



## THE NEW LOCAL LEGISLATIVE COMMUNICATION DYNAMIC: A LOOK AT THE PROFILE OF CITY COUNCIL TVS FROM SÃO PAULO STATE INTERIOR

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**Abstract:** With the beginning of “Rede Legislativa de TV” in 2012, the Federal, State and Local Legislative TVs channels had the chance to become a more cohesive group and not act in a spread way anymore. Based in the multiprogramming feature and sharing responsibilities, its new configuration brings also an unprecedented protagonism to the local broadcast scenario. This article uses bibliography review, data research and interview techniques to put light on City Council TVs from the São Paulo State interior, where today there are more of this type of broadcasters in Brazil. The goal is to investigate if there are possibilities, in these channels, for a local legislative communication which not only would work with transparency, but also with promotion of active citizenship and approximation of the society to the decision-making spheres.

**Keywords:** Legislative Communication; Public Communication; Legislative TV; City Council TV; Brazilian Broadcast.

### 1 Introduction

This article is the result of an initial step in the general process of a doctoral research that intends to study the potential exercise of citizen communication in a new legislative communication context, which not only places City Council TVs as vehicles in evidence, but also brings an unprecedented leading role in the local/municipal scenario. This first step consists of collecting data and tracing the profile of the sixteen City Council TVs in the interior of São Paulo state that already belong to the Digital Rede Legislativa de TV – which are the defined research corpus, for reasons explained throughout the text – to start a discussion about their role and about the current configuration of the public/state radio broadcasting modality which they are part of. For this, the article was divided into three topics that bring a brief bibliographical review on the path taken by Legislative TVs so far, followed by the study empirical part, which analyzes the information collected about the TVs studied for research in development.

### 2 The Brazilian State as a Communicative Agent

The existence of legislative TVs is due to the willingness of the parliament to communicate with society, making their image more positive and closer to the citizen. Since its inception, it is possible to see a double objective, of both “bringing population closer to the

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discussions that take place in the Chambers [...] allowing to increase citizens' control over these institutions and expand popular participation in the legislative process” (LEMOS; BERNARDES; BARROS, 2011, p. 2) and trying to reinvigorate one's image without depending on commercial media. Although today such broadcasters are a significant part of the communication that comes from the public sector and have been, after the redemocratization, major protagonists in the process of creating transparency and political visibility to the sector (BARROS; LEMOS, 2019, p. 109), they are far from representing the first and only initiative of the Brazilian State in positioning themselves not only as a communication regulator, but also as communicative agent.

Carvalho (2014), in his doctoral thesis on the function and legitimacy of federal Legislative TVs, recalls that radio broadcasting is a service the State cannot allow to be done exclusively by third parties. According to article 223 of the Federal Constitution, which requires the State to comply with radio broadcasting with the "principle of complementarity of private, public, and state radio broadcasting systems" (BRASIL, 1988), it has the duty to not only grant, but also provide that service. The principle came to make official the idea that these systems are not competitors but complementary, opening doors for them to seek specific actions. State media, for example, would have the role of “being institutional and providing a public service of access to information [...] from credibility based not only on objectivity, but on the formative or informative character of rendering of accounts to society” (CARVALHO, 2014, p. 64).

While the 1988 Constitution placed certain normative visibility to public/state radio broadcasting, especially in its chapter V on Social Communication (BRASIL, 1988, s/p) in practice, the movement to create public communication channels without private mediation comes from much earlier in Brazil. According to Barros:

The political power attempt to maintain a direct communication channel with the population that does not pass through the filters of private vehicles is an old one. Since 1935, the federal government maintains the program *A Voz do Brasil*, formerly known as *Hora do Brasil*, instituted by the Getúlio Vargas government, and which tries to build this bridge without mediation between government actions and citizens. We could go further and say that the press in Brazil was born official. The first newspaper printed on Brazilian territory, still in the colonial period, “*A Gazeta do Rio de Janeiro*,” brought news that were basically government announcements. (BARROS, 2007, p. 3).

*Voz do Brasil*, the first radio program from the State dedicated to bringing news from the Legislative Branch, is also pointed out by Eugênio Bucci as a key initiative to understand public communication in Brazil. According to him, it is in the obligatory “*chapa-branca*” news that “the genesis of the formulas by which public equipment is placed at the service of the private vanity of those in charge” (BUCCI, 2015, p. 138) resides, raising the always current discussion about which is the ideal public communication, and which is actually exercised by a state structure called by him the State of Narcissus.

