[PT] Only Sports Qualify as 'General Interest' Events

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On 28 October 2009, the Portuguese Minister responsible for Parliamentary Affairs and for the Media Sector, Jorge Lacão Costa, signed a decree (Despacho nº 23951-A/2009) containing the list of events which must be broadcast by national terrestrial open access television channels. The decree has been published in the Official Journal of the Portuguese Republic.

According to Article 32 of the *Lei n.º 27/2007 de 30 de Julho* (Portuguese Television Law), the government should publish annually a list of general interest events that cannot be exclusively broadcast by restricted access channels. The list comprises general interest events whose relevance justifies their broadcast on terrestrial national free-to-air channels.

The official document of *despacho nº 23951-A/2009* includes only sports events, particularly football. Amongst the list's eleven items, seven are dedicated to professional football and four relate to other popular first league sports, such as cycling, athletics, hockey, handball and basketball.

Before the publication of the annual list of general interest events, the government is legally obliged to consult with the *Entidade Reguladora para a Comunicação Social*, the Portuguese Media Authority.

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