



## Book of Abstracts: [WG] European Public Broadcasting Policies

### **National broadcasting policy v European State aid control: the benefits of introducing competition principles into the regulation of public service broadcasting**

*Karen Donders* – Vrije Universiteit Brussel, · [kdonders@vub.ac.be](mailto:kdonders@vub.ac.be)

*Caroline Pauwels* – Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium · [cpauwels@vub.ac.be](mailto:cpauwels@vub.ac.be)

Since the 1990s, the European Commission controls Member States' funding of public broadcasters. In order to ensure compliance with the rules of the EC Treaty, Member States are sometimes asked to adapt their public broadcasting regulation. It is often feared that these adaptations, which seem to increasingly focus on public broadcasters' expansion to the Internet and have been consolidated in the European Commission's new guidelines on State aid to public service broadcasting (i.e. the so-called 2009 Broadcasting Communication), aim to marginalise public broadcasters' activities and as such undermine the western European full-portfolio public broadcasters. Can such a doom scenario indeed be observed, however? Is the European Commission affecting public broadcasting policy in such a negative way? In this paper, it is hypothesized, going against mainstream academic and political discourse, that State aid control has not marginalised public broadcasters. On the contrary, it fosters the ongoing transfer from public service broadcasting to public service media, triggers welcome reflections on what public service mission suits the digital era and at the same time renders stakeholders more accountable and responsive with regard to the functioning of public broadcasters. The evaluation of the impact of State aid control is based on six conditions that should be complied with in order to speak of a sustainable public service media policy. These conditions are: (1) cross-media (platform independence), (2) core (services are explicitly linked to core values and public service criteria), (3) cost (sustainable funding), (4) clarity (financial and organisational transparency), (5) control and command (a balanced system of controlling and enabling public broadcasters), and (6) checks and balances (regulation is consultation- and not conflict-based). This public service media framework is elaborated in the paper. The paper's argument is not that the European Commission itself pursues a regulatory regime that fits with the six conditions described above. The empirical analysis suggests that the dynamics of the negotiation process at the European level and the dynamics initiated by the commitments that Member States make to alter certain aspects of public broadcasting policy (at the national level), strengthen the transition from public service broadcasting to public service media. Especially for the core, control and command, and clarity conditions this is the case. The paper analyzes the German and Flemish case. Both cases are recent (with decisions issued in 2007 and 2008 respectively), focus on public broadcasters' new media activities and have been used to update the Commission's guidelines for State aid to public service broadcasting. Findings are based on a literature study of different perspectives on public broadcasters evolving into multimedia entrepreneurs, document analysis and an extensive set of expert interviews. The paper, firstly, briefly contextualizes the Commission's State aid control, devoting attention to the 2009 Broadcasting Communication. Secondly, the six conditions of the public service media framework are elaborated. After that the German and Flemish cases are discussed. The analysis touches upon the negotiations between the European Commission and Member State, the commitments made and the implementation thereof. Finally, some policy recommendations and conclusions are outlined.

### **Germany's Public Service Broadcasters going online – resulting competition effects and the question of the justification for Public Service Media online**

*Nadine Lindstädt* – University of Southern Denmark, Denmark · nad@sam.sdu.dk

Public service broadcasting (PSB) has been existent in most European countries for many decades. The origin of PSB lies in times where frequencies for broadcasting were scarce and a great risk of market failure was feared. Furthermore, broadcasting was regarded to be too important to be left to the market - due to its contribution to democratic, social and cultural goals. Since the 1980s Germany has a dual broadcasting system where public service broadcasters and commercial broadcasters exist side by side. However, the public service broadcasting system remained and still remains quite strong. Nevertheless, the initial reasoning for PSB has meanwhile lessened. In particular since the digitalization the risk of facing market failure has diminished which in turn questions actions of public intervention. With the emergence of the internet, public service broadcasters in Germany have gone online as well. Since the financing on the internet is carried out solely by license fees and due to the development of PSB's online programs, the commercial sector in Germany has addressed many complaints to the European Commission, arguing that the license fee represents an illegal state aid that distorts competition online. The question of public service broadcaster's presence online has concerned the European Commission as well as several Member States for many years now. The public service broadcasters have been accused of distorting competition online - an area that up to then seemed to have worked being left to the market. Consequently, the Commission has taken several actions on this topic and recently adopted a new Broadcasting Communication - replacing the Communication of 2001. For Germany, in particular, the up to now biggest case has just been laid down in 2007 - making Germany responsible to undertake various actions in order to be allowed to have public service media (PSM) online without violating the EC Treaty. The Twelfth Amendment of the Interstate Treaty on Broadcasting in Germany just came into effect in June 2009. Though the extension of public service broadcasters towards the internet is legitimized by the European Commission it seems appropriate to analyze if there is a true justification of having public service media online and if so to which extent. Most articles up to now mainly focus on either the economic viewpoints or the socio-political and cultural perspective. This article contributes to elaborate both - economic as well as socio-political arguments - and finally bringing these argument strings together. Thereby it is important to initially elaborate the different viewpoints separately in order to avoid a false mixture of arguments. In the public discussion oftentimes economic and socio-political arguments are mixed up. Hence, the presence of PSM online is quite often justified with market failure arguments, though the criteria for market failure do not seem fulfilled on the internet. It is not questioned that there may be certain arguments that legitimize PSM online. However, it has to be distinguished and clarified if the arguments result from an economic perspective or a socio-political one. Consequently, this also determines the advisable extent of public service media activities online.

