

[FR] Committee of inquiry proposes stricter duty of discretion for presenters and producers, and the appointment of public broadcasting executives by the President of the Republic

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After six months of work and heated debate, the report on the “neutrality, operation and funding of public service broadcasting” was adopted by the parliamentary committee of inquiry. In the report, MP Charles Alloncle, the rapporteur, offers a critical assessment of the impartiality and funding of public service broadcasting, setting out 70 recommendations aimed at “reforming, reducing costs and improving oversight of public service broadcasting”. Meanwhile, the committee chair, Jérémie Patrier-Leitus, presented 40 counter-proposals.

Among the rapporteur’s key recommendations is the requirement that the duty of neutrality set out in Article 1 of the Act of 24 August 2021 be effectively applied to employees of public broadcasters, including on social media. To this end, channel managers, in consultation with the French audiovisual regulator (*Autorité de régulation de la communication audiovisuelle et numérique* – Arcom), should establish a binding code of conduct to govern their employees’ public statements, along with a graduated system of disciplinary sanctions. The report goes on to propose the introduction of a stricter duty of discretion, in particular for presenters, programme hosts, producers and “key editorial decision-makers”; the appointment of public service broadcasting executives by the President of the Republic; the inclusion of an explicit definition, within the Act of 30 September 1986, of the concept of impartiality applicable to public service broadcasting; the merger of France 2 and France 5 to create a major general-interest channel, and of Franceinfo and France 24 to create a national and international French-language channel; the closure of France 4, Le Mouv’ and Slash; that LCP-AN and Public Sénat be subject to the obligations of the 1986 Act and Arcom control; the transfer of responsibility for public broadcasting from the general directorate of media and cultural industries (*Direction générale des médias et des industries culturelles* - DGMIC) to a new general secretariat for public broadcasting, attached to the general secretariat of the government and reporting to the prime minister; finally, the halving of the maximum flat-rate allowance for journalists and its restriction to taxpayers whose income is below the median wage.

In a press release, France Télévisions responded point by point to the recommendations in order to defend the existing arrangements. It disputed some

of the rapporteur's analysis and considered that some of his proposals failed to take account of how the sector operated and the applicable legal framework. Three weeks after submitting his report, Charles Alloncle tabled a bill “to prevent conflicts of interest in national broadcasting companies”, which sets out legislative provisions based on the conclusions of his report. The text consists of a single article amending the Act of 30 September 1986, under which the High Authority for Transparency in Public Life (*Haute Autorité pour la transparence de la vie publique* - HATVP) will oversee former public broadcasting executives moving to production companies. During the committee of inquiry hearings, the MP had criticised the lack of transparency and the existence of conflicts of interest in the awarding of France Télévisions contracts to production companies.

Rapport fait au nom de la commission d'enquête sur la neutralité, le fonctionnement et le financement de l'audiovisuel public et proposition de loi visant à prévenir les conflits d'intérêts dans les sociétés nationales de programme déposée le 12 mai 2026 à l'Assemblée nationale

https://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/dyn/17/textes/l17b2791_proposition-loi

Report drawn up on behalf of the committee of inquiry into the neutrality, operation and funding of public service broadcasting, and draft bill aimed at preventing conflicts of interest within national broadcasting organisations, tabled in the National Assembly on 12 May 2026.

