

EBU

OPERATING EUROVISION AND EURORADIO

VIEWPOINT
**PARTNERSHIP
PROGRAMME**

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THE ISSUE

The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) provides professional and operational services for its Members – 74 national broadcasters in 56 countries throughout Europe, in North Africa and the Middle East. In doing so, the EBU is committed to fostering freedom of expression and information, enhancing pluralism of the media, developing cultural diversity and reinforcing social cohesion¹.

The EBU has a track record of providing advocacy, technical assistance and advice on the institutional reform of public service media (PSM). Notably, it helped transform the state broadcasters of the former Soviet bloc, which joined the EBU in 1993, from servants of a ruling party to broadcasters serving citizens in all their diversity.

Close cooperation with the EBU and its Members, as well as advocacy at government level for better media laws, enabled these broadcasters to progress towards independence and true public service in accordance with the highest European standards.

Yet setting broadcasters on a track to sustainability and independence is a long-term, demanding and delicate task; one that – especially in fledgling democracies – can be diverted or even reversed, for example, by a simple change of government or failure to enact good legislation.

In recognition that some Members had faltered on the path to independence or faced other, technical, structural, or managerial difficulties, the EBU launched its Partnership Programme² in 2009, underpinned by its experience and the prime principle of solidarity between Members.

The European Union (EU) did not take long to recognize the EBU's expertise. The Partnership Programme was acknowledged as a genuine tool to strengthen PSM in countries aspiring to join the EU and promote freedom of expression and the media, as well as stability and democracy. In July 2012, the EU signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the EBU to pursue these shared objectives.

Under this MoU, the EBU is rolling out a range of tailored activities to strengthen the independence, sustainability and contribution its Members make to democratic discourse in EU accession countries. Initiatives include training on public service news and investigative journalism, strategic consultancy, political intervention, and action to preserve priceless audiovisual archives.

In seeking to promote the interests of public service media (PSM) and its indispensable contribution to European society, the EBU offers its Members a range of services across the domains of broadcast technology and innovation, advocacy, training, research and European media law.

We are proud to have implemented the Partnership Programme, which fully mobilizes EBU expertise and is underpinned by the principle that "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

The Memorandum of Understanding signed with the European Union not only gives increased impetus to our activities; crucially, it recognizes PSM as an integral part of a solid democracy and a pillar of freedom of expression and media pluralism.



Ingrid Deltenre
EBU Director General

KEY MESSAGES

1. BUILDING SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA

Independent and adequately-funded PSM provide essential services to citizens: objective and reliable information, life-long learning, access to culture, and quality entertainment. They foster national debate by supporting diversity, promoting human rights and freedom of expression; give attention to minorities, encourage inclusiveness, help preserve cultural heritage, innovate, and invest in the creative industries.

The EBU Partnership Programme provides extra help to EBU Members on request, to develop and strengthen these crucial characteristics.

2. COMPREHENSIVE AND TAILORED ACTION PLANS TO ATTAIN PSM VALUES

The *EBU Declaration on the Core Values of Public Service Media* includes the principles of universality, independence, excellence, diversity, accountability and innovation. EBU Members strive to exemplify these values in their everyday actions to meet the democratic, cultural and social expectations of modern democracies.

Each country however has a unique economic and social context and history. There can be no one-size-fits-all solution to building independent and sustainable PSM. So the EBU Partnership Programme adopts a tailor-made approach to every request for help.

3. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND SOLIDARITY: THE KEY TO SUCCESS

The EBU Partnership Programme leverages peer pressure and solidarity at several levels. Building networks between professionals and the European PSM community provides an opportunity to learn from each other's best practice.

At international level, the partnership between the EU and the EBU sets in stone a shared commitment to media independence and freedom of expression. Alliances with other international organizations, including UNDP, OSCE, the Council of Europe, and NGOs, maximize outreach and impact in EU Member States, accession countries, and beyond.



¹ cf. Article one of the EBU statutes.

² Known as the Special Assistance Project until June 2012

1. BUILDING SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA

Cornerstones of democracy

Public service media exist to serve the public, not a particular political party or government. This implies independent and pluralistic programming, which facilitates the wide-ranging national conversation essential for a well-informed democracy to function.

