One important goal is to counter increasing politically and economically motivated disinformation, especially from China and Russia. Within the scope of projects funded by the *German Foreign Ministry* and the European Union, cooperation between *DW Programming* and *Distribution* is being expanded and more closely coordinated. Here, DW Akademie promotes issues such as environmental journalism, interreligious dialogue, and conflict-sensitive and constructive reporting. In South Asia, the *Flight and Dialogue* project strengthens understanding between refugees and their host societies. In Central Asia, DW Akademie is focusing on the development of grassroots media for the rural population in order to improve their access to reliable information and their involvement in society.

DW currently operates in the Asian market with nine regional-language editorial teams; Bengali, Chinese, Dari, Farsi, Hindi, Indonesian, Pashto and Urdu were joined in 2021 by the launch of a Tamil service for the populous Indian state of Tamil Nadu. The content will be distributed exclusively via social media, with a decision on whether to continue it to be made after a two-year test phase. In addition, DW distributes selective content in Vietnamese, Thai and Korean in cooperation with partners.

The English program is aimed at 10 Asian nations where the language reaches relevant target groups. These countries have been grouped into two regions: South Asia, where Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan are prioritized, and Southeast Asia comprising China (incl. Hong Kong), Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. In the future, DW's English programming will be geared even more strongly to these regions, for example, through more cooperative ventures with the respective regional-language teams as well as distribution partners. While expenditure for linear TV production is being further reduced, the content divisions are developing more on-demand formats. Both the high-production cultural documentary series *Art. See. Asia* and the *Love Matters* relationships podcast for India have been launched. DW has also launched a Hindi adaptation of its successful documentary channels on *YouTube*.

DW's regional language content addresses Asian demographics who speak little or no English. In accordance

with the re-prioritization of target areas, some language teams are catering to additional countries; *DW Bengali* will produce more content for the target group in the Indian state of West Bengal. Its digital products are geared to the preferences of young target groups. In content terms, the spectrum ranges from topics relating to freedom, human rights and social justice to science, education and the environment. With the exception of *DW Tamil*, all the Asian languages available have *Facebook*, *Twitter* and *YouTube* channels in addition to their own websites. Farsi, Hindi and Indonesian also use *Instagram*, with the Farsi service particularly successful.

The Bengali, Dari, Hindi, Indonesian and Pashto teams each produce a weekly TV magazine based largely on an adaptation of DW's science program *Tomorrow Today*. In addition, the English environmental magazine *EcoIndia* is translated into Hindi, Bengali and Tamil, with the latter version distributed exclusively via *YouTube*. Videos are in general the biggest usage drivers among the Asian languages; in Bengali, Chinese, Hindi, Indonesian and Urdu they promise especially high growth potential in the future as well. The regional language teams for Asia are therefore continuing to expand their video expertise while networking with the content divisions and DW Akademie.

China remains one of the most difficult media markets due to the communist regime isolating the country from the outside world with the help of permanently evolving blocking technology. Western websites and social media platforms are only accessible using circumvention tools, while Chinese services such as *WeChat* in turn remain blocked for non-Chinese information providers. DW therefore works with the *Psiphon* and *Tor* networks, whose functions for circumventing censorship have been integrated into the digital payout channels. DW's Taipei bureau enables improved coverage from the region for both English and Chinese-language programming. Hong Kong and Taiwan were already made target regions in 2018—which involved DW adding traditional Chinese characters commonly used in both areas to its language content. DW's simplified Chinese website is machine-translated to traditional characters and supplemented with its own editorial content. This is also successfully distributed by DW on *Facebook*, *Twitter* and *YouTube*. Despite the difficult starting position, opportunities for cooperation were established in all three target areas, including 25 online partnerships alone for articles and videos.

Both linear and digital cooperations are volatile in almost all Asian target countries—but given the size of the markets also have a high audience reach. DW is focused on expanding *Premium* live crosses and video series. There are also plans for digital partnerships with

over-the-top platforms, social media platforms and local influencers. In Pakistan, DW and cooperation partners have organized competitions inviting users to submit their own self-made videos. User-engagement projects of this kind are to be transferred to other target regions such as Indonesia.

In order to increase the overall attractiveness of content, current affairs coverage will be reduced in favor of exclusive stories and background reports. This involves the Bengali, Farsi, Hindi and Indonesian teams increasingly producing explanatory and fact-checking videos that are on-demand-compatible. In this way DW continues to position itself in Asia as a reliable information provider that counteracts disinformation. This applies especially to the areas of health education, climate change, extremism and anti-democratic developments. In addition, the Hindi and Urdu teams in particular plan to increase the proportion of women among their users by working more with female protagonists, female cooperation partners and female DW faces.

3.2.3 Latin America

Many Latin American countries are affected by social unrest. A frequent key factor behind protests is dissatisfaction among segments of the population over political or economic imbalances. In many places, an expected broad economic upswing has fallen far short of the expectations and promises of political elites. Most countries see themselves as democracies—but high poverty rates, violence, crime and corruption undermine confidence in government. Populist and authoritarian politicians—as seen in Brazil—divide entire nations, for example, by marginalizing opposition voices. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated antagonisms, while the consequences of the constant overexploitation of natural resources are also becoming increasingly visible in the region and subject to public opposition. The precarious situation repeatedly leads to major waves of migration, whether most recently from Venezuela to Colombia or from Central America to the USA via Mexico.

Even if the media markets of the target countries—except for Venezuela—are considered essentially pluralistic, free media activity is under significant pressure from restrictions and threats to reporters. In many cases the regional media market is dominated by a small number of private companies, which favors politically biased and



Figure 9: DW's Zobaer Ahmed reports on the effects of climate change in Bangladesh.

partisan reporting. This is especially true with television, which continues to be an important source of information in many countries. Mexico is one of the most dangerous countries in the world for media professionals; over the past 20 years, more than 100 journalists have been killed there by criminals, which is why many media outlets choose to self-censor. In keeping with the global trend, online media and social media portals are also assuming growing importance. However, the digital world is also being misused here for the targeted dissemination of disinformation — as was demonstrably the case during the presidential election campaigns in Mexico and Brazil. Such forms of manipulation hinder the free formation of opinion; accordingly, confidence in independent reporting by the local press is comparatively weak in most Latin American countries.

In this environment, DW has established itself as a reputable and unbiased source of information. It promotes the historical tradition of interest in Germany and German perspectives on Latin America. DW Akademie is likewise very active in these target areas, and concentrates its efforts on promoting critical discussions with the media. This has seen it become one of the leading international organizations for media literacy, supporting in particular the digital development of local and community media that operate outside of urban centers in rural

areas. On the content front, DW Akademie promotes access for Latin American civil societies to issues relating to environmental and climate protection, e.g. in connection with human rights violations in Colombia. Corresponding projects will in future be more closely linked to regional sales and programming activities.

As part of the re-prioritization of target countries, DW is focusing its Spanish programming on Argentina, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela, in particular the target group of 14 to 40-year-olds, as well as the approx. 60 million Spanish speakers in the USA. The Portuguese programming for Brazil also has a high priority. At the same time, DW also supplies Latin America with its German TV content.

An important focus in the future will be on greater regionalization of the information made available. DW has to this end increased its local presence, and in 2018 established an office in the Colombian capital of Bogotá. In addition, staff in several Central American countries have been working together at a virtual news desk since 2019. Working with different time zones enables DW to close its former nighttime gap and provide up-to-date information (online) around the clock. Now, the program will be even more focused on the Spanish-speaking target audience in the USA.



