

# **Strategies of public service media as regards promoting a wider democratic participation of individuals**

**Compilation of good practices**

**Group of Specialists on Public Service Media  
in the Information Society (MC-S-PSM)**



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*Compilation of good practices*

**Report prepared by the Group of Specialists  
on Public Service Media in the Information Society (MC-S-PSM), November 2008**

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Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs  
Council of Europe  
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## Executive summary

This report examines the general approach of public service media towards the promotion of a wider democratic participation, dealing with statutory requirements and internal policies regarding this goal, PSM strategies related to it, means that PSM use to interact with the citizens, as well as audience/reach of new PSM services. Furthermore, the document gives a number of concrete examples of PSM programmes or services that aim to widen democratic participation of individuals, most of which are based on the possibilities offered by the new media. These examples are organised into subsections that reflect the different levels on which a promotion of democratic participation can be achieved by PSM and which, among others, can be differentiated according to the level and form of interaction of PSM with its public and among the public itself.

PSM are aware that their role in promoting democratic participation of individuals is a crucial one and an important reason for their special status in the European media landscape. The strategies PSM follow in-

creasingly take account of the possibilities the new technologies open up. This ranges from making use of additional spectrum available through the digital switchover, facilitating the public's access to content through non-linear offers, to increasingly interactive services offered via the internet.

In order to survive in the present-day media landscape, PSM must increasingly strive to move away from one-way communication to reinforced dialogue and afford the public access to varied information as well as a possibility to engage and participate in the democratic debate. In order to continue to be of relevance in today's media environment, they will have to be creative and quickly and decidedly make advantage of new technological possibilities. They will also continuously need to strive for distinctiveness from other media and might need to be ready to move on once it is clear that this distinctiveness has been eroded.

Informing the public in a truthful, objective and credible way about politics

and everything they need to know will remain one of the most significant tasks in which PSM can contribute to the promotion of democratic participation of the individual members of its public and in which very useful use can be made of the new communication technologies. On the other hand, PSM could fulfil a vital role in educating active and responsible citizens, providing not only quality content but also a forum for public debate, open to diverse ideas and convictions in society, and a platform for disseminating democratic values. One of PSM's roles should be to foster citizens' interest in public affairs and encourage them to play a more active part.

To achieve these objectives, PSM must adapt its strategies and internal policies to the new technological and social context. Member states, for their part, must set a clear remit for PSM and ensure appropriate conditions to enable them to use new technical and technological means to better fulfil the remit, as stipulated in Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec (2007) 3 on the remit of public service media in the information society.

## Introduction

### Mandate and work of the group

The terms of reference of the Group of Specialists on public service media in the information society (MC-S-PSM) include the task of preparing a compendium of best practices on how public service media promote a wider democratic participation of individuals, *inter alia* with the help of new interactive technologies.

During its current working period of 2007 and 2008, the group has taken various steps in order to gather information on good practice examples of public service media in the field of democratic participation. In particular, it has made use of the work of outside experts which have drafted specialist reports on the topic. As a result of this work, the group has had at its disposal

two reports on the subject-matter, namely:

» Report by Gregory Ferrell Lowe, "The Role of Public Service Media for Widening Individual Participation in European Democracy";

» Report by the Institute of European Media Law (EMR), "The Public Service Media Promotion and Facilitation of a Wider Democratic Participation of Individuals".

The present report is based on the information gathered through these two reports and the examples of good practice mentioned there. The two reports enable a more thorough approach to the subject. This report also draws on other sources, such as a hearing held at the Council of Europe in 2005 on the role of public service

broadcasters in promoting wider democratic participation of individuals with the help of new interactive technologies, or information provided by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU).

### Content and structure of the report

The report is divided into two main parts. The first part deals with the general approach of PSM towards the achievement of the goal of promoting wider democratic participation of individuals, dealing with statutory requirements and internal policies regarding this goal, PSM strategies related to it, means that PSM use to interact with the citizens, as well as audience/reach of new PSM services. The second part

of the report then gives a number of very concrete examples on PSM programmes or services that aim to widen democratic participation of individuals, most of which are based on the possibilities offered by the new media. Following a structure proposed by Mr Lowe, these examples are organised into subsections that reflect the different levels on which a promotion of democratic participation can be achieved by PSM and which, among others, can be differentiated according to the level and form of interaction of PSM with its public and among the public itself.