Here, the important thing is to understand that the State's attempt to approach the

population through the exercise of public communication is not new at the federal level, coming loaded with points that go beyond the mere rendering of accounts to society. In the case of the Legislative as a communicative agent, issues ranging from the intention to improve the Parliament's image among the population and to create an alternative dialogue channel to the commercial media can be noted, to the unwanted use of public resources for non-public purposes, dilemmas that reflect on the practice and structure still in formation of Legislative TVs today.

### **3 Legislative TVs in the Radio Broadcasting System Complementarity**

After the 1988 Constitution established that the radio broadcasting system should maintain a balance between public, private, and state broadcasters, the landmark for the emergence and consolidation of Legislative TVs was the approval of the Cable Diffusion Law. Law 8977 of 1995 came to regulate the service of commercial cable service operators in Brazil but ended up playing a fundamental role in the expansion of public/state broadcasters in the country. The law began to oblige such operators to allocate basic channels of free use to certain sectors, including the municipal legislature (sharing the channel with the respective State Assembly), the Chamber of Deputies, and the Federal Senate. Receiving, right from the start, a “public and not just institutional DNA” (PAULINO, 2019, p. 24), Legislative TVs were born in the cable system thanks to what Letícia Renault calls an innovative article, as:

For the first time, Brazilian radio broadcasting legislation determined that, in order to operate a private business, it would be necessary to contemplate simultaneously, without interruption and for an indefinite period, the programming generated by sources other than the private networks or the existing public network. (RENAULT, 2004, p. 40).

With the broadcasting right guaranteed, the Legislative Branch began to occupy this space in an unorganized manner and by isolated initiatives of each Parliament, Assembly, or Chamber: in 1995, the Assembly TV of Minas Gerais state (TV Assembleia de Minas Gerais) went on air; in 1996, Senate TV (TV Senado); and in 1998, Federal Chamber TV (TV Câmara Federal). At the municipal level, City Council TV of Bauru (TV Câmara Bauru) was one of the first, starting to work in 1998, as well. From then on, Assembly TVs and City Council TVs popped up across the country, each one in its own way. The dispersed formation of this communication modality by the Legislative Branch is a relevant characteristic of the sector, as it reflects the lack of regulations that govern it. Until today, although academic and professional discussions on the subject seek to bring minimum parameters to their performance, the only real normative reference that falls on legislative broadcasters is the Cable Law, which determines that they must cover “the documentation of parliamentary work, especially the live transmission of the sessions” (Law 8977, of January 6, 1995).

While the non-uniformity of legislative broadcasters can provide a certain wealth of

experiences, at the same time it causes side effects such as the difficulty in seeing where they are in the Brazilian complementary radio broadcasting system. In a cold analysis of the case, these channels would be strictly state-owned, corroborating for the classification the fulfillment of three basic requirements for state broadcasters proposed by Bucci; Fiorini; Chiaretti (2012) in a UNESCO report:

Its property and its legal nature bind it directly or indirectly to the State, under the terms of the legislation that governs the country's public administration; its day-to-day management is subordinate to authorities of one of the three powers of the Republic; and its programming suffers limits arising from the two previous requirements, being more at the service of the dissemination needs arising from the internal logic of the State than at the service of freely reflecting the debate and cultural diversity that results from the non-state dynamics typical of social life. (BUCCI; FIORINI; CHIARETTI, 2012, p. 21).

However, in addition to the basic requirements and legal compliance with live broadcasts of plenary activities, the practices and structures of Legislative TVs remain diversified. Sant'Anna (2019), a scholar of legislative communication who coined the term “source media” for her, even points out the current lack of regulation and the importance of drawing up a legislative framework for the sector, since without it the aforementioned diversity it can easily turn negative into function deviation. In view of this, there is a certain scope for interpretation as to how they should work and for what, after all, they serve, besides rendering of accounts of the Legislative Branch. Carvalho (2014), for example, classifies them as public, state, and institutional, not seeing contradictions in the triple definition as long as there is a minimum balance between the dimensions. While the topic is still under discussion, another step was taken in the journey of Legislative TVs in 2012, with a great impact on the category's local leadership.