Figure 10: Pia Castro hosts the Spanish TV show *Aquí estoy*.

DW is establishing a broad range of access options for its journalistic content. It will maintain its presence in the TV markets via the 24-hour Spanish channel *DW (Español)*. German viewpoints are also in high demand among distribution partners, with more than 760 currently adopting content from DW's Spanish TV service. The popular regionalized formats *Fuerza Latina*, *Aquí Estoy* and *A Fondo* will in the future be specifically edited for social media platforms. DW plans to further expand the environmental magazine *EcoLatinoamérica* in 2022.

DW is further strengthening its digital content in response to changing usage habits, especially among young target groups. To this end, the Spanish department is developing a number of personalized and dialogue-oriented social media formats on science, business and the environment. There is to be an increase in the number of on-demand VJ reports from the target regions and an expansion of social media products. Videos on the three Spanish *YouTube* channels have in particular become important usage drivers with growth potential. In addition to platforms such as *Facebook*, *Twitter* and *Instagram*, the Spanish program also serves the growing demand for on-demand-compatible audio content. This

includes audio text messages that can be called up via voice assistants such as *Alexa* and *Google Assistant*, as well as popular podcast portals. Via *Google Assistant* alone, content prepared for this purpose was accessed millions of times each month in 2020. And ultimately, digital text content is likewise significant for audience reach and relevance. One focus is on critical articles by well-known regional columnists, which DW uses to express the opinion of the public. There is a focus on critical articles by well-known regional columnists, which DW uses to promote the plurality of opinions in the target regions. Above all pan-American issues affecting many countries are dealt with constructively: social inequality, discrimination, migration, environmental protection and the strengthening of democracy through civil society.

The focus for the Portuguese service is on providing dependable information and in-depth background on controversial debates. The pressure on media professionals in Brazil has increased sharply under the presidency of Jair Bolsonaro. Personal attacks are making the media's work there more difficult. The climate of debate is currently becoming increasingly heated in connection with issues such as economic insecurity, the government's indifference to environmental sustainability, and the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has already claimed over 600,000 lives in Brazil.

As in almost all Latin American countries, the target audience expects to be offered content with a high production quality. The Brazilian department uses a modern media mix of innovative formats for on-demand digital consumption. These are published via all relevant platforms and also by partners. Content that is particularly successful on *YouTube*, *Twitter* and *Instagram* is to be further expanded. A daily podcast with news summaries serves the growing demand for audio formats, including on voice assistants. *DW Brasil* was one of three DW teams to participate in the voice technology pilot project *HOLA!*; partially automated workflows support journalists in the production process and allow greater leeway for incorporating more self-researched articles and regionalized background stories.

Two Portuguese magazines are broadcast each week via distribution partners; *Futurando* is a language-adaptation of the global science and technology magazine *Tomorrow Today*, while *Camarote.21* reports on subjects from the German and European cultural worlds and is based on *Arts.21* and *Euromaxx*. In addition, DW has a strong presence in the market through regular TV live crosses; the German perspective on political events in the target area enjoys substantial interest.



Figure 11: The Spanish production *Fuerza Latina* features confident women in Latin America.

3.2.4 The Arab World

The political and economic situation has continued to deteriorate in DW's Arabic-speaking target areas. Almost all states are ruled by authoritarian regimes, while marginalized groups face stigmatization. Everyday life is shaped by extremely conservative concepts of society. The young target group in particular suffers under the economic situation, with youth unemployment averaging 25 percent. Social conflicts escalate even in relatively liberal markets such as Tunisia and Lebanon. At the same time, there is no end in sight to the armed conflicts in the war and crisis-torn countries of Syria and Iraq. These multiple factors continue to fuel mass migration to neighboring countries and Europe. Freedom of the press and freedom of expression are below satisfactory in all of the target countries. In fact, the safety of media representatives is in many places under threat, with state authorities suppressing unpopular issues by censoring press reports or blocking digital playout channels. Journalists in Egypt and Saudi Arabia face arrest and torture, while in Iraq and Syria more than 40 media representatives have been killed since 2017. A further factor is the use of propaganda and disinformation to prop up governments and their institutions. There is little if any scope for public discourse. At the same time, the desire for change is growing — as the series of protest movements since 2010 have shown. Young generations in particular are looking to access unbiased information, dialogue and participation.

In these polarized and fragmented markets, DW has positioned itself as a significant and dependable information provider. The Arabic-language service is the most popular in the region; 71 million weekly user contacts make it DW's most popular service after English. With programs such as *Massaiya* and the *JaafarTalk* format, which is supported by project funds, the Arabic service helps to promote local debating scenarios. DW's *Sulta 5* is a highly researched information service with content disseminated effectively via *Facebook*, *YouTube* and *Instagram*. The Arabic service uses a multi-platform strategy with a focus on video productions. Digital video formats such as *Because I'm a Woman* and *I Have a Story* question taboos and introduce perspectives from marginalized social groups.

The Arabic-speaking target areas are being courted by a large number of regional and international media companies. The resources at the disposal of international competitors are significantly larger compared to DW's on-the-ground capacity. DW will therefore cater its content even more acutely to usage habits in the highest-priority target countries of Egypt, Iraq, and Syria. To enable this stronger regionalization of programming, the joint offices of DW and DW Akademie in Beirut will be gradually

expanded as permitted by budgetary constraints and pandemic-related travel restrictions. All Arabic language content will continue to focus on issues connected to freedom and human rights and democracy, as well as the fight against terror, exclusion, racism and anti-Semitism. DW will continue to provide balanced coverage on the Middle East conflict, while maintaining a clear commitment to Israel's right to exist. The diverse mix of content is tailored to the regional needs of users. The *Albasheer Show*, for example, is a successful political satire program aimed in particular at audiences in Iraq. A further focus is on expanding on-demand content for women and other target sub-groups due to the important role they play in sociopolitical development. In addition, the Arabic service remains an important source of information for refugees who do not understand German. To facilitate their integration in Germany, DW continues to actively communicate information from German politics and society while also looking at the factors behind people fleeing their homelands.

As part of its distribution activities, DW is expanding its content range for high audience-reach distribution partners. This will involve a further increase in the number of web videos and live feed partnerships in conjunction with *DW Premium*. "Expert clips" are to be distributed digitally via regional and global platforms as a further evolution of classic TV feeds. Following the success of *JaafarTalk*, DW will be expanding further dialogue-oriented co-productions, including *Because I'm a Woman*, with a broadcaster in Jordan. In order to reach the young target group, DW is aiming to launch further cooperations with regional influencers as well as social media platforms such as *TikTok* and *Snapchat*.

DW Akademie is likewise strengthening the culture of dialogue in the target region with its media development projects. The primary focus is on conflict and displacement contexts resulting from political, economic or environmental crises. In addition to Beirut, the office in Tunis is also being expanded as a hub for the Middle East and North Africa sub-regions. The aim here is to establish a trans-national network of local figures who are committed to freedom of information and expression. Partners benefit from this exchange when it comes to teaching media literacy as well, especially in Jordan and the Palestinian territories. A further focus is on qualifying media professionals and users, with DW Akademie anchoring the principles of needs-based product development and business awareness in its partner organizations. In Tunisia, for example, media start-ups have been lent long-term support.



A forum open to opinions and dialogue: DW host Jaafar Abdul Karim talks to residents of Mosul in Iraq about the future of their country.

