[PT] Portuguese Government Orders a Report on the Definition of the Concept of Public Service Broadcasting

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On 14 November 2011, the report of the Working Group for the definition of the concept of public service broadcasting was delivered to the Deputy and Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Miguel Relvas. In accordance with the programme of the XIX Portuguese Constitutional Government, the formation of this Working Group is authorised under the political commitment to pay attention to changes introduced by technology, as well as from the understanding that it is indispensible to define and rethink the concept of public service covering the three areas still under State supervision: radio, television (RTP) and the news agency Lusa (points 1 and 5 of Decree no 10254/2011).

The Group was comprised of ten persons of different backgrounds, but all related to the field of media. It was formed in August 2011 in accordance with a communication issued by the Deputy and Parliamentary Affairs Minister (Despacho nº10254/2011) and published in the Official Journal (Diário da República, 2ª série, nº157, de 17 de Agosto). After several consultations with media broadcasters, the Group's conclusions were condensed in a written report published within 60 days of the date of its formation.

The major guidelines drawn up by the Working Group focus on the importance of public service media, as assured by the State and define "public service" as the act of "fulfilling tasks for the common good of a population" (topic number 8 of the report). Moreover, future concerns are also raised, justified by the affirmation that in past times the Portuguese in informative programmes broadcast by State operators involved "known illegal or ethically reprehensible interferences by political powers" (number 54). Among the recommendations issued are: shortening and condensing news programmes in public service broadcasters; dissolving the informative thematic operator RTP Informação (since cable broadcasters guarantee pluralism in informative programmes - number 63), as well as the broadcasters of the Portuguese Autonomous Regions RTP Açores and RTP Madeira; placing the strategic orientation of the broadcaster RTP Internacional under the Foreign Affairs Ministry (number 108); ending the contract between the State and the news agency Lusa, thus passing it on to private shareholders (number 27); and abolishing the State media regulator *Entidade Reguladora para a Comunicação Social* (number 28).

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Nota informativa do Gabinete do Ministro Adjunto e dos Assuntos Parlamentares

http://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/GC19/Governo/Ministerios/MAAP/Documentos/Pages/20111114_MAAP_Doc_Servico_Publico_Comunicacao_Social.aspx

Informative note issued by the office of the Deputy and Parliamentary Affairs Minister

Relatório do Grupo de Trabalho para a definição do conceito de serviço público de comunicação social

http://www.portugal.gov.pt/pt/GC19/Documentos/MAAP/Rel_Servico_Publico_Comunicacao_Social.pdf

Report of the Working Group for the definition of the concept of public service in the media

Constituição do Grupo de Trabalho para a definição do conceito de serviço público de comunicação social pelo Despacho nº10254/2011 do Ministro Adjunto e dos Assuntos Parlamentares, publicado no Diário da República, 2ª série, nº157, de 17 de Agosto

http://dre.pt/util/getpdf.asp?s=img&serie=2&iddr=157.2011&data=2011-08-17&num=2S157A0000S00

Official communication no. 10254/2011 issued by the Deputy and Parliamentary Affairs Minister, published in the official Portuguese journal, 2nd. Serie, no.157, of 17 of August 2011

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