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MC-S-PG(2010)004_report 1st meeting
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AD HOC ADVISORY GROUP ON PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA GOVERNANCE

(MC-S-PG)

**1st Meeting
27-28 May 2010
Agora Building
Room G 06**

MEETING REPORT

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Executive summary

During the meeting, the MC-S-PG:

- elected its Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson;
- examined its Terms of Reference;
- decided to prepare a report on the need for change in public service media (PSM) governance which would outline the internal and external governance factors that are necessary to improve PSM innovation, openness, independence and accountability;
- agreed that this report should be discussed at the Group's second meeting and eventually lead to a policy document on public service media governance.

The gender distribution of the 16 participants in the meeting was as follows: 11 men (70%) and 5 women (30%).

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. Mr Jan Malinowski, Head of the Media and Information Society Division opened the meeting. He welcomed the newly elected members and reminded them of the Consultation Meeting on Public Service Media Governance (Strasbourg, 17 to 18 September 2009) ([CDMC\(2009\)Misc4](#)). The Consultation Meeting had produced useful elements for the discussion on public service media governance and would be a good basis for the MC-S-PG's work.
2. The MC-S-PG adopted the draft agenda ([MC-S-PG\(2010\)OJ1](#)).

2. Elections

3. The members of the Group elected Mr Tim Suter as the Group's Chairperson and Ms Bissera Zankova as Vice-chairperson for a one-year term of office.

3. Information of interest to the work of the MC-S-PG

4. The Secretariat and Mr Thomas Schneider, Chairperson of the Committee of Experts on New Media (MC-NM), informed the Group about the outcome of the first two meetings of the MC-NM (Strasbourg, 29 to 30 September 2009; Strasbourg 25 to 26 March 2010; the meeting reports of the MC-NM can be consulted at http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/media/MC-NM/default_en.asp). The MC-NM is currently working on a policy document revising the notion of media to include not only broadcasting and the press, but also new means of mass communication which fulfil the functions of media. The MC-NM might submit a draft Recommendation on the new notion of media to the Steering Committee on Media and New Communication Services (CDMC) by the end of the year. In this case, the MC-S-PG should receive the draft for information.

4. The role of public service media in a democratic society

5. The MC-S-PG decided to consider under items 4 and 5 of the agenda the question of public service media governance as a means of ensuring PSM's relevance, sustainability and continuity (see agenda item 6).
6. After a presentation of the report prepared by the Secretariat on public service media governance (MC-S-PG(2010)003), the Chairperson invited the Group members to suggest broad lines of work for the Group having regard to the Group's Terms of Reference (MC-S-PG(2010)001).
7. The Group agreed that PSM's role in a democracy should not be limited to educating, informing and entertaining the public; greater emphasis should be put on fostering democracy, education, reflecting society, connecting with and empowering the audience to act and change society, enhance social cohesion and solidarity. Public service media have to embrace these new tasks, adapt to a society that is making more use of interaction and make full use of the technology that can provide these forms of enhanced interaction and participation.
8. The members concluded that the editorial independence of PSM, requiring in particular the absence of political interference or pressure and a sufficient level of financial security continues to be a priority; but it needs to be complemented by a change in PSM governance. Rigid, top-down organisations are unlikely to be sufficiently flexible, creative and forward-looking to fulfil PSM's new objectives. Many PSM organisations in Europe are in need of improved governance and management, and the Group considered that it would be important to explore what lessons can be learned from good governance and management practices which lead to successful and creative PSM.
9. It was suggested that a new understanding of PSM governance should include discussions on a possible scenario involving de-institutionalisation of PSM organisations – in other words, the impact on governance issues of an approach to delivering PSM objectives via other organisations in addition to, or in some instances instead of, the main PSM institution. It was agreed that this was an idea that might be further explored by the Group in the future. In the short term, the Group decided to concentrate on modality changes that would have to be applied to existing PSM organisations to allow them to develop the four key characteristics of a forward-looking PSM organisation that had been identified at the 2009 Consultation Meeting: **(a) innovation, (b) openness and responsiveness, (c) independence, (d) transparency and accountability**. The Group underlined the interdependence of these principles and decided to further define these aims.
10. '**Innovation**' includes exploiting new content ideas but also adapting the organisation's structure to be able to seize these opportunities. Management has to foster and provide the space for staff to create ideas. In addition, staff must have the willingness and flexibility to reach out to external sources, either partner organisations or the public; and the public has to be given the capacity and capability to create and interact. An innovative PSM organisation also needs to re-assess its objectives and goals regularly and check whether these goals were achieved and whether the right tools were used to achieve them.
11. Creating structures for public engagement is also a key pre-requisite for **openness and responsiveness**. A high quality flow of communication has to be nurtured both within the PSM organisation and with other stakeholders. Audience research is one tool to use the public's opinion to improve PSM quality and relevance. It might even be appropriate to open up PSM

organisations to allow the public to take part in content policy decisions. Adaptability is therefore an important corollary to openness and responsiveness.

12. **Independence** was considered both a pre-requisite as well as a desired result of all three other characteristics. Editorial independence and an independent supervisory structure should give PSM organisations the freedom to innovate and reach out within the framework established by their remit. An equally important element of independence is editorial pluralism, i.e., allowing for a diverse internal plurality of views.
13. The Group spent some time considering **accountability** and **transparency**. Ensuring that the staff is well-trained and has integrated the organisation's values, that it can agree on and set its own standards could be a more flexible and efficient way of ensuring quality rather than strict external evaluation regimes. The group agreed that ethics, self-regulation and/or co-regulation are central in this context. More information would have to be gathered on how much control can and should be exercised by managers themselves and at which point external supervision should start.