3.2.5 Russia, Ukraine and Eastern Europe

In addition to Russia and Ukraine, DW has also been prioritizing Belarus, which borders the EU, since 2020. The specific context here is the drastic deterioration of the political situation under the authoritarian leadership style of Alexander Lukashenko. He has at the same time made his country available as a deployment area for the Russian military in the war against Ukraine — a war that has called into question the balance of power in the entire post-Soviet region. Since February 2022, Russian president Vladimir Putin has been pursuing an aggressive foreign policy course, while further intensifying a policy of repression on the domestic front. Freedom of the press and freedom of expression are subject to increasing restrictions. The DW studio in Moscow was closed by the Russian authorities in early February 2022, with DW itself being declared a “foreign agent” in Russia. In addition, direct access to the DW website has been blocked. The media market in Ukraine is considered diverse in comparison — despite being traditionally dominated by the special interests of oligarchs and now being subject to the specific war-related conditions of the Russian invasion. The attack on the country poses a threat to both the existence of the Ukrainian state and the Ukrainian language and culture.

In all three target regions, TV is the most important source of information — although in Russia and Belarus it is considered a state-controlled propaganda instrument.

The use of digital media is growing in these markets above all among the younger generation — a target group with a higher commitment to political and economic change. In the digital world too, however, disinformation and censorship are increasingly hindering the free flow of information; payout channels including *Telegram* and *Twitter* have already been blocked or throttled in the past. Furthermore, the Russian government is working on an independent “Splinternet” in order to assert complete control over online activity. Foreign media also face severe restrictions and even direct attacks on their coverage; the forcible silencing of critical voices makes it almost impossible for them to currently report in Belarus. Two DW staff members and a coach working with DW Akademie have been among those arrested, one of them being charged with treason. Even under these circumstances, DW Akademie provided technical and financial support to a Belarussian media team for producing a documentary series about the protests, which DW then posted on *YouTube*. The strict state regulations also have an impact on DW’s cooperation with distribution partners in Russia. Consolidating these cooperative ventures is therefore an important marketing goal. At the same time, DW is distributing its Russian-language content via distribution partners in the neighboring countries of Armenia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

This difficult environment makes independent and critical journalism increasingly important when it comes to strengthening democratic opinion-forming. The focus with



Figure 12: DW correspondent Alexandra von Nahmen speaks with a soldier in Ukraine.

content is on social and political developments, although also on subjects related to the environment, business/economy, culture and technology. Additionally, DW continues to boost its presence via its dialog-oriented content, e.g. with the addition of a Russian-language version of the *To the Point* talk show format, while also broadcasting its global English and German-language content to Russian target regions. The Russian transmission window on its German TV channel makes DW the sole international provider of information on a daily basis in this market. DW's **digital** content is particularly diverse, ranging from the Russian website to *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Instagram*, *Telegram*, *TikTok* and *YouTube*. This dialog-oriented media mix ensures the continued presence of DW on this fragile market and is being expanded accordingly. The three *YouTube* channels enjoy particularly high usage, and promise growth in the future. This also applies to *Zapovednik*, which is successfully distributed via its own online channels. The first six months of 2022 saw the animated satire post an average of 17 million video views per month via DW's social media channels. The most important distribution channel for *Zapovednik* is the *TikTok* channel—which generates around 70 percent of total content usage. DW has in addition developed independent on-demand formats for the Belarus target area.

DW Akademie's focus in Ukraine is on strengthening the country's independent media, the public broadcaster and the population's media literacy. The projects are designed to meet the needs of the Ukrainian media and media professionals under the conditions of the Russian invasion. They combine direct financial support with media skills training courses and programs for media professionals and multipliers as well as advisory services on media viability, audience development and further capacity-building. These activities are supported by the *BMZ* and the European Commission.

Belarussian and Russian media professionals in exile in EU nations are offered financial support by DW Akademie for both resettlement and advice/training enabling a successful professional integration in those new countries. In addition, DW Akademie supports the expansion of Belarussian and Russian exile media. These activities are supported by the *Federal Foreign Office (AA)* in connection with a protection program for media professionals as well as defenders of media freedom.

The popularity of digital content is also increasing in Ukraine, which is why DW is further consolidating its presence on *Facebook* and *YouTube*. In this country bordering the EU and marked by war, domestic political polarization and poverty, German and European perspectives on issues related to democracy and the rule of law are in high demand. National media frequently display biased reporting or exercise self-censorship on critical subjects due to jour-

nalists repeatedly being subjected to physical attacks. DW has been able to establish itself as a dependable source of reporting in Ukraine and is currently boosting its capacities on the ground. The bureau in Kyiv was expanded to constitute a multilingual studio hub that houses part of the Ukrainian editorial team together with correspondents from *DW News*; the hub can only work on a restricted basis for the time being. The synergies with the Russian editorial team are likewise to be further reinforced due to the relevance of many subjects in the respective target areas to both target groups. In this context the planned Central Asia desk is to promote the networking and regionalization of the Russian and Ukrainian language services. At the same time, DW is further expanding its partner activities for both digital and linear content in order to consolidate the DW brand's presence in the Ukrainian market and increase its visibility.

3.2.6 Europe

With its content in 10 European languages, DW is responding to the increasing deterioration of the political and social atmosphere in Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Almost all target countries are ruled by populist and authoritarian parties that vilify opposition figures and in many cases violently suppress critical opinions. In the EU member states of Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Hungary, the rejection of the European Union's diverse and liberal fundamental values is now being articulated in unequivocal and radical terms. Meanwhile, the countries of the former Yugoslavia continue to be beset by national, religious, and ethnic conflicts; hate speech, corruption and disinformation are in many places a pervasive part of daily life. Added to this are the economic challenges of structurally weak regions, which are leading to high unemployment and emigration. Migration there from the Middle East and South Asia is causing particularly serious problems, while existing conflicts have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given the instability in some of these regions, DW is becoming an increasingly important conveyer of independent information for the free formation of opinions and decision-taking. Domestic media outlets have little scope for independent and objective reporting. In Bulgaria and Romania they are largely subject to the influence of a small number of oligarchs, who ensure coverage has a polarizing effect and caters to their own and other individual interests. The governments of Poland and Hungary above all control the television sector, which still has the highest usage in the European target markets. While countries such as Greece and Croatia are considered relatively pluralistic media markets, the press freedom situation has deteriorated in all European target areas. Domestic media are often economically dependent on advertising



Daily reports from the war: Reporter Fanny Fascar (center), producer Dima Khilchenko (left) and cameraman Florian Kroker (right) are part of DW's teams documenting the war in Ukraine.

© DW



Figure 13: The DW project *Balkan Booster* was created for a younger target audience in the western Balkan countries.

revenue, and to be on the safe side frequently censor themselves in connection with sensitive issues. Physical attacks on journalists, originating from state authorities, pro-government organizations or criminal associations, are also visibly increasing. As a result, media skepticism is comparatively high in the target countries.

DW's coverage features topics like human rights, the rule of law and healthy international relations. In a DW-wide comparison, these target groups have a greater interest in German and European perspectives, especially when it comes to developments in their home regions. In Poland in particular — the highest-priority European target country — the editorial team focuses on bilateral relations with neighboring Germany. DW therefore offers a counterweight to the numerous anti-European narratives of Polish broadcasters currently seen as well as the influence of propaganda news, especially from Russia. The situation is similar with the Hungarian service, which DW relaunched in 2021. This included the establishment of a correspondents' office in Vienna in order to provide regionalized coverage with greater promptness and flexibility.

