[FR] CSA Wants Arrangements that better Reflect the Diversity of Origins and Cultures on Public Television

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On 26 April the Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel (audiovisual regulatory authority CSA) and the Haut Conseil à l'intégration (council for integration HCI) organised a special day entitled "Pale screens?" devoted to considering the representation on television of the diversity of the origins and cultures that make up the national community. Dominique Baudis, Chairman of the CSA, took the opportunity to reaffirm his determination to act in favour of better representativeness of French diversity on television.

Mr Baudis said that, although the channels had reflected diversity better over the last few years, there was still some way to go before the gap between the reality of the diversity of French society and its representation on television was finally bridged. Moreover, although both the private channels and the public-sector channels are in principle required in accordance with the provisions of their agreements and terms of reference to reflect the diversity of the French population, their obligations in this respect are not the same on this point; more specifically, they differ in the drafting and in the terms used. Thus in 2001 the CSA negotiated with the private channels TF1, M6 and Canal+ an amendment of their agreements in order to introduce specific provisions with clear objectives. These channels are required to "promote the values of integration and solidarity that are those of the French Republic" and "take into account in the representation on the television screen the diversity of the origins and cultures of the French community". These provisions are extended to all the cable and satellite channels and future terrestrially-broadcast digital channels. However, the provisions for public-sector television are nowhere near as specific. Unlike the private channels, there is no specific obligation in respect of the diversity of origins and cultures of the people shown on television. Nevertheless, since the Decree of 24 February is intended to reinforce the terms of reference of France 2 and France 3 in this field, the two public-sector channels are required to ensure the promotion of the different cultures that form French society without discrimination of any kind. France 5, for its part, must ensure "exchanges between the various sectors of the population" and broadcast programmes concerning "the inclusion of foreigners", but there are no specific provisions concerning the representativeness of French diversity on television. The public-sector channels therefore still have to make an effort in this regard. Thus at its colloquy the CSA stated its desire to see the rules applicable to the public-sector channels brought into line with those of the private channels. A few days later,

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the CSA delivered its opinion on a bill amending the terms of reference of the national programme companies, more particularly in order to illustrate the consequences of the disappearance of the statutory monopoly of the company TéléDiffusion de France in terms of the regulations. In its opinion it pointed out that this change could provide an opportunity for including, in the national programme companies' terms of reference, provisions intended to provide a better reflection of the diversity of origins and cultures of contemporary French society in their programming. "Thus it would be desirable for broadcasts to ensure effective representation of the various components of the French community." It remains to be seen if the regulatory authorities will take note of this opinion.

Avis n° 2004-2 du 4 mai 2004 sur le projet de décret portant modification des cahiers des missions et des charges des sociétés nationales de programme Radio France internationale, Radio France, Réseau France outre-mer, France 2, France 3 et France 5, J.O. du 18 mai 2004, page 8813

http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/

Opinion no. 2004-2 of 4 May 2004 on the draft decree amending the terms of reference of the national programme companies Radio France Internationale, Radio France, the French overseas network, France 2, France 3 and France 5, published in the Journal Officiel of 18 May 2004 (page 8813)

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