### **Coping with Change: Organizational Responses of the Swiss Public Service Broadcaster to Technological and Financial Challenges**

*Manuel Puppis* – U of Zurich, Switzerland · m.puppis@ipmz.uzh.ch

*Matthias Künzler* – U of Zurich, Switzerland · m.kuenzler@ipmz.uzh.ch

Public service broadcasters (PSBs) throughout Europe are confronted with changing environments. This is true for the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation (SRG) as well. First, financial constraints intensify due to the economic downturn, the current crisis of the media and a skeptic (if not hostile) political environment. Advertising revenues collapsed and an increase of the license fee is unrealistic at best. Second, and connected to this unwillingness of providing an accurate funding, the SRG lacks legitimacy among politicians and citizens it supposedly serves. The PSB's existence or at least its entitlement to provide a broad range of programming is contested. Finally, technological convergence raises to question of whether the SRG needs to develop into a public service medium (PSM) in order to reach the public and thus fulfill its remit. These financial, socio-political and technological

challenges involve debates on the future of the SRG and the role it should have in society. However, while scholarly attention is devoted to the fundamental normative dimension (i.e. the necessity of PSM serving all citizens on a variety of platforms), the organizational changes taking place are often poorly understood. Only few studies focus on strategies and reorganizations of public service broadcasters. Additionally, the ways in which these organizational changes affect the inclusion of the public (as both citizens and audiences) mark a largely unexplored subject. In the present paper, we examine how the SRG changes its strategy and its organizational structure in response to environmental challenges and how this affects citizen participation. In particular, we focus on the SRG's reorganization projects called 'structural reform' and 'convergence and efficiency'. The first project aims at optimizing operations and at reforming the responsibilities of the SRG's parent organizations ('Trägerschaft') which represent the citizens. The second project involves a merger of the previously independent enterprise units for radio and television in each language region in order to respond to technological convergence. Based on a qualitative analysis of documents, we look at political parameters, the considerations of internal working groups as well as the implementation in different language regions. Preliminary results indicate that reorganization efforts were more strongly influenced by efficiency considerations than by an imperative of responding to technological convergence. Moreover, the parent organizations of SRG seem to lose at least some relevance, undermining the representation of citizens within the public service broadcaster.

#### **Social media interplaying and strengthening public service-media**

*Pernilla Severson* – MEDEA Collaborative Media Initiative, School of Arts and Communication, Malmö University, Sweden · pernilla.severson@mah.se

This paper is based on a study of how public service-media is a theme of conversation within social media. Main focus of study is a micro-blog tool called twitter (<http://twitter.com>). Following the Swedish twitter-sphere using lists and the search engines for twitter, I conduct a qualitative content analysis. Analytic thematic issues are: 1. The construction of public service-media as a twitter theme 2. Person-oriented vs institution-oriented; displayed intentions 3. Concluding of conversation; ending process and prospective 4. Underlying values in conversations, and implications for public service-media The analytical framework is based on theories on participatory culture and new media, where processes for knowledge and learning are central. One illuminating example is Henry Jenkins work on digital media and learning, summarizing well how research point to a new media logic characterized by: affiliations, expressions, collaborative problem-solving and flows of media. Main result of the study is that social media is meshed with institutional media, and that the interplay shows a strong support for public service-values. One case illustrating this is how the online service for broadcasted TV shows, SVT play (<http://svtplay.se>), starts a "twitter-appeal" concerning the hardware and software company Apple. The appeal was for Apple to allow an SVT play-application for iPhone, a smartphone with Internet browsing and networking capabilities. Concluding remarks in the paper deals with how this implicates importance of using social media for vitalizing public service-media's participatory ideal, guidelines for doing this and the risks of trying to institutionalize social media effort.