Overall DW is the only western media provider here with a comprehensive multimedia portfolio including regional-language content in 13 countries. The Europe editorial departments are committed to a mix of linear and digital playout channels as well as an extensive partner distribution setup. This includes weekly TV magazines as well as video, text and linkup partnerships, plus DW websites and

Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram channels. A key project is the further development of *Europeo*, the European affairs magazine that was launched as a web video series in Albanian, Greek, Croatian, Romanian and Serbian in 2019. Both the dialogue-based user communication and the content are geared to the target group of young adults; *Europeo* is now also broadcast on linear television in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia via broadcast partner N1. DW Akademie supports children's and youth media in Serbia as well as in neighboring countries. The aim is to give the young generation in the Western Balkans — in cooperation with Serbian partner organizations — the opportunity to use various media to participate in public debate. In 2022, DW Akademie will — together with the *Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)* and the *Internews* organization — launch the EU's largest media development project to date in the Western Balkans. In Moldova, DW Akademie promotes formal and non-formal media literacy training.

The content-related focus of content for Europe in the coming years will be on sustainability in the sense of sustainable lifestyles and consumption, education, climate and gender justice. Protecting the rights of discriminated minorities such as the Sinti and Roma will also be featured intensively. To this end, the Bulgarian, Greek, Polish, Romanian and Hungarian departments are developing a young, fact-driven dialogue format for distribution via social media in cooperation with DW's content divisions. An expansion phase will then see this format also distributed

in Albanian, Bosnian, Croatian, Macedonian and Serbian, and potentially in German and English as well.

As in most target countries, the target group's demand for digital information content is also growing steadily in the European markets. Videos with a connection to the target region in particular are a strong usage driver and offer high potential for dialogue, e.g. in Bosnian and Bulgarian. Due to the limited financial resources available to them, however, the Europe editorial departments can only expand their content on a small scale by slightly reallocating their resources. For Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian, the content on *YouTube* and *Instagram* was expanded into trilingual platforms, leading to synergistic increases in capacities. The example of the *Balkan Booster* format, which was financed by project funds, shows the high potential of regionalized and personalized video series. In connection with this, DW trains young creatives primarily from the countries of the Western Balkans. They then work in binational teams to produce features and reports about what young people have in common in countries that have often been enemies.

For DW to remain well-positioned in the region, expanding on-demand content for the European languages is the only viable option. This also applies to the many different forms of cooperation with which it is currently making itself visible. The aim is to win over young decision-makers of the future in particular to a liberal concept of democracy. In Poland and Greece, DW is currently the only foreign public broadcaster with a team on the ground, while in markets such as Albania its many years of work have earned it a particularly good reputation. At the same time its coverage is, especially in the countries of the Western Balkans, competing against many narratives that are disseminated by Chinese foreign media in order to promote the free-market expansion of the Silk Road. Debunking disinformation is likewise a growing challenge, as a lot of Russian fake news in particular finds interested recipients in the former satellite states of the Soviet Union.

3.2.7 Turkey

Under the government of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the political climate in Turkey has continuously deteriorated since 2014. The Turkish president uses the state apparatus to silence critical voices, and has brought both the majority of the domestic media and state institutions into line. Over 3,000 Turkish journalists have been imprisoned in the past five years, often on absurd charges. Objective points of view or even critical reporting often lead to official reprisals and legal action.

Despite Erdoğan's autocratic interpretation of his office, he is coming under increasing pressure on both the domestic and foreign policy fronts. The well-educated and liberal

middle class is migrating abroad, while growing sections of the population are complaining about the way the government is dealing with the ongoing economic crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic and recurring natural disasters. In geo-strategic terms, the president's hardline approach repeatedly leads the country into conflicts—whether with Russia over the Syrian war or with the EU on the refugee issue. For Germany, Turkey is also significant due to its large ethnic Turkish population, especially since Erdoğan's uncompromising policies have repeatedly strained bilateral relations.

The Turkish target market is a top priority for DW. Its Istanbul bureau serves as an important content supplier for DW's English news service as well as a basis for regionalized Turkish reporting. Where the security situation for



Figure 14: The Turkish channel +90 highlights stories from society that often are missed by mainstream media.

staff allows, this office will be expanded subject to a funding increase. Collaborations with Turkish media are becoming increasingly difficult, as many partners shy away from critical content for fear of restrictions. DW's objective is therefore to consolidate existing partnerships.

When it comes to distributing content, the Turkish editorial team is currently focusing on digital services on its own and third-party platforms. Usage is increasing, due to social media being used disproportionately often among news consumers in Turkey. DW is particularly successful among the young target group with its content on *Twitter* and *YouTube*. This is accompanied by the DW website as well as *Facebook* and *Instagram* channels. In the future, on-demand production is set to be expanded with cross-divisional collaborations. Since 2019, DW has also been involved in a strategic partnership with the *BBC*, *VOA* and *France 24*. The joint video project *+90* immediately enjoyed a strong response on *YouTube* and was expanded to include its own channels on *Instagram* and *Twitter*. The focus is on socio-political issues such as future prospects, identity and generational justice, while maintaining a personal approach and dialogue with users.

DW's Turkish core content has established itself as a reliable source of daily news. It provides a nuanced depiction of global events and important debates on subjects such as civil liberties, democracy and the rule of law that domestic media can no longer report on independently. DW's expertise on German-Turkish content is also in demand, as are its panel show and live broadcasts. In light of upcoming major events such as the 2023 presidential election, DW intends to expand its coverage to make independent information available to its target audience. This programming-related focus is, however, dependent on the resource situation.



A reliable source of information: The view from the control room of the Turkish news show *DW Haber* that broadcasts live on the social media channels from *DW Türkçe*.

4 Cross-language Programs and Projects

DW is consolidating its international reputation as an innovative and identifiably German media brand with a series of cross-language collaborations. At the same time, these products and projects are highly relevant for the company's public visibility and approval within Germany.

To master the challenges of highly competitive media markets and strengthen its own competitiveness, DW uses a specific product for cooperation with distribution partners: **DW Premium**. Close communication with partners gives it valuable insights into the needs of target groups, which enables DW to provide content specifically tailored to distribution partner and target group needs. **DW Premium** is as such a distribution model that both sides benefit from significantly; access to exclusive DW content of high quality means that DW can establish a relationship with these distribution partners and increase its own brand awareness thanks to their high audience reach, while gaining an advantage over competitors. **DW Premium** is reserved for the five providers with the widest reach in a market, with target group congruence and professionalism being further criteria in the selection of distribution partners. **DW Premium** offers distribution partners three product categories:

- **Premium TV crosses** feature DW journalists from Germany being featured live on news shows of domestic TV broadcasters and talking about politics, business, culture, sports and other issues.
- **DW Premium News** provides daily news reports for TV and online, identifying three to five reports a day for distribution to premium distribution partners.
- **DW Premium Library** offers digital evergreen video series on lifestyle, science, environment, health, sports and culture.

In light of the successful establishment of this cooperation model and the growing demand for exclusive DW content, **DW Premium crosses** are to be expanded in addition to new video series for selected target countries. Among other factors, this also necessitates an increased presence of DW in the respective countries. As a further development of classic TV broadcasts, “expert clips” are to be distributed digitally in the future via regional and global platforms. The aim is—in addition to extra audience reach—to open up a further channel of access to the younger target group via on-demand content.



Figure 15: The *Global Media Forum* in the plenary building in Bonn.



Figure 16: A key visual from a campaign for *ENTR — What's Next*.

