

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

2010/2028(INI) - 25/11/2010 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 522 votes to 22, with 62 abstentions, a resolution on public service broadcasting in the digital era: the future of the dual system.

Recalling the crucial role that broadcasting plays with regard to European audiovisual production, the resolution notes that the co-existence of public service and commercial broadcasters has ensured a diverse range of freely accessible programming, which benefits all EU citizens and contributes to media pluralism, cultural and linguistic diversity, editorial competition (in terms of content quality and diversity) and freedom of expression,

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 remits 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;
- maintain a **balance amongst the digital media services on offer**, to ensure fair competition between public service broadcasting and private media
- **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 commitments made in the context of the Council and Council of Europe, Parliament recommends that Member States **respect European standards** and provide appropriate, proportionate and stable funding for public service media. It calls on the Commission and the Member States to give the European Audiovisual Observatory a mandate to gather data and carry out research on the way in which the Member States have applied these standards. It urges that Member States be held accountable for failing to fulfil these commitments.

Parliament invites the Member States to **deal with 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:

- adapt copyright to the new digital era,
- 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;
- 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.

Lastly, Parliament underlines the importance of media education for the responsible use of services provided by content aggregators.