#### **Still struggling with PSB? Maybe South Africa should get rid of it.**

*Pieter Fourie* – University of South Africa, South Africa · fouripj@unisa.ac.za

South African public service broadcasting is in shambles. Has it ever been otherwise? Although it is now seventeen years after the official demise of apartheid, the euphoria after the adaptation of new broadcasting legislation between 1994 and 1999 is still fresh in the mind. It was then believed that the state broadcaster would be turned into a "true" public service broadcaster. It now (Jan 2010) seems as if proposed new legislation wants to turn the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) back into a state broadcaster. Many of the problems besieging the SABC are similar to those which have been experienced in European countries and which

may or may not have been resolved in Europe with its latest policy directives. However, whereas, funding, performance in terms of PSB principles, self-regulation and performance measurement are, as in Europe, core concerns in South African broadcasting, and whereas digitisation and the WEB 2.0 era has, as in Europe, created a new media landscape in which the public broadcaster has to find its place and in which PSB principles themselves need to be rethought, the overall problem in South Africa remains to be the autonomy and independence of the public broadcaster. Given the geopolitical history of the country and the continued struggle for freedom of expression in Africa, this is disturbing. After a brief summary of (i) the transformation of the SABC based on the Broadcasting Act of 1999 and the ideals which were then set for PSB in South Africa and (ii) the present problems besetting the SABC in terms of management, funding, and government interference, the publication of a highly controversial Public Service Broadcasting Bill in late 2009, will be critically outlined. Taking into account the broader and changed broadcasting landscape in South Africa and how the new converged and digitised landscape has affected broadcasting as well as the nature of the changed South African society, the paper then considers alternatives for PSB in South Africa, amongst which the demise of institutionalised PSB and the replacement thereof with “distributed” PSB. Distributed PSB will be explained as a genre spread on the basis of quotas and financial incentives over the range of the broadcasting system with the purpose of acknowledging the country’s diversity of official languages and cultures, as a mechanism for empowering citizenship and democratic participation, and as an agency towards better intercultural and interracial understanding.

#### **Self-regulation in response to media performance issues:**

*Yael de Haan* — University of Amsterdam, Netherlands · y.m.dehaan@uva.nl

In the past decade media and journalistic performance have come under severe criticism in many Western European democracies, the former as an institution with social responsibilities, the latter with regards to their professional attitude. Objections concerning the increasing power of the media in combination with discontent of the media’s role in contemporary democratic society has led to a steady decrease in trust between media, politics and the public (Schultz, 1998; ROB Council of Public Governance, 2003; von Krog, 2008). Although criticism of the media’s performance is not new, during the last decade the tone appears to be louder and the diversity of voices greater. Specific incidents, such as the alleged demonization by the media of the Dutch politician Pim Fortuyn, murdered in 2002, and the suicide of Dr. David Kelly in the UK in 2003 following a BBC-reporter’s claim that the Labour government had ‘sexed up’ the dossier on Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction have led to questions about the role of the media. In the Netherlands, the PSB was criticized in particular for not having discerned the insecurities within society, proclaimed by the politician Fortuyn. Both incidents triggered a debate about their responsibilities and how they can be held accountable or act with a higher degree of responsiveness, taking the wishes and concerns of the public into account (Brants & Bardoeel, 2008). Since then commissions have been appointed to give advice on the future role of the media (e.g in the Netherlands RMO, ROB 2003), new regulatory bodies were introduced (e.g Ofcom in Great-Britain), (self)regulatory measures for the media were stimulated and numerous debates at the political, media professional and academic level have taken place. This study offers a profound understanding on how media at institutional and professional level are dealing with the increasing criticism on their performance, through an in-depth case study of the news bulletin of the Dutch PSB, NOS Nieuws. Data gathering was done between August and October 2009 through a method of triangulation, using multiple sources of evidence, including document analysis, observations and 42 semi-structured interviews. Results indicate that the PSB has moved forward in terms of accountability and responsiveness, answering to performance and organization issues. Historically, like many other European public broadcasters the Dutch PSB has had to conform to regulatory measures being a government financed and instituted body. Instigated by the Fortuyn period, from 2002 onwards the news bulletin of the PSB has displayed an increase in the usage of self-regulating accountability measures to regain the trust of the public. Prompted by a top-down strategy there is acknowledgement at a professional level of the importance of accountability. Yet, the novelty of the instruments, the practical drawbacks and the organizational cultural change following this accountability policy are factors leading to reluctance among professionals to incorporate the accountability