5. Modalities for public delivery to the widest possible public, including young audiences, of trustworthy, diverse and pluralistic media and media-like services

14. The MC-S-PG also considered ways of how PSM's organisational structure and management could be improved to meet the aims of innovation, openness and responsiveness, independence, and transparency and accountability. The members agreed that inadequate management and rigid, outdated organisational structures often get in the way of responsive, creative and innovative PSM. Continual change in both management and staff needs to be avoided to ensure independence and efficiency. Avoiding a top-down structure and involving staff, especially those close to the audience, in structural decision making could not only lead to staff being more engaged, but can also make the whole organisation more responsive to the needs of the public. There might be a need to organise content and allocate budget not vertically, by sector, but horizontally, by theme or objective.
15. New ways of involving the audience could include crowd sourcing for ideas and content, and networks between producers and wider communities of interest. Several members underlined that opening up the organisation to reach out to the audience and other partners would have to be accompanied with teaching staff new skills, including how to involve audiences, how to filter or edit content received from the public, how to negotiate with external partners and contributors, and how to aggregate content and network.
16. The Group agreed to prepare a report which should eventually become the basis of a standard setting policy document on public service media governance. The report should first explain the need to change PSM governance, outlining changes in audience expectation and communication technology and the need to create a media that provides the public with different platforms for many different kinds of services. This will be followed by a definition of the term 'governance' (the wider relationships that allow organisations to take well informed decisions).
17. The report will then concentrate on internal and external governance changes that are necessary for PSM organisations to meet their main objectives – (a) innovation, (b) openness and responsiveness, (c) independence, (d) transparency and accountability. External factors relate mainly to state action and legal and policy frameworks which need to be changed to give PSM organisations the freedom to be innovative, responsive and accountable. Work on internal factors should concentrate on proposals for PSM on how they could improve their

organisational and management procedures (structure, working methods, recruitment procedures, etc) to meet these goals.

18. Ms Andra Leurdijk and Mr Christian Nissen will work on the chapter on innovation; Ms Lizzie Jackson on the chapter on openness; Mr Pascal Albrechtskirchinger on the chapter on independence; and Mr Nuno Conde and Mr Ewan King are in charge on the chapter on accountability and transparency. Tim Suter and Bissera Zankova will ensure the overall coherence of the report.
19. It was agreed that the Secretariat will propose a first synopsis based on the agreed structure within two weeks of the meeting. Each member will then work on their assigned chapter, also identifying possible additional research needs. These first draft chapters should be submitted to the Secretariat by 31 July. The Secretariat will then finalise the draft report by end of September at the latest.
20. It was agreed that the Secretariat will set up a shared workspace for the Group to share information and develop draft texts.

6. Governance approaches that could contribute to fulfilling public service media's remit

21. This issue was considered as part of the discussions under item 4 and 5.

7. Results-oriented alternative public expenditure approaches for media and media-like Services

22. The Group decided to postpone discussions on this topic until its next meeting.

8. Other business

23. The Group will hold its second meeting between the end of October and the first weeks of November. They will decide on the exact dates by e-mail.

Appendix I

AD HOC ADVISORY GROUP ON PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA GOVERNANCE

(MC-S-PG)

Strasbourg-Agora G.06
27–28 May 2010

List of participants

I- MEMBERS

1. **Pascal Albrechtskirchinger**
ZDF, European Affairs Office (D)
2. **Nuno Conde**
State Department for Media Policy (Portugal)
3. **Lizzie Jackson**
Deputy Head of the Faculty of Communicatins Media,
Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication (UK)
4. **Karol Jakubowicz, (*Apologised*)**
Intergovernmental Council, Information for All Programme (UNESCO), former Director,
Strategy and Analysis Department, the National Broadcasting Council of Poland (Poland)
5. **Ewan King**
Director of Research, Office for Public Management (UK)
6. **Andra Leurdijk**
TNO Information and Communication Technology (NL)
7. **Christian S. Nissen**
Independent advisor on media and management (DK)
8. **Tim Suter**
Managing Director, Perspective Associates Limited (UK)
9. **Bissera Zankova**
Ministry of Transport, IT and Communications (BG)

II – REPRESENTATIVES OF MEMBER STATES

10. **Garegin Chugaszyan**
Executive Director, IT Foundation, Yerevan (ARM)
11. **Thomas Schneider**
OFCOM, (CH)
12. **Vera Beutler**
OFCOM, (CH)
13. **Lia Chakhunashvili**
Board Trustees, Georgian Public Broadcasting

III – PARTICIPANTS

14. **European Audiovisual Observatory**
Wolfgang Closs (*Apologised*)

IV – OTHER PARTICIPANTS

15. **European Commission**
Pierre-Yves Andrau (*Apologised*)
Emmanuel Joly
16. **Article 19**
Mr Boyko Boev (*Apologised*)

V – OBSERVERS

17. **Association of Commercial Television in Europe (ACT)**
Ross Biggam (*Apologised*)
Maxim Hauk
18. **European Association for the Viewers Interests (EAVI)**
Paolo Celot (*Apologised*)
Fabio Bauer
19. **European Broadcasting Union (EBU)**
Michael Wagner
20. **European Newspaper Publishers' Association (ENPA)**
Ben Carlin (*Apologised*)

IV - SECRETARIAT

21. **Jan Malinowski**
Head of Media and Information Society Division, Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs of the Council of Europe
22. **Anita Van de Kar**
Administrator, Media and Information Society Division, Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs
23. **Franziska Klopfer**
Media and Information Society Division, Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs
24. **Elvana Thaci**
Administrator, Media and Information Society Division, Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs
25. **Michal Glowacki**
Media and Information Society Division, Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs