[FR] Commission for the New Public Service Television Finalises its Report

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On Wednesday, 18 June 2008, the Member of Parliament Jean-François Copé, after a final meeting of the Commission for the New Public Service Television of which he is chairman, revealed the recommendations that will be made to the French President on 25 June. In the end, the 26 members of the Commission have opted for a single financing scenario instead of the three proposed at the end of May (see IRIS 2008-5: 9). This will involve taxes and indexing of the licence fee with a view to providing compensation for the judgment on advertising on public service television.

The Commission, therefore, recommends a tax of 0.5% on the turnover of Internet and mobile phone operators (generating EUR 210 million), a tax on radio frequencies (EUR 100 million), and a tax on the additional advertising revenue of private television channels (EUR 80 million). This EUR 80 million would be paid to the French audiovisual institute (*Institut National de l'Audiovisuel* - INA) in place of the licence fee it receives currently, which will henceforth be paid to the France Télévisions group. Similarly, the licence fee received by Radio France International (EUR 60 million) would be paid to the France Télévisions group, and the radio station should become part of the external audiovisual holding (along with France 24 and TV5 Monde), with its budget therefore dependant on the State. These amounts add up to EUR 450 million, corresponding to the estimated loss of earnings during the transition period. This loss is due to the fact that advertising would be abolished after 8 p.m. from September 2009 until January 2012, before being subsequently totally abolished. As for the licence fee, which currently stands at EUR 116, the Commission recommends indexing it to inflation and making it payable by the owners of a computer or mobile phone that can be used to watch television. The Commission is also maintaining its proposal to reorganise the France 3 channel on the basis of seven regional centres instead of the present thirteen. Lastly, on the matter of governance, it recommends abandoning the right of veto held by the State's representative on the board of directors of France Télévisions. Draft legislation covering all these recommendations should be put to Parliament in the autumn, for implementation in 2009.

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Commission pour la nouvelle télévision publique – Rapport présenté au Président de la République par Jean-François Copé le 25 juin 2008

http://www.matelepublique.fr/fichiers/rapport.pdf

Commission for the New Public Service Television – Report of 25 June 2008

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