instruments. At the same time, structural changes such as increasing competition and technological innovations have triggered this need for a greater focus on binding and interacting with the public in terms of responsiveness. Bibliography Brants, K. and J. Bardoel (2008). Death duties: a suicide, a murder, and their challenge to media governance. *European Journal of Communication* 23 (4), 471-489. Raad van Openbaar Bestuur, ROB. [Council of Public Governance] (2003). Politiek en media: pleidooi voor een LAT-relatie. Den Haag: Raad van Openbaar Bestuur. Raad voor Maatschappelijke Ontwikkelingen. [Council for Social Development] (2003). *Medialogica: over het krachtenveld tussen burgers, media en politiek* [Media logic and the forces between citizens, media and the politics]. Den Haag: Raad voor Maatschappelijke Ontwikkeling Schultz, J. (1998). *Reviving the Fourth Estate: Democracy, accountability and the media*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Von Krogh, T. (2008). Introduction: media accountability. A 60-year-old compromise that still holds promise for the future. In T. von Krogh (Eds.) *Media accountability today... and tomorrow: updating the concept in theory and practice*. (pp.1-12) Göteborg: Nordicom.

### **PUBLIC TELEVISION AND IDENTIFICATION: THE CASE OF FLEMISH CITIZENS WITH MOROCCAN AND TURKISH BACKGROUNDS Evidence from correlation research and family interviews in Flanders**

*Hatim El Sghiar* – Catholic University Leuven - CMC, Belgium · hatim.elsghiar@soc.kuleuven.be

*Leen d'Haenens* – Catholic University Leuven - CMC, Belgium · leen.dhaenens@soc.kuleuven.be

Since the 1960's, both European societies and the minority 'groups' within gradually diversified. Over the last 20 years, public broadcasters started, at least in their ambitious mission statements, to reach out to these citizens with so-called inclusive programming. The reality, however, both in terms of content and perceptions of minority audiences, shows that these initiatives are far from being successful. Against this general background, and looking into the Flemish reality as a case-in-point, this paper briefly sketches the achievements of the public broadcaster VRT in relation to the other broadcasters in Flanders, when it comes to representing Flanders' demographic and cultural diversity. Centrally, the results of our so-called emic family research are looked into. This entails both in-depth discussions with 25 families from Moroccan and Turkish origins in their family context and a field experiment with individual family members (N=102) assessing comprehension and recall after exposure to a VRT newscast in relation to different elements of social capital (trust etc.), identification and to their general media and news menus. Correlation analysis of individual assessments will thus be combined with family-grown deliberations of television output. Although all program genres will be taken into account, more emphasis will be put on the news genre, both in terms of public vs. commercial news output in Flanders and Flemish output alongside other (i.e. other western and non-western) news output. The functionality of the television output under study will be operationalised in terms of the different identification levels that television output in general and public television output in particular, with a special emphasis on news, generate in the family discussions. Following the Netherlands Scientific Research Council's threefold definition of functional, normative and emotional identification, attributions and references which have a bearing on these types of identification will be carefully scrutinized so as to evaluate the Flemish public broadcaster alongside and in competition with that of other TV channels that are occupying a substantial role in the media menus of these family members. In functional identification group boundaries (for example ethnic ones) are played down or neutralized (de-categorisation) in order to re-categorize on the basis of 'groups', which are functional for the realisation of certain goals (for example as employees, students, gamers...). (Self-)exclusion can obstruct these processes. Normative identification starts from the ability to apply one's own frames (beliefs, norms) and to find these accepted or articulated in public and political domains. Access to, representation in and influence on the articulation powers, which consist of meaningful arena's (politics, media ...) where norms are named, discussed and defended, are extremely important. Emotional identification is about feelings of connectedness, mostly in relation to Anderson's 'imagined communities'. (News) events, catastrophes, sports ... are often presented as a national matter, thus creating or adding to this emotive sense of belonging. Hence, these attributions, as a result of inter- and intragenerational deliberations within the family context will enable us to determine the overall



relevance of the Flemish public broadcaster, relative to and embedded in the broader media menu of these citizens under study.

### **Looking for Legitimacy Amidst Demands for New Performative Standards, Public Value Tests and Market Impact Assessments. The case of Flemish PSM VRT in an international context**

*Hilde Van den Bulck* – University of ANtwerp, Belgium · hilde.vandenbulck@ua.ac.be