The events hosted by DW are an important communication tool, because they provide direct exposure to the company and its activities. They enable DW to facilitate direct communication between funders and stakeholders with station managers and program makers, as well as representatives of the target groups. The most important of these events is the annual *Global Media Forum (GMF)*: Germany's largest international media congress with around 2,000 participants from 120 countries. DW organizes the conference with the support of the German Foreign Ministry, the *Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development* and the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. The *GMF* has successfully established itself both internationally and domestically as a dialogue-based network platform. Participants discuss interdisciplinary solutions to the challenges of globalization in which the media play a central role. DW and DW Akademie position themselves here as impulse providers for the implementation of liberal and democratic values in the world, especially freedom of opinion and freedom of the press.

Due to pandemic restrictions, the conference was digital only for two years—however, it will be predominantly an in-person event in the future. At the same time, the *Global Media Forum* will also have an extra digital component in order to reach participants who do not travel to Bonn for sustainability reasons. The hybrid form makes it possible

to digitally promote the important event year-round with subject-related content on DW's own and third-party platforms, in the process attracting the participation of new opinion leaders.

As part of a strategic partnership with the umbrella organization of French foreign broadcaster *France Médias Monde*, DW launched *ENTR — What's Next* in 2021. The multilingual project with journalistic content is aimed at a young target group aged 18–34 and conveys European perspectives on social change. The aim is to promote a culture of democratic debate in Europe while at the same time supporting Germany's role in the EU. *ENTR* is co-financed by the European Commission, Germany's *Federal Foreign Office* and the French Cultural Ministry. In addition to the French partnership, DW is also working as consortium leader on the project with *Rádio e Televisão de Portugal*, the Polish online portal *Onet.pl*, *RFI România* and the Romanian non-profit organization *G4Media*.

In order to cater to the target audience's usage habits, *ENTR* was set up as a purely digital platform on *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *Twitter* and *YouTube*. The reports focus on young Europeans with their views on education, environmental protection, the economy, health and other topics. Their publication via social media enables *ENTR*'s makers to communicate directly with users and actively involve the target



Figure 17: DW reporter Arafatul Islam talks to immigrants from Bangladesh for the *InfoMigrants* project.

group in the selection of issues that are relevant to them. Initially launched in German, English, French, Polish, Portuguese and Romanian, *ENTR* is—subject to sufficient funding increases—to be expanded to include all EU languages in the long term.

In 2017, DW joined the *InfoMigrants* project along with *France Médias Monde* and Italian news agency *Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata*. Now available in six languages, this service is aimed at people who are considering migrating, have currently fled their homes or have already migrated to Europe. Many of them suffer from insufficient information or are often encouraged by disinformation from criminal smuggling organizations to make life-threatening journeys, possibly with no prospect of a right to permanent residence at their destination. *InfoMigrants* was established in response as a platform for independent and reliable information.

In addition to English and French, reports are also distributed in Arabic, Bengali, Dari and Pashto so as to reach as many migrants as possible in the local languages of the most common countries of origin. Content from *InfoMigrants* is available on a website run by DW and its partners, and is also featured on social media platforms. The project continuously develops its content and produces new formats, such as recently the *Tales From the Border* podcast and the *InfoMigrants' Stories* video project. Currently,

project funding from the EU has been secured through 2023 and is to be further expanded by way of cooperation with DW editorial teams.

DW is at the same time continuing its mutual **cooperation** with the *ARD* network of German public broadcasters as well as *ZDF* and *Deutschlandradio*. The shared programming setup includes DW broadcasting news-in-brief editions of the *ARD* and *ZDF* bulletins *Tagesschau* and *heute*. Germany's public broadcasters pay special attention to supplying low-threshold programming for refugees from Ukraine. DW provides Russian-language versions of its *Focus on Europe* and *To The Point* shows in the *ARD* media library. DW also participates in the structural reform of public broadcasting. Subject to the proviso of cost-effectiveness, DW plays a leading role in one of the structural projects. The reform process will lead to synergies in joint procurement projects and in the digitalization of administrative processes.

In addition, DW produces the joint multimedia **German News Service** with the *Deutsche Presse-Agentur (dpa)*. The service is distributed by DW and is financed by project funds. It enables media partners and multipliers around the world to access and publish daily multimedia content relating to Germany in nine languages: Arabic, Bosnian, German, English, French, Croatian, Russian, Spanish and Serbian.

As of 2024, DW Akademie will also be offering its English-language master's program in *International Media Studies* in French as a parallel study program. COVID-19 restrictions meant that teaching was switched to digital-only in 2020. In the future, DW Akademie is planning to set up institutional collaborations with universities in development assistance partner countries. A new moderated communication platform will enable a South-South as well as a South-North forum for exchange that will help to secure the transfer of knowledge between the participating universities.

DW is also involved in the founding of the non-profit *Bonn Institute* as a co-partner. The academic institution has the aim of examining issues in journalism that will arise in the future and acting as a networking organization. The focus is on promoting constructive journalism—especially through practice-oriented research, conferences, publications and training programs. In addition to DW, organizations including the *RTL Group*, non-profit research organization *Correctiv*, the *Media Authority of North Rhine-Westphalia*, Denmark's *Constructive Institute* and the *Gimme Institute* intend to participate as active partners. In addition, the University of Bonn has granted the *Bonn Institute* the status of an affiliated institute.

Another important partnership, maintained by DW for over 20 years now, is with *Internationale Beethovenfeste Bonn gGmbH*. In its dual role as shareholder and media partner, DW boosts the international profile of the annual cultural festival. It intensified its commitment on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of Ludwig van Beethoven's birth during *Beethoven Year 2020*, which was extended through September 2021 due to the pandemic. Three major documentary productions, livestreams and reporting on topical events contributed significantly to global interest in the anniversary year. Accompanying the change of artistic director at the *Beethovenfest*, DW is developing new digital formats in cooperation with the festival in order to expand global awareness via additional channels.

Another important cultural collaboration for DW is its long-standing partnership with the *Goethe Institute*. From programming to language courses, DW and DW Akademie work together with the non-profit institution on a basis of mutual confidence. This also applies to the *Global Media Forum*, where the Goethe Institute features regularly with its shared expertise. DW will in future engage in a bilateral exchange with the institute on issues related to shaping its organizational culture; this will involve the joint discussion of challenges and the scope for action in connection with the implementation of topics such as digitalization, *New Work*, diversity and sustainability.



Figure 18: The cellist Joséphine Nsimba from Democratic Republic of Congo in DW's documentary film *Beethoven's Ninth: Symphony for the World*.

5 Planned Measures Pending Increased Funding

DW's strategic resource allocation focuses on expanding its services in prioritized countries with the aim of strengthening relevance, overall reach and ability to engage in dialogue. Against the backdrop of growing geopolitical challenges and increasingly accelerated market changes, DW has compiled further important measures that will be feasible only through an increase in funding. These measures will serve to strengthen the commitment of DW's existing services and structures in the 32 broadcast languages as well as interregional cooperation projects and the activities of DW Akademie. Furthermore, expanding the range of services to include other relevant broadcast languages makes the most sense in order for DW to fulfill its mission of providing as many people as possible worldwide with independent information to promote freedom of opinion.

Strengthening existing services and structures

The competitive situation in the prioritized target countries has further intensified as a result of increasing digitalization. While DW used to compete exclusively with a manageable number of national and international media providers, this situation has changed completely—especially with social media. Numerous semi-professional portals and distributors flood the digital world with often one-sided, biased or false information. To ensure that its content continues to stand out and remain attractive in this environment, DW is strengthening its regional expertise, cooperation with local cooperation partners and its presence in prioritized target countries. Additional resources will also strengthen on-demand production.