PSM fulfil their role by reflecting and highlighting the social and cultural diversity of the society they serve, thereby advancing pluralism, inclusiveness and tolerance.

Support in line with PSM values

Universality, independence, excellence, diversity, innovation and accountability: the *EBU Declaration on the Core Values of Public Service Media* provides a set of guiding principles for Partnership Programme activities and a set of goals for the broadcasters it supports.

The Partnership Programme works to strengthen Members with limited financial resources by providing support in line with these values and with the EBU's over-arching principle of solidarity.

Meeting European standards for public service media

The EBU Partnership Programme supports the ambitions of broadcasters to increase their autonomy and efficiency and improve their infrastructure in the digital age. Reaching the highest European standards for PSM requires:

- adequate and stable funding
- good governance to ensure independence from political influence
- human and technical resources for the information society
- presence on relevant platforms, including digital terrestrial, radio, mobile and online
- serving all levels of society, including minorities; contributing to inclusion, democratization, cultural enrichment, innovation and economic development
- being the trusted and first-choice provider of independent information, encouraging debate and discussion among citizens

At a time of growing media fragmentation, PSM are still a trusted source of content in most European countries. This is why it continues to enjoy a stable and respectable audience share: on average, 28% for TV³ and 35.7% for radio⁴. Online multimedia run by PSM, which represents the state of the art in many European countries, meanwhile helps to reach and interact with wider audiences.

Resolution of the European Parliament on the Review of the Neighbourhood Policy, 14 December 2011

"Free and independent public media always play a crucial role in deepening democracy, in maximizing the involvement of civil society in public affairs and in empowering citizens on the path to democracy."

2. COMPREHENSIVE AND TAILORED ACTION PLANS TO ATTAIN PSM VALUES

Freedom of expression

Partnership Programme activities are intended to strengthen freedom of expression and the media. Sustainable and independent PSM operating within robust regulatory and financial frameworks bring balanced and objective information to society, and foster national debate.

Partnership Programme activities must therefore comprehensively address the needs of eligible Members and be tailored to the specific historical, economic and social contexts of the countries concerned.

Advocating change

Partnership Programme advocacy supports the enactment of enabling legislative and regulatory environments, and the attainment of institutional sustainability through financial autonomy, public accountability and editorial independence.

Training and technical support for capacity building

Achieving sustainable results in reforming media is a complex, challenging and lengthy process.

Inversely, ground gained towards successful reform can be lost in a matter of months.

Targeted assistance enables broadcasters to build their own internal capacity for independence and long-term sustainability. Specifically, the Partnership Programme offers strategic support; editorial training and technical advice; infrastructure modernization; help with digitization of production, transmission and archives for preservation; advice on investigative journalism; peer learning; and change management.

Election coverage assistance

During the 2011 elections in Tunisia, the EBU coordinated a major intervention with other Members to provide editorial and operational support for the Tunisian national broadcaster in covering the national elections. Together with BBC Media Action and the Deutsche Welle Akademie, the EBU also trained journalists and provided technical help for the major national broadcaster in Libya for its coverage of the country's elections in July 2012.

High-level intervention

EBU interventions on behalf of PSM include high-level meetings with governments, parliaments and regulatory bodies. For example, a mission to Moldova in spring 2010 secured the full support of the prime minister for implementation by public broadcaster TRM of a strategic plan to strengthen editorial independence which was developed with EBU expertise through the Partnership Programme.

Recent achievements

- During its start-up phase, the Partnership Programme provided eligible Members with up to 700 hours of high-quality European programming donated by fellow EBU Members, along with strategic consultancy and seminars on management, digital archiving, and news production.
- In the first five months of 2013, the Programme held tailored national workshops on public service news in all seven EU accession countries in the Balkans.
- In a contribution to saving endangered audiovisual archives, the Partnership Programme is supporting an initiative of the French Audiovisual Institute INA to catalogue and, when possible, digitize the archives of several EBU Balkan Members.

³ Source: EBU based on MAVISE / European Audiovisual Observatory and Eurodata TV Worldwide Data, 2011
Note: Based on 25 countries; excludes Malta and Luxembourg as they have no audience measurement system.

