

Council of the European Union: Resolution on Public Service Broadcasting

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On 25 January 1999 the Council of the European Union and the representatives of the governments of the member states of the European Union adopted a resolution concerning public service broadcasting. It emphasises the vital significance of public service broadcasting for safeguarding democracy, pluralism, social cohesion, and cultural and linguistic diversity while recognising that the increased diversification of the programmes on offer underlines the importance of the comprehensive mission of public service broadcasters. The resolution includes a reaffirmation that the Treaty establishing the European Community shall not hinder the competence of Member States to provide for the funding of public service broadcasting on the conditions that such funding is (a) granted to broadcasting organisations for the fulfilment of the public service mission as conferred, defined and organised by each Member State, and (b) does not affect trading conditions and competition in the Community to an extent which would be contrary to the common interest. Furthermore it is noted in the resolution that the fulfilment of the public service broadcasting's mission must continue to benefit from technological progress; that broad public access to various channels and services, without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunities, is a necessary precondition for fulfilling the special obligation of public service broadcasting; and that public service broadcasting has an important role in bringing to the public the benefits of the new audiovisual and information services and the new technologies. It is also reaffirmed that the ability of public service broadcasting to offer quality programming and services to the public must be maintained and enhanced. This includes the development and diversification of activities in the digital age. Public service broadcasting must be able to continue to provide a wide range of programming in accordance with its remit as defined by the Member States in order to address society as a whole. In this context public service broadcasters may legitimately try to reach wide audiences.

Council Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 25 January 1999 concerning public service broadcasting (Official Journal of the European Communities 1999/C 30/01)

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