Taking Flemish PSM VRT as a case in point, this paper aims to analysis contemporary debates regarding the legitimate position and remit for PSM amidst demands for new performative standards, Public Value Tests (PVT) and Market Impact Assessments (MIA). If we want to understand the state of public service media today, three intersecting developments demand our attention. First, the global financial downturn increases pressure on all spending, also across media. Second, as the internet has become ubiquitous in public life, traditional media and their business models are challenged. Third, these combine with the continued spreading of an audit culture, encouraged by the EU and demanding accountability and measurement of public sector spending to avoid market distortion. Seen in unison, these developments create a new situation for public service media. Flemish public service media institution VRT has been confronted with a management contract with the Flemish government since 1997, renewed every five years. At its core is an extensive list of performative benchmarks across all platforms based on viewing and appreciation figures. This has helped VRT gain a leading market position (after a period of crisis 1985 – 1995) and as recent as 2009 the VRT was shown (VRM, 2009) to reach and even excel these prescribed standards. Nevertheless, PSB is under fierce attack, questioning its existence and the justification of its output, even leading to the dismissal of its CEO in December 2009. The above-mentioned triple developments seem to put renewed pressure on the existing benchmarks and overall position of PSB. At the same time Flemish PSB finds itself maneuvering between government demands to take the lead in digital developments across all platforms and the search for an affordable public value test (PVT) and market impact assessment (MIA) of new services to curb its potential market distortion. The article is based on document analysis of debates in the parliamentary media committee, the media minister's policy statements, discussions in and the official advice of the Policy Advice Committee (composed of representatives of all major media stakeholders), reports and opinion pieces in the press, as well as interviews with relevant stakeholders (VRT, commercial media groups, cabinet workers...). These data are analysed looking for the main arguments in current discussions and hot issues with regards to PSM's future position and remit focusing on the next management contract, and the development of a PVT and MIA. These findings are all analysed against the backdrop of theoretical models regarding the future role of PSB as well as evolutions in other European countries dealing with similar issues.

### **Moving away from PSB 2.0? How the EU State Aid regime and the revised 2009 Communication on State Aid to PSB are impacting on PSBs expansion into online media in Europe.**

*Benedetta Brevini* – University of Westminster, United Kingdom · brevinb@westminster.ac.uk

The European Commission has confirmed the importance of allowing PSBs to expand online in the 2001 Communication on the application of state aids to public service broadcasters. However, the political climate in Brussels has gradually grown more diffident towards PSBs new media ventures .In 2003 for example, the BBC Digital Curriculum decision by the EC has clearly shifted towards a 'technology non-neutral approach' by demanding that new media services of PSBs would be "closely associated" with their traditional services such as radio and television. Moreover, it maintained that PSBs new media services should be "distinctive from and complementary to services provided by the commercial sector" (EC, 2003).Whereas in later decisions the EC has abounded the principle of "close association", its line remains consistent with a market failure and technology non-neutral approach. This line is evidently restated in the new revised Communication adopted on the 2nd of

July of 2009. More precisely, the new document requires stricter controls on PSBs' expansion in the new media, by imposing the burden of an "ex ante test". This paper sets out to analyze the impact of the European framework on PSBs online activities. After examining the most relevant State Aid Decisions, this study evaluates the impact of the 2009 Communication on PSBs online ventures by discussing the current policy debate taking place in Denmark regarding the new agreement for DR (the Danish PSB) as a case study. For the first time in Denmark, a market impact assessment on DR's online activities will be introduced, following the 2009 Communication. Eventually, the paper concludes that if PSBs in Europe have to fulfill the same social, cultural and democratic functions online (PSB 2.0), the EC should develop a more enabling and supportive framework rather than the restrictive one which has currently been delineated.

### **Chances and challenges of the German version of PVT: The case of ARD and ZDF**

*Barbara Thomass* – University of Bochum, Germany · barbara.thomass@rub.de

Following the complaints of commercial broadcasters within the frame of the EU competition laws and the conflict with the EU commission about the activities of public service broadcasting in the digital world, the German legislator found a compromise with a broadcasting law that defines the restrictions of German public broadcasters for their enhancement of the remit in the online world. Three-step-test is the name of the German version of the public value test, which demands to define the cultural, social and political needs of the society and how they are served by new media services. The public value test in general has two dimensions: it has a normative perspective looking for the public welfare served by communication media and it has an institutional perspective representing a legitimation strategy of the broadcasters. This contribution will look at the German version of the PVT and explain with the case of ARD and ZDF (the first and second public national TV channel) how these two dimensions are spelled out and are intertwined. Therefore the contribution will explain and explore the recent broadcasting legislation with respect to its provisions for public service broadcasting in the online world. It will demonstrate what sort online services ARD and ZDF offer, and how they are submit to the three step test. It will explain the strategies of the public broadcasters and explain how the controlling bodies interpret the cultural, social and democratic needs of the society for evaluating the new services. The contribution will give insight to very recent developments, as the three step test is at present ongoing. The author is member of the broadcasting council of the ZDF and takes part in assessing the ZDF online activities within the frame of the three step test.