⁴ Source: based on data from EBU Members, 2011
Note: Based on 23 countries; no data available for Cyprus, Malta, Luxembourg and Slovenia.

3. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND SOLIDARITY: THE KEY TO SUCCESS

Win-win partnership

On 24 July 2012, the EBU and the EU signed a **Memorandum of Understanding** aimed at strengthening PSM in countries preparing to join the EU. Both organizations share a conviction that freedom of expression can only be guaranteed through continuous efforts by the EU and the so-called Enlargement and Neighbourhood countries to support PSM.

Since the MoU was signed, the Partnership Programme has carried out activities in seven EU accession countries: Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia.

Driving change across Europe and beyond

Alongside work in the EU accession countries, the Partnership Programme has continued to support other Members eligible for special assistance. In 2012-13, it organized and financed or co-financed training or consultancy activities in various sectors at the request of Members in Algeria, Armenia, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Georgia, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania, Tunisia, and Ukraine.

Strengthening cooperation

"The EU enlargement process is about assisting the aspirant countries with their transformation and reaching European standards in all areas of life. For the challenging task of helping public broadcasters with the reform, we have an important ally with the necessary expertise and experience, the EBU, with whom we share the same goals of promoting freedom of expression and public service media."

Stefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement

"The EBU is extremely pleased that the European Commission has recognized our work across Europe in supporting broadcasting reform, training and capacity-building for journalists and media professionals. We look forward to the challenge, and to strengthening cooperation in other EU neighbouring countries over the years to come."

Jean-Paul Philippot, EBU President

Sponsored training

In March 2013, the Partnership Programme sponsored training in Warsaw for journalists working for the Poland-based international satellite channel Belsat, which broadcasts independently from government into Belarus in Belarusian and Russian.



Media Development

The Partnership Programme coordinates an EBU Media Development Network including Deutsche Welle, Canal France International/France Télévisions, BBC Media Action and other Members that are particularly active in the media development field.

PSM and society

In March 2013, the Partnership Programme held a regional conference entitled *Public Service Media and the Citizen* in the Montenegrin capital of Podgorica. It concluded that PSM should encourage the founding of associations of viewers, listeners and web users to promote dialogue.

Bringing PSM expertise in from across Europe

The EBU has a tradition of solidarity and can rely on collaboration between Members as well as individual experts. The EBU draws on its community to ensure the best possible outcome with regard to quality, cost efficiency and sustainable results. This approach facilitates cross-learning and fosters a spirit of positive peer pressure.

Involving civil society

The EBU supports the activities of civil societies, which is crucial for building support for reform and fostering public confidence in the media.

Building alliances with international organizations

The EBU builds alliances with influential organizations sympathetic to the cause of PSM in a bid to provide strategic support, editorial training, technical advice and access to programmes.

The EBU works in partnership with:

- peer organizations, such as the Arab States Broadcasting Union and COPEAM (the Permanent Conference of the Mediterranean Audiovisual Operators)
- intergovernmental organizations, including UNESCO, UNDP, ITU, OSCE, and the Council of Europe
- specialized NGOs, such as the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and the International News Safety Institute



European Union entrusts the EBU with strengthening public broadcasting in EU accession countries, Brussels, 24 July, 2012 (EU Commission: EBU President Jean-Paul Philippot (on the left) and Commissioner Stefan Füle)

ABOUT THE EUROPEAN BROADCASTING UNION (EBU)

DID YOU KNOW?

The EBU is a not-for-profit alliance of public service media entities. Its purpose is to pursue goals that are in the common interest of public broadcasters.

The EBU embodies and enacts a code of solidarity in accordance with the principle that *the whole is greater than the sum of its parts*.

To this end, the EBU assists and represents its Members, collectively and individually, in various service areas.

Active Members determine their own level of participation in available EBU services and in the various committees and assemblies where knowledge and best practices are shared. Equally, Members decide whether to put themselves forward for roles in the governing bodies.

The EBU facilitated the regional EuroMed-News project, a remarkably effective exchange of news, current affairs reports and documentaries in cooperation with the Arab States Broadcasting Union (www.euromed-news.org).

MedMem is an EBU-led regional project that gives access to digitized archive material to people in the region and beyond (www.medmem.eu).

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