### **The promotion of democratic participation as part of the remit of public service media**

This report contains concrete examples (best practice models) on the promotion and facilitation of wider democratic participation of individuals which is enhanced by national public service media operators through their offerings (programmes or other content). In this respect it is relevant to consider the extent to which the public service media operators have a dedicated strategy on promoting democratic participation and the extent to which such strategies are based on requirements in the public service remit or internal policies.

The general situation in the member states concerning the public service remit in the information society is addressed in the report "How Member States ensure the legal, financial, technical and other appropriate conditions required to enable public service media to discharge their remit" (November 2008) prepared by the Council of Europe Group of Specialists on Public Service Media (MC-S-PSM).

As a general rule, member states have taken into account the need of public service broadcasters to provide their public service offer on new media platforms when defining the remit, though the exact definition of the public service remit varies widely amongst the member states. Several examples of member states can be identified where the public service media remit is defined in a two- or

multiple-step way, with a general remit generally defined by the legislator and more precise regulations defined or agreed upon at another level – by the legislator again, by the administration, by agreement between the State and the public service media organisation through a contract or using self- and co-regulatory instruments.

The question of how member states when defining the public service remit specifically deal with the issue of promotion and facilitation of a wider democratic participation of individuals has separately been addressed in the above mentioned study "The Public Service Media Promotion and Facilitation of a Wider Democratic Participation of Individuals" of 28 April 2008, which is based on country reports and prepared by the Institute of European Media Law (EMR) on behalf of the Council of Europe. The study covers the situation in Denmark, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Slovenia and the United Kingdom – all of which represent good practices of public service media as regards promoting a wider democratic participation of individuals.

The study shows that the strategies of the public service media in these countries to promote, facilitate and develop services that promote a wider democratic participation of individuals only to a certain degree are based on specific requirements on democratic participation in the public service remit. Whereas the public service remit for the Finnish and Danish public service broadcasters YLE and DR specifically include requirements on democratic participation, the remits of the German, United Kingdom, Latvian and Slovenian public service broadcasters are defined along more general lines. The scope of the public service remit varies between these national broadcasters. This is also the case for the different United Kingdom public service broadcasters. Thus the remit of channels 3 and 5, in that it requires "the provision of a range of high quality and diverse programming" may not necessarily relate to the wider democratic participation of individuals. The remits of Channel 4 and, particularly the BBC, are on the other hand more

focussed towards democratic participation. In particular the BBC Agreement specifies that one of the BBC's public purpose remit is for "sustaining citizenship and civil society" and reflecting the United Kingdom's nations, regions and communities.

### **The promotion of democratic participation and the transparency of public authorities**

In its terms of reference for the MC-S-PSM, the CDMC included a topic concerning the contribution of public service media in the information society in increasing the transparency of public authorities and facilitating their scrutiny. In its report from its November 2007 meeting, the CDMC asked the MC-S-PSM to deal with this matter in connection with the present report.

The issue in whether and how PSM should aim at promoting the transparency of public authorities and facilitate their scrutiny is a highly complex one, and the answer to the question depends essentially on how one defines the task that is called for.

It is for instance relatively clear that insofar as the PSM remit includes, as it universally does, an obligation to inform the public and comment about politics and general interest topics, they will, while fulfilling their remit, promote the transparency of public authorities by informing the general public about these authorities' activities. In the same manner, PSM can promote the public's understanding of political processes at local, national or European level and therefore enhance the public's possibilities of understanding government and critically appraise its activities.

The fundamental obligation of PSM to be objective and neutral in its reporting is particularly important with regard to the activities of public authorities. Under no circumstances should a PSM take upon itself the government's own role in promoting its activities, lest it loses its distance to the government of the day and its ability to inform impartially as well as its credibility. If transparency is understood in

this sense, public authorities are themselves responsible for making their work transparent and this is not an activity PSM should engage in to. Also, it is obviously not a common task of PSM to act as an access point for government services or for offering the public facilities to collect information on government activities or receive access to official documents. The obligation of objectivity and neutrality also influences the decision on whether PSM should engage in investigative journalism on the same terms as private

media. Different member states may have different answers to this question.