### **Public Value, Paradigms and Politics**

*robert beveridge* – edinburgh napier universiry, United Kingdom · r.beveridge@napier.ac.uk

The establishment of the BBC Trust and the change in the terms of reference of the BBC constitutes a paradigm shift in the ways in which the Corporation is assessed and operates. The list of the BBC Public Purposes bears a similarity to the definitions of public service broadcasting as outlined in the UK regulator OFCOM's documents and analyses and so the scene has been set for a diminution of the BBC in size, scope and regulatory oversight. Meanwhile, a range of news providers such as nations and regions television, local newspapers, radio and community groups have been lamenting the collapsing business model for their content and seeking public support/funding for their work citing the requirement for competition, the need for pluralism and the democratic imperative. What this has led to is a series of proposals which seek to sustain provision other than the BBC but via contestable funding involving a number of funding options such as top slicing the television licence fee or direct subsidy or grants. In addition, the Scottish Government has proposed the creation of a Scottish Digital network while the regulator OFCOM seems to accept that it is unable to prevent ITV from becoming fully commercial rather than a PSB per se. This paper traces, examines and analyses the varied and various approaches with a view to establishing whether or not the best model for public value is that of a licence fee

underpinning an institution or whether or not direct contracts for news provision, for example, runs unacceptable risks of democratic legitimacy and may further damage public trust in news and news provision. By the time the conference takes place in Braga, the result of the UK general election will be known and the path a little clearer at least in terms of the Independently Funded News Consortia as proposed by the current UK Labour government and the paper will take account of these developments.

### **Public broadcasters in Spain and its regions: Trying Out New Forms of Adaptation to the digital landscape**

*Juan Miguel* – Universidad del Pais vasco, Spain · jc.miguel@ehu.es

Pressure from the private sector, both on a national and European level, as well as the EU stance on state aid for the media (CE, 2001 y 2009) is provoking major changes in the European state media (Coppens y Saeys, 2006). These changes are of vital importance, as they will define the public broadcasters' capacity to perform in the future market of digitalization and convergence with The Internet: that is to say, that the new framework will completely condition the possibility of adaptation in the future. Public broadcasting in Spain is special within the European context, since, as well as having a state media company on a national level (RTVE), there also exist 13 regional radio and television companies subsidised by the respective regions. These companies are independent of RTVE and have, in general, a solid structure. In fact, their total budget is quite a lot higher than that of RTVE (more than €2,000 million compared with €1,200 for RTVE and 8,500 workers compared with 6,000 for RTVE). Following the example of Sarkozy in France, the most recent step taken in this reform has been the new law on funding, which has eliminated publicity from RTVE. The loss of this revenue will be compensated by a 0.9% tax on telecommunication companies' revenue (€290 million), 3% and 1.5% tax on free channels and pay channels respectively (€140 million) and by 80% of the funds raised from taxes on the use of the radio-electric domain (€330 million). Added to this, there will be €500 million from the state budget which will make up 45% of the RTVE budget. This measure will mean, in theory, the possibility of €400 million revenue for the private television channels, this being the difference in revenue which RTVE will not now receive (€600 million) and the €190 million which the new law will collect from the private channels. This novel way of funding is being assessed by the European Commission and the results of this assessment will provide fundamental information for the establishment of the new model. Currently, state media must face the challenge of offering programmes with a marked public service character, as is compulsory with contract programmes, and they must continue to reach the vast majority of the society in a television ambiance which is more and more fragmented, as a result of the new digital channels and their ever-strengthening position on The Internet. In the case of state radio and television, the reform of the funding mechanisms has been carried out as a response to pressure from the private sector and without a profound reflection on the meaning of a public service television. In the case of the television channels in the Autonomies, some of them have adopted contract programmes for administrative purposes, but none of them have carried out a similar action with regard to their funding. Taking these factors into consideration and through the study of documents on strategy and the legislation the state radio and television channels, this article aims to analyse the adaptation by Spanish state radio and television channels to European directives and the new technological environment. References EC (2001). Communication from the Commission on the application of State aid rules to public service broadcasting. (2001/C 320/04). EC (2009). Communication from the Commission on the application of State aid rules to public service broadcasting. (2009/C 257/01). Coppens, T. and Saeys, F. (2006). Enforcing performance: new approaches to govern public service broadcasting. *Media, Culture and Society*, Vol. 28, No. 2, 261-284.