#### **4 Legislative Radio and TV Network and the New Local Leadership**

Until then, dispersed throughout the country with few initiatives that acted as sector connections – such is the case of ASTRAL, the Brazilian Legislative Televisions and Radios Association, inaugurated in 2002 with the aim of representing the interest of communication activities of legislative houses, among others purposes – legislative broadcasters began to show greater cohesion after Act of Table No. 52, of October 17, 2012, which created the Legislative Digital TV Network and the Legislative Radio Network of the Chamber of Deputies.

With the implementation of the digital television system in the country, the Network would make possible the territorial expansion of Legislative TVs and, finally, their entry into the open network, universalizing access to their programming. In addition to being “the first television network to be designed in Brazil with digital resources of multiprogramming, which allows the use of the same transmitter for four independent broadcasters” (BRASIL, 2020, n.p.), the Network would work on its growth through a hitherto unusual Federal City Council TV, Senate TV, State Assembly TV, and Municipal City Council TV, since “the City Council and

Senate share their channels with partners and share costs and responsibilities” (BRASIL, 2020, n.p.).

In practice, with the resource of multiprogramming, the same channel can be divided among four broadcasters in the Union. Through technical cooperation agreements between the Chamber of Deputies, Senate, Assemblies, and Municipal Chambers, the task of expanding the television signal to Brazilian municipalities is divided: the Federal Legislative Branch grants the channel, supports its implementation and in general, it manages the Network, while the municipal Legislative Branch bears the costs of reception and transmission of the digital TV signal. In capitals, costs are divided between the Chamber of Deputies and the State Assembly.

For a City Council and the population related to it to have a Legislative TV, the first necessary step is demonstrating interest in signing an agreement for the implementation of Legislative Network in the city. In other words, not only the emergence of new municipal legislative channels, but also the expansion of access to existing federal and state legislative channels depend primarily on the interest of the local Legislative Branch in making such an investment. In this way, the configuration based on the sharing of channels and responsibilities of the Network ended up causing an unprecedented leadership for the place.

Alongside debates on the organization of the Legislative Network itself, the novelty places at the heart of the matter the citizen potential that local legislative communication can begin to draw (or is already drawing). Heloisa Matos, who has several publications on public communication and some specifically on legislative communication, argues that this, “to be fully fulfilled, needs a close relationship with the practice of citizenship” (MATOS, 1999, p. 9) , and should be guided by the “formation of citizen, participatory, and aware attitudes” (MATOS, 1999, p. 9). She even argues that for the dissemination of citizen information, adequate spaces are needed for debates and exchanges of ideas and that this concept has been better expressed within the municipality, as it is conducive to “the understanding of public communication as a means of renewing practices related to the direct experience of problems and the search for solutions” (MATOS, 2009, p. 6). Cicília Peruzzo, in an article on regional and local media, also states about municipal legislative broadcasters that “although there are distortions (misuse of some of these channels), the program global purposes are still legally and ethically educational-cultural, of community development, and in favor of citizenship” (PERUZZO, 2005, p. 83). According to her, the strength of the place as a source of information should not be underestimated.

In fact, this article does not aim at ignoring the new scenario and discussion it suggests, since the numbers referring to Legislative TVs tend to be increasingly expressive. With data updated in February 2020 (BRASIL, 2020), there are 37 cities that have City Council TVs included in the Legislative TV Network and therefore, are on air on the open television network. Thus, today, on the Network, Municipal City Council TVs have already surpassed in number the federal level TVs (City Council TV and Senate TV) and the state level TVs (Assembly TVs that

are on air in Acre, Amazonas, Amapá, Bahia, Ceará, Espírito Santo, Goiás, Maranhão, Minas Gerais, Mato Grosso, Pará, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Rio de Janeiro, Rio Grande do Norte, Roraima, Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, Sergipe, São Paulo, and Tocantins states). The trend is still for an increase in the numerical difference in the coming years since Brazil has many more municipalities than states (5,570 municipalities *versus* 26 federal states). This limits the growth of Assembly TVs and boosts that of City Council TVs - currently, for example, in addition to the 37 cities on air of the Legislative Radio and TV Network, 117 are being implemented and another 365 are awaiting the release of a channel by the Chamber of Deputies.

The largest number of cities that already have City Council TVs on the open television network is in the state of São Paulo, specifically in its interior. For this reason, they were chosen as the research corpus<sup>3</sup>, which will be analyzed next.

### **5 City Councils TVs Profile in the Interior of São Paulo State**

By the beginning of 2020, the Legislative Radio and TV Network had reached 16 cities in the interior of São Paulo state. They are: Assis, Barretos, Bauru, Botucatu, Campinas, Franca, Jacareí, Jaú, Jundiá, Marília, Mogi das Cruzes, Piracicaba, Ribeirão Preto, São José do Rio Preto, Sorocaba, and Tupã. For an initial look that would allow drawing a profile of these broadcasters, a survey of data regarding the channels, management and technical staff organization models, and character of the content that designs the program of each of them was carried out. The information was acquired through the official websites of the Municipal City Councils, Transparency Portals, Map of the City Councils prepared by the Court of Auditors of São Paulo State and, finally, interviews made with managers or the ones responsible for the City Council TVs<sup>4</sup>. Thus, a first point to note is the diverse local reality in which these medias are found, reflected in the differences in the number of inhabitants and budget of the municipal Legislative Branch:

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<sup>3</sup> SP City Council TV (TV Câmara SP), means of communication of the City Council of São Paulo city, was excluded from the research corpus, as it concerns the country's largest capital, with 12,258 million inhabitants, which changes its structure and scope profile. Thus, it could be responsible for the production of another study, alone.

<sup>4</sup> The interviews were carried out by phone calls, while additional information to the first conversation was obtained through *WhatsApp* and *email*. Those responsible for City Council TVs who were interviewed are: Márcio Antonio Fabre (Assis), Rafael Luciano de Lucas (Barretos), Marcelo Malacrida (Bauru), Dario DJota Carvalho (Campinas), William Campos Galvão (Franca), Elton Rivas (Jacareí), Ângelo Boaventura (Jaú), Patrícia Montanari Leme (Jundiá), Amanda Campos (Marília), Rosângela Cavalcante (Mogi das Cruzes), Felipe Marchiori (Piracicaba), Sergio Figueiredo (Ribeirão Preto), Alexandre Gama (São José do Rio Preto), Cláudia Cristina de Almeida Jacob (Sorocaba), and Tiago da Costa Pettenuci (Tupã). The exception is Botucatu City Council TV (TV Câmara Botucatu), in which the author acts as a participating observer, as she is media's civil service certified journalist.

**Table 1**– City Councils TVs in the interior of São Paulo State

<b>City</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Legislative Branch Budget<sup>5</sup> (in Brazilian reais)</b>	<b>Channel on the open television network</b>	<b>Year in which it joined the Digital TV Legislative Network</b>
Assis	103,666	7,219,464	31.3	2013
Barretos	121,344	10,609,250	31.3	2012
Bauru	374,272	16,799,669	31.3	2013
Botucatu	144,820	4,385,693	61.3	2016
Campinas	1,194,094	101,005,217	39.3	2015
Franca	350,400	10,588,334	61.3	2018
Jacareí	231,863	21,048,700	39.2	2013
Jaú	148,581	6,002,142	34.2	2012
Jundiaí	414,810	26,846,286	60.2	2016
Marília	237,130	12,356,664	31.2	2014
Mogi das Cruzes	440,769	29,235,187	60.2	2015
Piracicaba	400,949	32,541,826	60.4	2013
Ribeirão Preto	694,534	48,323,916	31.4	2012
São José do Rio Preto	456,245	21,433,809	28.2	2015
Sorocaba	671,186	48,924,404	31.3	2015
Tupã	65,477	6,136,767	34.3	2013

**Source:** VIEIRA, 2019.

As much as all cities are located in the interior of the same state, local differences are expressive, both between municipalities and between the municipal Legislative Branch. In this scenario, City Council TVs are present in only one small city (up to 100 thousand inhabitants), as they are mostly concentrated in twelve medium-sized cities (100 to 500 thousand inhabitants) and also are present in three large cities (over 500 thousand inhabitants), one of which is Campinas, which surpasses the one million inhabitants mark. Expectedly, different municipal sizes require different legislative structures, also reverberating in each City Council's annual budget. Since the investment and maintenance costs of City Council TVs are directly linked to the budget of the

<sup>5</sup> Reference period: September 2018 to August 2019, in a survey carried out by the Court of Auditors of São Paulo State.