A further challenge arises from the susceptibility of digital distribution channels to intervention by state censors, for example, with the blocking or filtering of certain broadcasters, subjects and entire channels. Authoritarian states such as Russia, Iran, Turkey and China are constantly working on the further technical advancement of digital control systems or fragment the internet by creating their own national networks for their citizens. In order to ensure the visibility of its content, DW must continuously invest in methods for circumventing censorship and blockades.

DW plans to implement the following measures subject to funding:

- **Prioritized Asian target countries:** As laid out in section 3.2.2, Chinese ambitions of political and economic influence in the region are growing tangibly. DW's primary goal is to bolster information services for the



Figure 19: Circumventing censorship with the *Tor* browser. Source: Compiled and designed by DW

highest-priority Asian target areas and therefore also the relevant languages.

- **Afghanistan:** The Taliban's seizure of power is changing both the domestic and global political significance of the country. For DW, Afghanistan and its people have a high importance due to the ties between the two countries as a result of Germany's participation in the NATO mission and the high number of migrants seeking help. The Dari and Pashto language services will be modified according to developments and needs.
- **Brazil and Mexico:** Social polarization and the sometimes heated climate of debate in Brazil, which further intensified after the election of Jair Bolsonaro as president, create an increased need for independently researched and fact-based journalistic content. Targeted disinformation in the digital world poses as much of a challenge to serious journalism in Brazil as it does in Mexico, where free reporting is already under pressure due to the intimidation of media professionals by criminal entities. Both the manipulative spread of false information via social media, which is used intensively in both countries, and pressure on the critical press pose a threat to the free formation of opinion. DW would therefore like to expand its Spanish and Portuguese-language

information services, especially for the target group in the region's two most populous countries, and to this end also have a stronger presence on the ground. This would further improve the scope for specifically addressing current controversial debates and social grievances from Mexico and Brazil, presenting more in-depth background information, and for reaching young people in particular by disseminating formats via digital video platforms to encourage dialogue.

- **Africa:** Since 2017, DW has developed *The 77 Percent* into a successful brand in the African target group. The program uses multimedia in six languages to discuss topics that are relevant to the young population but are often rendered a taboo subject in regional media. In the event of additional funding, this DW program is to be transferred to DW's regular financing.
- **Russia and Belarus:** The constant decline of freedom of the press and freedom of opinion in Russia, as well as the particularly drastic elimination of almost all civil liberties in Belarus, require an expansion of related DW activities. On-demand video content and social media activities in Russian are in particular to be reinforced.
- **Turkey and Middle East:** The sensitive nature of their foreign, security and migration policies puts Turkey as well as Egypt and Iraq among DW's highest-priority target regions. In light of the growing demand for consumption, DW services here will be consolidated and/or expanded in the future. An additional possibility is expanding coverage to include Azerbaijan, where DW will need to build up language and regional expertise. Due to Turkish and Azerbaijani being closely related, these activities are to be coordinated by the Turkish editorial team.
- **Poland and Hungary:** As in these two countries, anti-EU tendencies as well as discrimination against minorities and state restrictions on civil liberties are continuing to grow in many Eastern European EU nations. In keeping with Germany's responsibility as an EU member, DW recently expanded its program portfolio to include content for Hungary. Additional funding will be used to strengthen the prioritized European languages.
- **Western Balkans:** Many of the numerous conflicts in the countries of the former Yugoslavia are still present more than 20 years after the bloody civil wars. DW's *Balkan Booster* makes an important contribution to international relations in this region by identifying common ground among representatives of the younger generation. Additional funding would see the current annual project funding replaced by regular financing.

In general, DW sees an increased need for action in all high-priority target countries, which would be met with the arrival of additional funding. This includes cross-language content aimed at contributing to health education and the preservation of cultural diversity in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The popular content of the *Eco@* range of programs will also be adapted into additional regional languages. In the case of DW Akademie, additional funds will be used to expand its commitment to strengthening free media systems and promoting constructive dialogue.

Extending the range of languages

As part of the re-prioritization of target regions, DW has identified several regional languages that with a financial basis could productively expand the program portfolio. **Fulani/Fula** and **Pidgin English** promise substantial demand for information as well as high usage potential. Both languages are spoken by respective target groups in several prioritized African countries. DW would potentially reach 12 million people with Fulani, primarily in Nigeria and Guinea; both countries suffer from a range of problems such as economic poverty, natural disasters, social injustice and civil liberty restrictions. Pidgin English presents a similar situation, being spoken as a native language by more than 21 million people alone in the West African nations of Nigeria, Ghana and Cameroon. Due to the various different problems and areas of conflict, many people in these countries decide to migrate to Europe.

A further potential DW plan subject to a funding increase is addressing the **Kurdish target group** with a new language service. Germany enjoys a high reputation among speakers of Kurdish dialects, partly because it is home to up to one million people of Kurdish descent. As recent history has shown: Kurdish minorities in the target areas are repeatedly exposed to brutal, ethnically motivated conflicts. In countries including Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria, around 29 million Kurds face a constant struggle over their own territory. The verbalization of these old conflicts via digital media means they are often further fueled; a corresponding DW program in one of the Kurdish dialects can make an important contribution to defusing many of the emotionally charged issues.

The **ENTR — What's Next** joint venture will, subject to increased financial support, likewise be expanded to include additional languages. As described in chapter 4, DW has launched this successful project for young Europeans together with several partners in six languages. In the medium term, content is to be extended to all languages of EU member states.

Expanding technical investments

DW has identified a number of future challenges in primary-focus projects that it can only meet adequately with new technical investments. With the resources available, it can—provided that funds are managed responsibly—implement appropriate solutions only to a limited extent. With additional financing, DW could tackle the following measures significantly faster and more extensively:

- **Artificial intelligence:** The artificial intelligence options described in section 2.4 have a wide range of potential deployments. The technology makes it possible to accelerate numerous processes and to redeploy freed-up resources. Artificial intelligence can also be used actively and in the public interest in the fight against disinformation and for unhindered access to information, for example, on issues relating to accessibility-for-all or circumventing censorship and blockades. A corresponding increase in funding would enable DW to optimize and expand its technical systems for this purpose even more effectively.
- **System availability and security:** The flexibilization of work processes requires high investments in technical systems. Additional mobile workplaces, for example, require appropriate software and hardware equipment that enables staff to have reliable and secure access to their accustomed infrastructure. The regionalization of

services likewise requires an expansion of existing production systems to ensure consistent quality. Accordingly, DW will prioritize additional funding to realize its primary-focus projects.