For the purposes of this report, it appears that as long as the promotion of transparency of public authorities is understood in the sense of PSM informing and commenting about political issues and helping the public understand and move within the democratic system, it has a very close relationship with the activities of PSM in promoting wider democratic participation of individuals. In this sense, nu-

merous examples within this report such as information services, parliamentary TV channels and even PSM initiatives to help the public engage in civic campaigning, can also be understood as examples on how to promote transparency of public authorities. If transparency is understood in this way, then the present report can therefore also be understood as a report on how PSM promote the transparency of public authorities.

## Public service media and the promotion of democratic participation

If public service media are to strengthen their role in promoting wider democratic participation of individuals, they must keep and strengthen some of their present features and develop new ones. Also, they should formulate relevant strategic objectives, allocate the resources necessary to achieve those objectives, and craft tactical designs that concretise the objectives in programmes and services. Objectives and tactics are conceived in light of expectations about the functions of PSM in supporting democratic needs. The enactment of all these functions, and the correlated fulfilment of strategic objectives, on the one hand, require defending traditional roles, especially the social role and identity of citizens, and on the other, emphasises the development of partnership relations between PSM providers and the publics they serve.

The role of PSM is grounded in the public service remit, which despite its classical connotations has demonstrated ample capacity for continual development while still preserving the ethos that grounds its social legitimacy. Public service media are crucial for building social capital by ensuring intercultural understanding and cross-cultural dialogue. In an era of media abundance and market fragmentation, PSM are essential to ensure unity and cohesion – on the one hand, as well as

diversity and pluralism – on the other hand.

There are four principal obligations for PSM as can be deduced from normative theories about media-society relations: the informative and control obligation; the representation obligation; the forum obligation; and the participatory obligation. The participatory obligation, which is of particular interest for this document, is the meat of the matter for widening individual involvement in democracy. It also requires the most effort and investment for development because it is at the heart of cultivating partnership between PSM and the publics it must serve. This obligation is about the degree to which people are able to impact decision-making by political representatives; it can also be seen as the degree to which people influence production in media content.

In diverse and pluralistic societies the media have a significant role in both constituting and mediating the public sphere. The role of PSM is primary to ensure the good health and necessary development of this. The public sphere is produced in and by public communication about issues, events and processes of common interest. The future of PSM requires the institution to evolve into an effective and efficient partner with the publics it serves. That is a cornerstone for widening the participation of individuals and

collectivities in contemporary democracy. For PSM the public should be understood as citizens as well as consumers and treated as active partners rather than passive recipients.

This section focuses on four main issues related to PSM and the promotion of democratic participation, notably: (1) Statutory requirements/internal policies related to PSM strategies regarding democratic participation; (2) Strategies to promote, facilitate and develop services for widening democratic participation; (3) Means used by the PSM in order to interact with the citizens; and (4) Audience/reach of new PSM services. It covers the situation in a limited number of countries (Denmark, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Norway, Slovenia and the United Kingdom) examined by the Institute of European Media Law and by the European Broadcasting Union.

### Statutory requirements/internal policies related to PSM strategies regarding democratic participation

#### Denmark

The DR strategy is supported by the legislation as well as the current public service contract regulating the activities of DR.

In Chapter 3 of the Act on Broadcasting (2006) the role of public service media is described as follows:

“The overall public service activities shall provide, via television, radio and Internet or similar, the Danish population with a wide selection of programmes and services comprising news coverage, general information, education, arts and entertainment. Quality, versatility and diversity must be aimed at in the range of programmes provided. *In the planning of programmes freedom of information and of expression shall be a primary concern. Objectivity and impartiality must be sought in the information coverage. The programming shall ensure that the general public has access to important information on society and debate.* Furthermore, particular emphasis shall be placed on Danish language and culture. The programming shall cover all genres in the production of art and culture and provide programmes which reflect the diversity of cultural interests in the Danish society” (emphasis added).

In the Public Service Contract between the Ministry of Culture (on behalf of the Danish parliament “Folketinget”) and DR the important role of DR related to democracy is elaborated.