Legislative House, this amount can bring significant reflections on what work possibilities they have and how the stations are organized. From the smallest annual budget – Botucatu, with just over BRL 4 million – to the largest – Campinas, with over BRL 100 million – passing through an average of BRL 23 million, it is clear that these are different numbers not only among themselves, but also extremely low when compared to the federal and state spheres. The 2019 Annual Appropriation Act provided for the Chamber of Deputies an approximate budget of BRL 6.3 billion (BRASIL, 2020); the Legislative Assembly of the state of São Paulo, the most expensive in the country, costs around BRL 1.3 billion per year (QUINTELLA; CHAPOLA, 2019). While this fact can generate a local environment based on a plurality of experiences, focused on creativity and efficiency, there are a number of difficulties that may arise for the operation of broadcasters, as well as for the full compliance with their legal functions and obligations, especially if these are discussed considering only “the major ones” in the sector, that is, federal broadcasters followed by state broadcasters.

Still regarding these first data, we note that all broadcasters are on air through multiprogramming. For example, in Botucatu, we have Chamber of Deputies TV (TV Câmara dos Deputados) on channel 61, ALESP TV on 61.2, Senate TV (TV Senado) on channel 61.4, and finally Botucatu City Council TV (TV Câmara Botucatu) on 61.3, all using the same transmitter, which was the proposal of the Legislative Network from the beginning. Broadcasters also started to go on air soon after the creation of the Legislative Network, in 2012, with Barretos, Jaú, and Ribeirão Preto starting their work on open television in the same year. Franca, inaugurated in 2018, was the last to join the list. It is worth mentioning that, although some broadcasters in fact have started their activities with the assignment of the channel through the Legislative Network, others have been operating on cable television for a long time, only adapting their structure to transmit the signal in this other modality. This is the case of Bauru City Council TV (TV Câmara Bauru), one of the pioneers in the sector, completing 22 years of existence in 2020.

Having established the City Council TVs in the interior of São Paulo state and the diversity of their local realities, we are now going to look more closely at how these elementary differences reflect in the structure and organization of each one of them. This look is especially important for future developments of these data, because, as Sant'Anna has already observed when comparing editorial criteria of municipal, state, and federal legislative broadcasters, "the more fragile the employment relationship of a worker, for example, a commissioned position or an outsourced worker, the less independent was the attitude that this professional, by themselves, faced the news" (SANT'ANNA, 2019, p. 17).

Following the trend of autonomy between each broadcaster and each Legislative Branch, in the municipality the option for different management models continues. While seven City Council TVs have political appointments occupying a commissioned position in the management,



another six have civil service certified employees in the same position. It is important to emphasize that occupying the position through political appointment does not mean having specific technical or academic training in the area, in this case, communication; the issue here is to assess how the person acquired the position and not their qualifications to hold it. Thus, the broadcasters were classified as follows:

**Table 2** – Organization model – management

	<b>Commissioned manager (appointment)</b>	<b>Civil service certified manager (in-house staff position or bonus remuneration position)</b>	<b>No defined management</b>
<b>Cities</b>	Campinas	Assis	Botucatu
	Jaú	Barretos	Franca
	Marília	Bauru	Jundiaí
	Mogi das Cruzes	Jacareí	
	Piracicaba	Ribeirão Preto	
	Sorocaba	São José do Rio Preto	
	Tupã		
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>

Source: VIEIRA, 2019.

It is interesting to note that, in addition to opting for different models, the thirteen City Councils with defined management appointed the positions responsible for their broadcasters in a complete non-standardized manner, revealing yet another indicator of autonomy and plurality/non-unity among themselves. These are the appointments found: City Council TV director, communication director (three), media director, social communication director, legislative TV director, communication advisor with attributions of director, communication secretary-director, City Council TV and radio coordinator, communication coordinator, City Council TV coordinator, and communication legislative secretary.