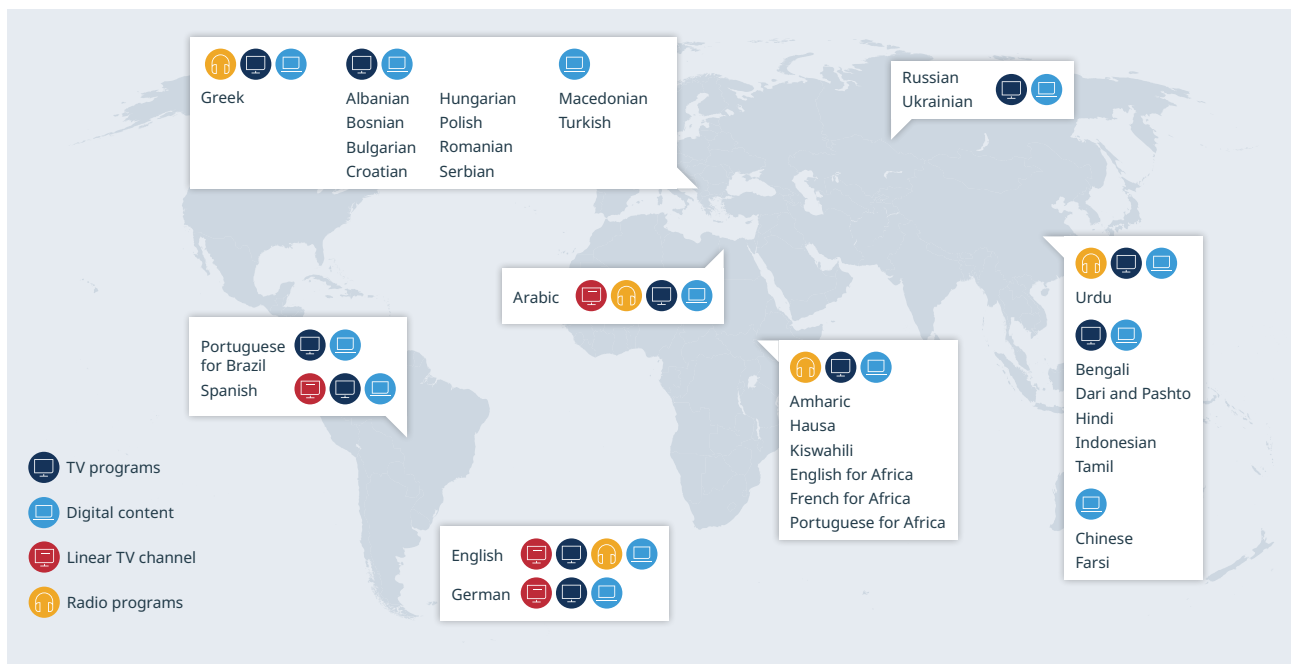


Figure 20: DW languages available as of 2022.

Source: Compiled and designed by DW

6 Financial Framework

DW's financial basis comprises federal funds from the budget of the *Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media (BKM)*. In 2021, these amounted to approx. €391 million, including €380.5 million in structural funds and €10.5 million in one-time funding. Independently of this, the *Federal Foreign Office (AA)* supports selected DW projects with special project budgets (approx. €9 million).

During the 2018—2021 strategic planning period, DW continued to receive markedly more funding from the German federal government (particularly the *BKM*) and parliament, most recently an increase in structural resources by approx. €15 million in 2021. In total, the structural *BKM* budget saw an increase of approx. €66 million compared to 2018, not including special funding from 2021.

In addition, DW was provided with around €31 million in additional funds over the entire period: in part as one-time, dedicated special funds approved in the parliamentary process (around €15 million), as compensation for pandemic-related additional expenditures (around €8 million) and as a one-time investment in the *Neustart Kultur* stimulus program with around €8 million for 2020/21 (total amount through 2023: approx. €14.35 million).

Fortunately, it was possible—in particular through project funding—to implement additional program projects. Among these is the new *ENTR—What's Next* program, launched in 2021 supplementarily to an EU project funding measure and with the aim of connecting young people from different backgrounds across Europe. The challenge here remains transferring the often beacon-like program projects into the regular funding of the *BKM*. In addition, the *BKM* is involved in project funding in the area of artificial intelligence and its deployment in a journalistic environment.

A major source of support for DW's projects was the early setting of the financial framework conditions for the period of the last strategic plan by the German government and parliament. This enabled DW to plan its requisite further development into an international digital information provider in terms of both programming strategy and technical aspects in an economically reliable manner.

For the 2022 financial year, DW is expected to have an operating budget of approx. €380 million. The planned increase over the 2021 operating budget amounts to €20 million (excluding one-time special funding). Of the operating budget, €7.18 million is tied to a specific purpose for the corresponding expenditure from the rental agreement with the *Bundesanstalt für Immobilienaufgaben (BfIA)* for the broadcasting center in Bonn. Additionally,

the *BKM* will reimburse the annual retirement scheme costs of former *DWFZ*¹⁰ staff amounting to approx. €0.5 million. A sum of €20 million is foreseen for investments. In total, this will add up to an expected overall subsidy of €400.5 million for the 2022 fiscal year. Furthermore, in 2022 DW's participation in the federal economic stimulus program amounts to a one-time contribution of €4 million (see above). The program of measures foreseen in the supplementary federal budget for 2022, aimed at mitigating the consequences of Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, included the allocation of €4 million from the budget of the *Federal Commissioner for Culture and Media (BKM)*. This put the total funding envisaged for DW in 2022 at up to €408.5 million, with €404.5 million of that coming from DW's federal government funding grant. A continuation of the previous project funding volumes is likewise expected. Under these financial conditions, DW's financial stabilization can be continued in 2022. The federal government's draft budget for 2023 provides for a one-time increase in DW's funding by a further €6 million.

In the interests of fulfilling its mission in the context of the existing global challenges and rapid technical developments ("Digital Transformation") in accordance with this new strategic plan, DW must ensure sustainability in its financial development. DW has shown how a moderate four-year annual increase of the current grant has enabled it to further enhance the impact of its content by optimizing its scope and quality. One prerequisite for achieving an impact is that the services are used as widely as possible, a factor that has increased notably by around 84 percent from 157 million (2017) to 289 million (2021) weekly users. From DW's perspective, the audience reach potentials of digital transformation are far from being fully utilized. This first and foremost requires the dependable implementation of the new and already launched program strategy and technical measures planned for the 2022–2025 strategic plan.

Project funding from the *Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)* in 2021 amount to approx. €32 million for the tasks performed by the externally funded DW Akademie, plus a further approx. €3 million from the budget of the *Federal Foreign Office (AA)*. In addition to project funding by the *BMZ* and *AA*, DW Akademie produces a range of media projects for other funding providers such as the EU and Germany's main development agency: *GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale*

¹⁰ Deutsche Welle Fortbildungszentrum/DW Training Center

Zusammenarbeit). In order to implement DW's goal to "promote dialogue", DW Akademie is, as an institutional component of DW, to be reliably provided with resources for its basic personnel and financial structure in the future. This basic structure is, in addition to temporary project funding, intended to ensure DW Akademie's independence and freedom of action. Financing DW Akademie solely from project funding is not financially feasible for the long-term fulfillment of its tasks. Unfortunately, DW Akademie's existing staffing requirements have not yet been taken into account, despite the welcome increase in positions for DW as a whole. Efforts will therefore be made to secure additional positions determined by the government.

DW is again able to rely on additional financing for its programs and DW Akademie activities in 2022 through project funds from the *Federal Foreign Office (AA)*, which has provided many years of cooperation and support. A concrete commitment on the final sum is provided through approval for individual project applications during the course of the year. In addition, the *Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU)* has already expressed the intention to continue the project funding in place since 2013 to beyond the year 2022. Based on corresponding signals, DW can also assume that the *BKM* will continue its involvement in the field of artificial intelligence (AI) and its deployment in a journalistic environment.

The financial challenge for the subsequent budget periods will be to compensate for personnel costs increasing further even with consistent staff levels. These will in particular result from the expected pay increases as well as from the rising costs of retirement benefits, which despite the switch to a defined contribution plan for employees hired since 2017 are to be expected in light of the longer-term development of the capital markets.

