[FR] The CSA Sanctions Eight Radio Stations for Failure to Comply with the Quota for French-Language Songs

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Amélie Blocman
Légipresse

Having noted that in February, as had been the case for some months, eight radio stations broadcasting nationally (NRJ, Fun, Europe 2, Vibration, Vitamine, Top Music, Oui FM and Contact FM) had not complied with the quota of 40 % of songs broadcast being in French as required by the Act of 1 February 1994, the CSA served notice on them. This is an essential preliminary to being able to implement its powers of sanction.

The operators strongly contest this requirement which imposes an obligation on all radio stations that 40 % of the songs they broadcast between 6.30 am and 10.30 pm must be in French, with at least half of them being by new talent or new productions. It is true that current legislation takes no account of the growing specialisation of radio formats and does not now appear to be suited to a diversified radio scene. In view of this, and because of the growing number of sanctions issued by the CSA in this respect, the Minister for Culture and Communication has asked the CSA to draw up a report on application of the Act. In the light of this study, the CSA considers it would be desirable to improve the present text by permitting a modulation of quotas and by giving priority to the promotion of new talent. Thus the CSA would like to be able to offer three alternatives to radio stations (option A: the present quotas; option B: 50 % of songs in French and 15 % new talent, basically more suited to formats aimed at adults; option C: 30 % of songs in French in the original and 25 % new talent, more suited to formats aimed at young people). The stations would then be free to choose which option suited them best.

The bill to reform the audiovisual area adopted by the Conseil des Ministres on 21 April makes no reference to quotas for songs in French on the radio; in its opinion on the bill, the CSA could do no more than «regret that none of the methods providing for greater flexibility which it had proposed had been included».

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