The plurality/non-unity of the Network is also found in the discrepancies that each broadcaster deals within their choice of management model. We have the example of Tupã and Bauru. In addition to the appointed communication legislative secretary, Tupã has a councilor designated as City Council TV coordinator; its role even includes authorizing or not suggested agendas. On the other hand, Bauru established in municipal legislation (Municipal Law 6,043, of April 1, 2011) that it is necessary to be a civil service certified journalist or broadcaster in the communication area to occupy the position of communication director. Also, in Jacareí, although there is no legislation, it is an internal rule that commissioners are only allowed in councilor or

president offices.

The other three City Council TVs that still do not have (or momentarily do not have) defined management demonstrate that municipal legislative broadcasters are in the process of formation or, often, due to lack of regulations, suffer from structural insecurities. In Botucatu, the person responsible for the City Council TV is the City Council administrative director. In Franca, a legislative officer from the purchasing sector in charge of acquiring the broadcaster's initial equipment ended up being responsible for the channel. Although he is a civil service certified employee, he has no bonus remuneration to play the role – in his words, the task “fell into my lap.” In Jundiaí, a communication advisor who works on TV is informally responsible for it, in a process in which a partnership between Jundiaí City Council TV (TV Câmara Jundiaí) and TVTEC Jundiaí fell apart, significantly modifying the previously existing dynamics.

While the presence of commissioned or civil service certified employees in management demonstrates a certain balance between both options, when we talk about technical staff, we already find a choice predominance of civil service certified employees over outsourced ones, as listed below:

**Chart 1 – Organization model – technical staff**

	<b>Civil service certified</b>	<b>Outsourced</b>	<b>Mixed (civil service certified and outsourced)</b>
<b>Cities</b>	Assis	Campinas	Barretos
	Bauru	Franca	Jacareí
	Botucatu	Mogi das Cruzes	
	Jaú		
	Jundiaí		
	Marília		
	Piracicaba		
	Ribeirão Preto		
	São José do Rio Preto		
	Sorocaba		
	Tupã		
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>

**Source:** VIEIRA, 2019.

It can be inferred that a political management does not reflect an entire body of civil servants in the same situation, since constitutionally – in article 37, item V (BRASIL, 1988) – there is not even the possibility of commissioners exercising technical functions; and here we

highlight the role of TCE-SP, which supervises and makes recommendations regarding the attributions that can be assigned to trust positions. Of the sixteen City Council TVs studied, eleven chose to have in their technical staff only civil service certified employees, three have outsourced ones, and two have a mixed model, with civil service certified and outsourced employees.

At this point, it is worth mentioning the structure in which the technical staff of these broadcasters is located, which, once again, can vary considerably. While Campinas City Council TV (TV Câmara Campinas), the largest of all, has approximately 33 outsourced employees, followed by Jacareí, with 24, and São José do Rio Preto, with 23 (which are still modest numbers in the organizational structure of a television broadcaster), most of other TVs work with a total staff ranging from four to ten servers. This is the case of Assis and Jundiaí, with four people, Botucatu, with five, Tupã, Barretos, Jaú and Piracicaba, with seven, eight, eight and nine, respectively. Bauru and Marília have eleven employees, Sorocaba, seventeen, and Ribeirão Preto, eighteen. The staff of Franca City Council TV (TV Câmara de Franca), for example, although it is classified as an outsourced model, it is actually limited to a manager (“legislative official”) and an outsourced person responsible for the technical operation of the equipment used in live broadcasts. Another relevant point is that many of these teams, already relatively small, have among their attributions not only the functioning of the City Council TV, but also the general communication of the Legislative House, which includes being responsible for websites, social networks, and press relations, in addition to City Council Radio when it exists. Assis, Barretos, Bauru, Botucatu, Jacareí, Jaú, Jundiaí, Marília, Ribeirão Preto, São José do Rio Preto and Sorocaba City Council TVs are included in this dynamic.

