



Recommendation 1067 (1987)¹

Cultural dimension of broadcasting in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having considered the report by its Committee on Culture and Education ([Doc. 5782](#)) and the opinion of its Legal Affairs Committee ([Doc. 5800](#)) ;
2. Recalling its [Recommendation 926 \(1981\)](#) on questions raised by cable television and by direct satellite broadcasts, and [Recommendation 996 \(1984\)](#) on Council of Europe work relating to the media ;
3. Recalling the Declaration on the Freedom of Expression and Information adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 1982 ;
4. Drawing attention to the profound changes in the mass media field, and in particular in that of television, as a result of the introduction of new transmission techniques by satellite and cable, in conjunction with rapidly increasing commercialisation both in public broadcasting and through privatisation ;
5. Noting that such developments may have potentially positive effects, in particular through :
 - a. increasing the opportunities and opening up new fields for cultural creation and expression ;
 - b. broadening the range of programmes ;
 - c. assisting awareness of other European languages and cultures ;
6. Believing however that such changes also carry serious cultural risks, notably :
 - a. the encouragement of passive consumption of broadcast material ;
 - b. the reduction in programme diversity and the erosion of socially accepted standards of behaviour ;
 - c. the undermining of the cultural identity of smaller countries and minor language groups, and of the cultural diversity of Europe as a whole ;
 - d. lack of respect for copyright and neighbouring rights ;
 - e. economic and thereby cultural dependence on outside (largely commercial) factors ;
7. Recognising that advertising provides an important occasion for artistic creation and is often of high quality, but at the same time wishing to prevent advertising destroying, for example by inappropriate juxtaposition or interruption, the cultural value of the programme it accompanies ;
8. Insisting on the need for an effective reassertion by governments of the public service nature of broadcasting (whether public or private), and of the political, educational and cultural roles of the mass media, and believing that greater emphasis should be placed on the mass media as a means of creative expression, cultural diversity and communication throughout Europe ;

1. Assembly debate on 8 October 1987 (18th Sitting) (see [Doc. 5782](#), report of the Committee on Culture and Education, and [Doc. 5800](#), opinion of the Legal Affairs Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 8 October 1987 (18th Sitting).



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9. Believing that, as a general principle, both public and private broadcasting should be subject to the same rules ;
10. Stressing the importance for member states to concert policies and, when relevant, harmonise legal arrangements relating to the mass media, but in a manner that will respect national differences and also the independence of professional broadcasting bodies ;
11. Repeating its concern, expressed in [Recommendation 963 \(1983\)](#) on cultural and educational means of reducing violence, that artistic freedom should not be used as an alibi for purely commercial interests ;
12. Recalling its [Recommendation 862 \(1979\)](#) on cinema and the state, and stressing the need for closer co-ordination of mass media policies with those of other means of cultural expression ;

Recalling also its [Recommendation 928 \(1981\)](#) on the educational and cultural problems of minority languages and dialects in Europe, and [Recommendation 1043 \(1986\)](#) on Europe's linguistic and literary heritage, and stressing the role that the cinema and mass media can play in promoting linguistic diversity and widening cultural appreciation ;

Recalling its [Recommendation 1018 \(1985\)](#) on private sponsorship of the arts, and [Recommendation 1059 \(1987\)](#) on the economics of culture, and believing that considerably more resources should be channelled from the enormous profits made in the mass media business into direct encouragement of original production and the development of new and more varied talent ;

Believing also that the governments of member states should review the fiscal incentives available to promote the re-investment of profits made in the mass media business in original domestic production and the development of new and more varied talent ;

Recalling the long-standing concern of the Council for Cultural Co-operation and the Conference of European Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs with the interaction between cultural policy and the communication media, and welcoming the proposal made by the ministers in Sintra (September 1987) for developing practical measures to promote European cultural diversity, taking into account the development of the communication technologies ;

Having noted the texts adopted by the 1st European Ministerial Conference on Mass Media Policy (Vienna, December 1986), and welcoming in particular the direct request addressed by the Vienna conference to the Committee of Ministers for the rapid preparation, within the Council of Europe framework, of binding legal instruments on certain crucial aspects of transfrontier broadcasting ;

Stressing the need for the participation of the European Community bodies in this initiative ;

Underlining the need for speed in this area, in order to keep pace with technological advance and avoid cultural policies being dictated by such advances,

Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :

- a. finalise and open for signature, early in 1988, a binding legal instrument on basic standards for transfrontier broadcasting by both public and private bodies, with a view to the possibility of its entering into force before the 2nd European Ministerial Conference on Mass Media Policy in Stockholm in November 1988, and set up an effective mechanism (including the representation of broadcasting bodies) to monitor the implementation of this instrument ;
- b. provide for the subsequent inclusion into such an instrument of binding agreements or additional protocols in other fields mentioned in the following paragraphs ;
- c. adopt a declaration on public responsibility for the mass media and the public service nature of broadcasting, with particular reference to the role of television in stimulating awareness of different cultures and developing the diversity of cultural and linguistic identities ;
- d. draw up proposals for maintaining and encouraging the linguistic diversity of the mass media, for example by :
 1. joint production funds on which minor language nations may also draw ;
 2. the inclusion of minor language interviews in news bulletins ;
 3. the development of improved techniques for subtitling and the provision of dubbing on an optional basis ;

4. ensuring the right for national languages, and where appropriate minor local and regional languages, to be carried on national, regional and local networks ;
- e. recognise advertising as a valid field of creative expression, but give consideration to means of ensuring that it does not shock or affect the cultural integrity of the programmes it may accompany ;
- f. accelerate and intensify its work on guidelines for reducing violence, brutality and pornography, with reference to national legislation, not only on videograms, but also with reference to broadcasting in general ;
- g. encourage increased participation by women in broadcasting (especially in the fields of production and programming) ;
- h. encourage media education, for example by :
 1. the introduction of school courses on critical appreciation of the media and audiovisual production ;
 2. the information of adults (and not only parents) as to developments in the mass media field ;
- i. promote the use of the mass media in education and in particular in line with the objectives of the Council of Europe in such fields as human rights, tolerance and equality between the sexes ;
- j. encourage the development of international concertation to promote the production and distribution of audiovisual works in Europe within the framework of overall cultural policies, including :
 1. training programmes, for example the setting up of training centres for those working in the broadcasting profession, and trainee exchange schemes ;
 2. protection of copyright and neighbouring rights ;
 3. the closer co-ordination of media policies, and in particular the relationship between cinema and television ;
 4. mechanisms of direct and indirect support for audiovisual creativity ;
 5. special emphasis on co-production in the making of musical and other non-verbal programmes ;
- k. maintain and encourage a continuing dialogue between all partners (government, media, the public and interested non-governmental bodies) with a view to developing, by means of a series of suitable instruments, the basis for the free exchange of mass media material and professional experience between Council of Europe member countries, between Western and Eastern Europe, and between Europe and other parts of the world ;
- l. conduct periodic reviews of international co-operation and research relating to broadcasting.