

Public service broadcasting in the digital era: the future of the dual system

2010/2028(INI) - 28/09/2010

The Committee on Culture and Education adopted the own-initiative report drafted by Ivo BELET (EPP, BE) on public service broadcasting in the digital era: the future of the dual system.

Members reaffirm their **commitment to the dual broadcasting system**, in which private and public service media play their respective roles, independent of political and economic pressure, and call for access to broadcasting of the highest level to be ensured irrespective of consumers' and users' ability to pay. They reiterate the **need to maintain strong and vibrant independent public service broadcasting**, whilst adapting it to the requirements of the digital age, and calls for specific measures to be taken to attain this objective.

Member States are invited to:

- ensure that there are **sufficient resources** to enable public service broadcasters to take advantage of the new digital technologies and to secure the benefits of modern audiovisual services for the general public;
- **address the digital divide** – for example between urban and rural areas – and to ensure that, with digitisation, all individuals in all regions have equal access to public service broadcasting;
- consider the possibility of making it easier for consumers to **switch** from analogue to digital television;
- **define the remit of public service broadcasters** so that they can retain their distinctiveness through a commitment to original audiovisual production and high-quality programming and journalism regardless of commercial considerations or political influence, which is precisely what marks them out as distinctive; notes that these remits should be defined as precisely as possible, but with due regard for the broadcasters' programming autonomy;
- **intensify the cooperation** between national media regulators within the European Platform of Regulatory Authorities (EPRA) and step up the exchange of experience and best practice in relation to their respective national broadcasting systems.

Recalling the importance of the Council of Europe's recommendations and declarations, Members are reminded of their commitment to these European standards, and recommends that they provide appropriate, proportionate and stable funding for public service media so as to enable them to fulfil their remit, guarantee political and economic independence and contribute to an inclusive information and knowledge society with representative, high quality media available to all.

The report invites the Member States to **treat the problem of insufficient financing**. It recalls the financial instruments offered by the EIB, and encourages public service broadcasters facing financial difficulties to apply for a soft loan from the EIB for the renewal of their infrastructure, particularly in connection with digitisation and innovation.

Members encourage the various stakeholders to **intensify their cooperation with a view to safeguarding the dual system** and, in particular, encourage public service and private broadcasters to cooperate with one another and with publishers in relation to content-sharing and innovative projects and to find ways of working together.

The Commission is invited to:

- launch an **initiative bringing together different media actors** in order to help identify possible areas of cooperation, facilitate exchanges of best practice and address relevant issues;
- adapt **copyright** to the new digital era,
- ensure that **content aggregators** comply with the existing legal framework, and calls on it to consider ways in which search engines and internet service providers could contribute to the financing of content creation.