Although the article does not go deeper into this organization, it is at least necessary to visualize the reality in which municipal legislative communication finds itself in order to finally better understand what reaches the citizen, that is, what is produced by each broadcaster and shapes its program. Barros and Lemos (2019) had already observed, in a study on the Chamber of Deputies TV, that the legislative broadcaster worked its program schedule using four main strategies: live transmission of the legislative sessions; dissemination of political information through television news; debates and interviews; and historical, cultural, and documentary shows, always balanced between the expectations of the public, parliamentarians, and producers involved in a game of forces in which political visibility is one of the main cards on the table. In local reality, there is nothing very far from that. Thus, the production models found in the City Council TVs observed here were divided into three categories, shown in the table below:

**Chart 2 – Production models**

	<b>Live broadcasts from the plenary session</b>	<b>Live broadcasts of the plenary session and legislative content</b>	<b>Live broadcasts from the plenary session, legislative and non-legislative content</b>
<b>Cities</b>	Barretos Franca	Assis Jundiaí Mogi das Cruzes Ribeirão Preto	Bauru Botucatu Campinas Jacareí Jauú Marília Piracicaba São José do Rio Preto Sorocaba Tupã
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>

**Source:** VIEIRA, 2019.

The legislative broadcasters reason for existing is to enable greater transparency to the Legislative Branch and visibility to the parliamentary work, contributing, tangentially, to education for citizenship. At its core is the live broadcast of activities carried out in plenary, as already stipulated by the Cable Diffusion Law. In the interior of the São Paulo state, all City Council TVs fulfill this central role. However, most of them go beyond this primary obligation and produce legislative content (regarding the coverage of the Legislative House's routine, such as events, commissions work, parliamentary activities, institutional events, etc., either through fixed television news or not, in addition to any type of material that intends to bring and elucidate the legislative universe to the citizen or counts on the participation of parliamentarians) and even non-legislative content (matters without direct relation to what happens in the Legislative Branch, for example, general information about facts of the city, interview programs and debates without parliamentarians, documentaries and special reports, educational, cultural, or with diverse focuses, such as environment, rights, health, youth, inclusion, among others). Some TVs define their role well, for example, Jacareí City Council TV (TV Câmara Jacareí), which, according to its manager, claims to be based on the tripod of public utility, dissemination of parliamentary activities, and provision of services. On the other hand, other broadcasters are still restricted to live broadcasts from the plenary session, filling the rest of the schedule with ALESP retransmission or third-party material<sup>6</sup>. It is worth noting that the option to expand the

<sup>6</sup> It is important to emphasize the role of ASTRAL (Association of Legislative TVs and Radios) in bringing together and supporting local broadcasters. Through content sharing in the cloud, it enables the exchange of material between

performance to non-legislative content is not always linked to a larger production structure, as some of the City Council TVs with smaller staff produce this type of material, while other larger ones choose to focus only on broadcasts, which makes us infer that not only operational difficulties are involved in the issue, but also a lack of clarity on the purpose and potential of a legislative broadcaster.

### **Final Considerations**

Although they must fulfill the same functions – in particular, transparency and rendering of accounts of the parliament – as the already more consolidated Legislative TVs at the federal and state level, when we look closely at the structure and organization of their legislative "sisters" at the municipal level, we realize that they relate little to the major broadcasters. Unique characteristics generate situations that are also peculiar to this local environment: on the one hand, organizational difficulties are constant, for example, arising from a small staff or the challenge of producing full-time programs; on the other hand, there is a possible chance that the limitations provide a localized space for innovation, efficiency, creativity, plurality, and integration with the municipal reality, making the citizen closer to the entire legislative, television, and communication process. Which of these two aspects is predominant is a matter to be discussed in other studies.

The lack of knowledge about this differentiated scenario still generates certain risks. In the absence of regulations or greater attention to the sector, there is the possibility of discrepancies in addition to the healthy plurality between the federal, state, and municipal levels, which confuse the perception of the primary role of public communication played by legislative broadcasters and, even more serious, that involve barriers to the fulfillment of legal obligations. This is the case when more production or investments are demanded – a recent example being those resulting from requirements for accessibility resources – of local Legislative Branches that have much smaller budgets than Branches in other spheres.

The legislative communication that emerges and changes, along with an unprecedented and perhaps unexpected leading role in the local scenario, requires a more sensitive look at these broadcasters and their respective spaces of action, which may, after all, be responsible for a new paradigm for citizen legislative communication and for the expansion of society's access to the routine of federal, state, and municipal parliaments, not only in the interior of São Paulo state, but throughout the country.

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members and filling in the program schedule. Today, of the sixteen Municipal City Council TVs studied, ten are associated with ASTRAL.

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