### **Media Accountability System and its features when applied to the Radio Ombudsman services of Brazilian Public Broadcaster**

*Fernando Paulino* – University of Brasília, Brazil · fopaulino@gmail.com

*Laurindo Leal Filho* – University of São Paulo, Brazil · laloleal@usp.br

*Luiz Silva* – University of Brasília, Brazil · silvalmd@unb.br

This paper goal is to analysis and provide parameters for Radio Ombudsman services, considering the experience of the Ombudsman at the Brazil Public Communications Organization (EBC), the group responsible for the public communication system prescribed in the 1988 Constitution. EBC is a public communication company engaged with the right to access information, the pluralism of opinion and Brazilian social and cultural diversity manifestation. The organization is composed by the new Public Communication TV (established in 2008), eight radio stations, a news agency and other services. It is managed with society control through an autonomous Board of Trustees. Its audience can rely on the Ombudsman service as a direct channel for criticism, reviews and complaints. The Ombudsman experience may be considered a MARS, Media Accountability System (BERTRAND, 2002), focused not only on journalism but music and entertainment. Its task is to assure that the broadcast content will follow principles established by federal law 11,652/2008. The authors accomplished a literature review and analyzed letters sent between January and December 2009. They find that the ombudsmen performance may be a MARS, since it provides visibility and transparency to errors, issues and dilemmas associated with the media functions. Thus it stimulates more credibility, prompt discussion with readers, listeners and viewers, and encourages a culture of greater accountability in the newsroom. Also, they came across with the fact that the EBC Ombudsman sought to be a mediation channel that provides visibility (SILVA, 2008) to matters raised up during a weekly program: “Radio on Debate”. The initiative can also increasingly promote an exercise of discipline and care on the part of public communication institutions and its professionals. From the review of ethical documents (Radiobrás Writing Manual and the Ethics Code of Brazilian Journalists) and the broadcasters editorial statements, the department has sought to point paths to Brazil Communications Organization radios (“Rádio Nacional do Rio de Janeiro”, “Nacional de Brasília AM”, “Nacional de Brasília FM”, “Nacional da Amazônia”, “Nacional do Alto Solimões”, “MEC AM”, “MEC FM” e “MEC Brasília”), considering audience demands through letters and during the broadcast interviews.

### **An Understanding of the Public Media and the Context of Political Culture**

*Inta Brikse* – PhD, Latvia · inta.brikse@lu.lv

The development of public service broadcasting (media) as a concept and an institution in the Eastern Europe and the Baltic States has proceeded in two different dimensions. First of all, there have been processes in Europe and the world which have had an effect on PSB in any country at all. These include digitalisation, the development of mobile technologies, fundamental changes in processes of public communications, shifts in the role of the public media, and problems in ensuring high quality in the information environment. The changes are seen both directly (i.e., via implementation of the EU’s Directives), and indirectly (presentation of overall European traditions). These aspects of the practices of the public media have been analysed and put to use in the experience of the public media (Bardoel, Haenens, Lowe, Moe, Jackubowicz, Gross, Nieminen, Nord). It is also true that the development of PSB in Eastern Europe and the Baltic States has been affected to a great degree by the political culture (Klingemann, Zielonka) of each individual society. This culture defines attitudes toward political systems and their components, as well as toward orientations vis-à-vis different social objects or processes. Thus it is that different experiences with political culture have had an effect on the different interpretations and implementations of overall European PSB traditions (Jakubowicz, Splichal, Gross, Balcytiene, Vihalemm, Lauristin, Dobek-Ostrowska, Richter). The interaction between these two dimensions leads to the emergence of contradictory discourses. On the one hand, it is declared that the *raison d’être* for the public media is to serve the public, while in fact the public are often distanced from any participation in the management and control of the media. On the other hand, it is also declared that the public media have

fundamentally important functions of information, education and culture which characterise the uniqueness of these media, but in fact these are hybrid constructs which cover public services, the provision of a mouthpiece for the public elite, a public battlefield, as well as various commercial elements (Jakubowicz, 2008). The aim of this study is to compare regulations and practices related to political influence and public participation in Eastern Europe and the Baltic States – media laws, management bodies, forms of public participation. The research will be based in part on a case study focused on the adoption of a new law on the electronic media in Latvia (content analysis of documents and media texts, as well as interviews and a survey). Narrowing the contradictions between these two discourses is of fundamental importance if there are to be rational public debates about the place and role of the public media. There must be new ideas as to the development of the public media in an environment which has changed so very much. For the public media, one of the greatest challenges in this environment is to establish new relations with the audience, shifting from paternalism to partnership.