These factors are joined by cost increases generated through the success of DW; the effective development and marketing of a program format in a region or on a global scale leads to correlating expenses for community support in the editorial departments, sales operations and usage-dependent distribution costs in the area of on-demand and streaming distribution. The further systematic expansion of digitalization throughout DW likewise leads to higher expenditure in technical infrastructure (investments, ongoing operating resources, technical personnel, project staff), which are only offset by potential savings at a later point in time, for example, in the continual expansion of AI in programming or in the planned automation of the supporting business processes. The COVID-19 pandemic has enabled an abrupt increase in the speed and intensity of the *New Work* process. The task now is to continue along the existing path and to transform it into a systematic *New Work* concept, in particular with the

aim of using premises more efficiently, reducing space requirements and enabling people to work independently of time and location.

DW will continue to meet the programming challenges described in the strategic plan through increases in efficiency. These include concentrating on programs with a higher profile and degree of professionalism, the gradual digitalization of work processes and even more selective cooperation with partners including *ARD*, *ZDF* and *Deutschlandradio*. Subject to the proviso of cost-effectiveness, DW is involved in the structural reform of public broadcasting and is as a result already achieving savings potential, especially in connection with joint procurement. In this context, DW is willing to be involved in the merging of foreign bureaus and making more of its products available to *ARD*, *ZDF* and joint programming. The existing cooperation arrangement with a view to sharing broadcasts and material is to be continued; this is important for DW and is linked to considerable positive cost-related effects.

Targeted cost-saving measures have already been taken in recent years, such as the outsourcing and simultaneous reduction of printing services previously provided in-house and the implementation of energy-efficient measures including the replacement of energy-intensive studio lighting with LED lamps. It is apparent here that the newly established sustainability management setup can play a significant role not only in reducing DW's CO2 footprint but also in increasing efficiency, economy and cost-effectiveness. DW already set up a project in 2021 with the aim of identifying tasks that it will no longer, or at least not to the same extent, be able to perform in the future. Focusing decisively on the relevant issues will be absolutely essential to safeguarding DW's future feasibility.

At the same time, however, increases in efficiency will not be enough to fund digital transformation, the resulting on-demand strategy and regional prioritization and DW-related tasks that have increased as a result of global crises.

The successful expansion of DW (2021 subsidy: €391 million, including €10.5 million in one-time special funding) could be continued in the 20th legislative period over the 2022–2025 budget period by consolidating the positive budget development of the previous legislative period with an annual increase of around €20 million. DW is Germany's international broadcaster. Following the UK's departure from the EU, it is also one of the most important voices in Europe for communicating the values and positions of the EU. An increase in financial means to match that of *BBC World*¹¹ would see DW become the leading European voice around the world.

¹¹ *BBC World* budget in 2021: €687 million

Given the current geopolitical and market conditions, fulfilling the mandate of DW can only be safeguarded permanently through a long-term increase in funding. Depending on the degree of structural increase, it will be possible to realize the programming projects described in this strategic planning document as well as essential investments and innovations, and to implement the necessary human resources and technical infrastructure at DW.

Calculation of operating and investment costs for the 2022 – 2025 period				
A – Basic needs status quo funded by federal grant	2022 Outlay in 000 €	2023 Outlay in 000 €	2024 Outlay in 000 €	2025 Outlay in 000 €
1.1 Human resources expenditure	301,867	303,366	297,366	297,366
Wages and social security expenses	136,496	142,268	145,113	148,016
Expenditure on pensions	53,667	52,880	54,870	59,104
Expenditure on fees and social security expenses for freelancers	111,704	108,218	97,383	90,247
1.2 Functional administration costs	91,368	91,369	91,369	91,369
Operating expenditure	47,485	49,485	49,485	49,485
Program expenses (licenses etc.)	23,406	23,406	23,406	23,406
Broadcasting expenditure	13,297	11,297	11,297	11,297
Expenses for renting <i>BIMA</i>	7,180	7,180	7,180	7,180
1.3 Expenditure for investments	24,000	22,330	20,000	20,000
Total expenses for basic needs	417,235	417,065	408,735	408,735
Own funds for grant recipient incl. amounts carried forward	-12,735	-8,235	-8,235	-8,235
Total basic needs (expenditure minus own income)	404,500	408,830	400,500	400,500
B – Funding from federal grant*	2022 Outlay in 000 €	2023 Outlay in 000 €	2024 Outlay in 000 €	2025 Outlay in 000 €
Federal grant from <i>BKM</i>	-404,000	-408,330	-400,000	-400,000
Reimbursement of retirement scheme costs for <i>DW Training Center</i>	-500	-500	-500	-500
Total funding	-404.500	-408.830	-400.500	-400.500

* Funding as of August 24, 2022:

2022: Budget bill passed | 2023: 1st govt. draft of budget bill | 2024/25: Medium-term federal financial planning

Figure 21: Budget overview as of Aug. 24, 2022, prior to refinement and implementation of the budget act.

Source: Compiled and designed by DW

7 Appendix

DW criteria for evaluating content and its impact

DW operationalizes the evaluation of its content and its impact using **four criteria**. Each is dedicated to a content-related priority focus, so that the journalistic quality of content and its impact can only be considered fulfilled for the purposes of DW when all four criteria are taken into account.

1. **Content-related quality:** DW conceptualizes, produces and distributes its content in such a way that users are satisfied, use the content regularly and share DW content online.

Indicators of content quality may include:

- Depth of content: Is content complete and does it go beyond regular current news? Does it feature contextual background and explain causes and consequences? Can users form their own opinions and understand the bigger picture as a result of using DW?
- Credibility: Is the content accurate, transparent, independent and reliable? Do users acknowledge these values and trust DW on the basis of them?
- Professionalism: Does DW's content have integrity, separate opinions from reporting and draw on a variety of sources?
- Balance: Does DW feature different perspectives? Does it give fair consideration to all points of view?

2. **Subject-related relevance:** The point here is answering the question *"When is an issue of interest to users?"* DW focuses on subjects that encourage the target group to use the content.

- Relatability: Are DW's topics regionally relevant; do they relate to the needs, values or opinions of users; and is there a benefit for them in their everyday lives?
- Relevance felt by users: Do users perceive DW topics as relevant?
- Topicality: Are the subjects featured of current significance to the users?
- Originality: Does DW offer investigative, exclusive and out-of-the-ordinary stories?
- Vital content: Does DW cover the essential topics? Is the target audience missing something if they use DW content?

3. **Presentation and form:** DW uses this criterion to determine whether its content is presented in a contemporary and appropriate manner. In doing so, it takes into account current usage habits.

- Comprehensibility: Does the content have an appropriate level of simplification in terms of language and style? Does the complexity correspond to the subject matter?
 - Lively style: How expressive is the storytelling? Is DW content entertaining and engaging?
 - Personalization: How authentic is DW content? Are there opportunities for users to have their say?
 - Style in the narrower sense: How dynamic is DW content? Are video editing, camera work and design used appropriately? How high is the usability of online content? Is DW content visually and acoustically up to standard?
 - Discoverability: Is the target group able to find the content? Do search engines rank DW content highly? Does DW draw attention to its content through effective promotional work?
4. **Brand:** This criterion is used by DW to determine whether users recognize what it stands for.
 - DW featured topics: Does the content address the crucial subjects of freedom, knowledge and dialogue?
 - DW values: Are the values DW stands for — e.g. clear, journalistically sound and open-minded reporting — recognizable in the content?
 - Brand essence: Is it evident that DW provides unbiased information for free minds?

