[BE] New Executive Agreement 2002-2006 between VRT and Flemish Government

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After long and difficult negotiations between the public broadcasting organisation VRT and the Flemish Government, a new agreement has been reached on the specific rules and conditions for the allocation of public finances to the VRT. According to Articles 15-17 of the Flemish Broadcasting Act, such an agreement between the VRT and the Flemish Government is necessary for each new period of five years. The new executive agreement will replace the agreement for 1997-2001.

The agreement emphasises the "mission statement" of the VRT, as formulated in the Flemish Broadcasting Act (Article 8), with explicit reference to the Resolutions of Prague (1994) and Cracow (2000) on the role of public broadcasting in a democratic society. The VRT has to provide a reference point for all members of the public and be a vector for social cohesion and the integration of all individuals by being attentive to the needs of minority groups and developing pluralistic, innovative and varied programming which meets high quality standards. Quality is defined as "public quality", "functional quality", "ethical quality", "operational quality" and "professional quality". Concrete objectives and options have been formulated, in particular, for news and information programmes (an average of 1.5 million viewers per day) and cultural programmes. Special efforts will have to be undertaken with regard to educational programmes (an average audience of 10% of population) and childrens' programmes (i.e., for 4-12 year-olds: an average audience of 70%). From 18:00h until 23:00h, at least 50% of the programmes shall be Flemish TV-productions (or co-productions). The six radio stations of the VRT should reach 65% of the audience on a weekly basis.

The agreement also contains important innovative options with regard to new technologies: digitalisation, e-services and e-platforms are to be developed within the framework of an Application Service Provider (ASP) model. These projects of the "E-VRT " will be financed separately by the Flemish Government, according to a specific agreement with the VRT. The accelerated digitalisation and annotation of the VRT-archive of sound and images will also depend on additional financing by the Flemish Government. Other chapters of the agreement deal with the optimalisation of the transmission infrastructure, the development of DAB and DVBT, the exploitation of rest capacity of transmission networks, process management and informatisation of working processes and information flows

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(Enterprise Resources Planning - ERP) and Human Resources Management (training, remuneration, evaluation, function classification, consumer orientation).

The public funding that the VRT will receive for the implementation of the agreement for 2002-2006 will be EURO 229,326,000 in 2002, increasing by 4% each year up to EURO 268,279,000 in 2006. The agreement will enter into force on 1 January 2002.

Beheersovereenkomst tussen de VRT en de Vlaamse Gemeenschap 2002-2006, 7 June 2001

Executive Agreement between the VRT and the Flemish Community 2002-2006, 7 June 2001

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