**'Cooperation and partnerships in Public Service Broadcasting': regained legitimacy or business-model-utopia? Lessons from a geographic-comparative analysis**

*Tim Raats* – IBBT-SMIT, Belgium · traats@vub.ac.be

*Caroline Pauwels* – IBBT-SMIT, Belgium · caroline.pauwels@vub.ac.be

In recent years, Public Service Broadcasters have – in adapting their strategy to consolidate their position in the new media ecology – increasingly emphasized the importance of cooperation strategies and partnerships in broadcasting practice. Policymakers and academics in their turn have stressed the importance for broadcasters to integrate various forms of cooperation in their existing business model. From the establishment of shared digital content platforms or the joint distribution of broadband Internet, to the set-up of partnership initiatives with the public sector (especially with cultural institutions) or with independent producers, all of them reflect the call for 'cooperation' as core priority in PSB policy. With regard to these cooperating strategies, two tendencies are striking. Firstly, in acknowledging the need for 'cooperation' in their rhetoric, public broadcasters have propagated 'cooperation' as a new legitimizing argument, emphasizing their role as indispensable link in the production, distribution and consumption of cultural, or broader, public service, content. As stated by BBC Director-General Mark Thompson, "For the BBC, partnership is no longer a theory. It is a proven model – indeed it is now the default model for the BBC when any new large-scale issue or opportunity presents itself." (Thompson, 2008: 10). Secondly, in exploring the extent of their remit and integrating cooperation as a key feature of their business-model, public broadcasters have, albeit modestly, increasingly superseded their conventional confines, and have shifted away from the traditional conception of PSB as a stand-alone organization, a media 'monolith', towards an active player and an essential link in a complex network. The question at the core of this paper is whether these new cooperation strategies offer a viable model to sustain PSB's legitimacy, and if so, what the limits of this model are in practice. In order to explore and critically assess the described transitions, we build upon PSB's cultural remit. The cultural remit has proven to be an interesting case for research: not only has culture, in a true re-valuation of the traditional core remit, regained PSB's focus in recent years, it has also been a domain in which a large number of players are increasingly playing an active role as producers and distributors of content. The aim of this paper is threefold: first, we aim at theoretically framing the current emphasis on collaboration in PSB discourse by a contextualization of current discussions and academic stances. Second, building on new empirical evidence from a geographic-comparative case study analysis (UK, Flanders, Netherlands), we explore PSB practice by analyzing a series of partnerships and joint initiatives. And third, setting out from a series of in-depth interviews (to be conducted in February-March-April 2010), we discuss the challenges broadcasters will encounter when considering the cooperation model as a legitimate and viable one, thereby putting the apparent shared optimism among media professionals and academics in a critical perspective.

**Hybrid Television: Opportunities and challenges for Public Broadcasters to improve their service to the citizenship.**

*Roberto Suárez Candel* – Researcher - Hans Bredow Institute, Germany · r.suarez@hans-bredow-institut.de

The convergence between broadband and broadcasting (Hybrid Television) is happening right now. Equipment manufacturers are fully focused on this innovation and several receivers are already available at the retailers. From the point of view of broadcasters, especially those operating at the terrestrial platform, the possibility of having a broadband (return-)channel for supplying extra content and services related to their flow-channels or independent from them implies a great opportunity to enhance the value of their programming. In a context of increased competition due to the implementation of digital terrestrial television and economic crisis, where availability and access to funding resources have become major problems, such a technical convergence becomes an opportunity that should not be wasted. On the other hand, the connection of the main tv-set to the broadband becomes a very relevant threat, as it will end with the exclusive gatekeeper role that broadcasters had until now. In that sense, alliances between equipment manufacturers and content providers become a high risk for the position of terrestrial broadcasters. Concerning Public Service, this technical innovation brings new opportunities for improving the fulfilment of its remit as well as challenges concerning the boundaries of its activities. However, despite the debate and the possible controversy around this issue, ongoing experiences in the United Kingdom, Germany or Spain show that Public Broadcasters have already taken the initiative and they are developing interesting and successful services. In part, they are making profit of their previous online strategies, which were developed as a first reaction in front of the consolidation of the Internet as a platform for distributing audiovisual content. The decisions taken now to foster the deployment of the Hybrid Television are the following steps in their necessary conversion into multiplatform operators. This paper wants to contribute to the analysis of the current processes of redefinition and repositioning of Public Service Broadcasting in the multiplatform scenario. In order to do so, in first place, an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) that Hybrid Television implies for Public Service Broadcasters will be carried out. Following that, some of the most relevant experiences across Europe will be identified and described. Finally, based on the current state of the art, and with the aim of participating in the main debate topic of the working group, the opportunities for empowering the participation of the citizenship in the field of public service raised by the convergence between broadband and broadcast will be detected and discussed. This paper will include part of the first stage results of the post-doc research project “Redefining and repositioning public service broadcasting in the digital and multiplatform media scenario: agents and strategies – An international comparison within the European Union.”, which is funded by the EU’s Marie Curie Program [[www.psb-digital.eu](http://www.psb-digital.eu)].