In Chapter 1 of the Public Service Contract, the Ministry of Culture has stated that DR, in the programmes and services offered, *inter alia* shall strengthen citizens’ capacity efficiency in a democratic society:

- » DR shall provide access to important information on society and debate;
- » DR shall through programme content and services encourage participation in the public debate and the democratic process;
- » DR shall contribute to popularisation of the new digital media by creating new programmes and information services likely to make viewers, listeners and users familiar with the technology, thereby inspiring them to use it.

The Public Service Contract very clearly prescribes that DR shall use all relevant digital and interactive media to fulfil its obligations. DR shall offer public service content – i.e. content by way of text, sound and images meeting cultural, social and democratic needs in the Danish society – on all relevant technological platforms.

DR shall focus on the production of public service broadcasting services specifically developed for such platforms.

## Finland

Since January 1, 1994, the existence and all activities of YLE have been based on a law, *Act on Yleisradio*. Originally, this law defined the duties of the company as well as public service (Chapter 3, Section 7) as follows:

“The company shall be responsible for the provision of comprehensive broadcasting services for all citizens under equal conditions. As special duties involving public service, the company shall:

1. support democracy by providing a wide variety of information, opinions and debates on social issues, also for minorities and special groups;<sup>1</sup> [...]”

However, in the latest amendment of the law (635/2005) this section was changed and updated, so that since January 1, 2006, the new definition has been:

“The company shall be responsible for the provision of comprehensive television and radio programming with the related additional and extra services for all citizens under equal conditions. These and other content services related to public service may be provided in all telecommunications networks.

The public service programming shall in particular:

1. support democracy and everyone’s opportunity to participate by providing a wide variety of information, opinions and debates as well as opportunities to interact;<sup>2</sup>

The text of the law has been adapted to the age of the Internet by mentioning also additional and extra services in all telecom networks besides broadcasting. In addition, while the law still requires YLE to support democracy by providing information, it now emphasises that this also has to be done by providing opportunities to public *participation* and *interaction*, which is a quite new and to some extent difficult task for a traditional public service broadcaster.

1. <http://www.ciemer.org/mercator/bulletins/41-16.htm>.  
2. <http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1993/en19931380.pdf>.

There are also six other aspects to public service in the law (promotion of Finnish culture, educational and minority language programming, multiculturalism, cultural interaction and broadcasting of official announcements). The first one is probably the most fundamental, because without democracy all the other aspects of public service mentioned in the law would be more or less insignificant.

Following this principle defined in the law, YLE has developed its strategies and internal policies to meet those legal obligations and to promote the democratic participation of individuals.

## Germany

Besides the general stipulation in Article 5 (freedom of expression and information) of the *Grundgesetz* (Basic Law), according to which the freedom of reporting through broadcasting is guaranteed (paragraph 1, sentence 1), the *Grundgesetz* holds no specific provision on the PSM’s programming. According to the interpreting jurisdiction of the Federal Constitutional Court (*Bundesverfassungsgericht*), Article 5 only defines the remit along general lines.

The German *Bundesländer* (Federal States of Germany) are responsible for the regulation of broadcasting as part of their sovereignty, they have signed several interstate agreements, one of which is the *Rundfunkstaatsvertrag*. This *Rundfunkstaatsvertrag* lays down the general principles for private and public service media operators (please see §§1 to 10 *Rundfunkstaatsvertrag*) and contains particular regulations for both institutions (please compare §§11 to 19 *Rundfunkstaatsvertrag* for public service media operators and §§20 to 47 *Rundfunkstaatsvertrag* for private broadcasting companies). Under the terms of the recital clause, the parties of the agreement acknowledged that public service media is indebted to the process of free formation of public and individual opinion. §3 of the Inter-State Treaty on Broadcasting defines *general* programming principles (e.g. the respect for human dignity), without providing a

dedicated strategy to promote democracy.

§11 paragraph 1 Rundfunkstaatsvertrag defines the remit of public service broadcasters in more detail: they should act as “a medium and a factor in the process of free formation of public and individual opinion”. Therefore, broadcasters have to provide a comprehensive overview of all important international, European, national and regional issues in order to promote understanding and integration (§11 paragraph 2 Rundfunkstaatsvertrag).

§11 Rundfunkstaatsvertrag in conjunction with the operator’s guidelines and the declarations of self-imposed obligations on programming are the basis of a dedicated strategy to promote democracy.

### Latvia

As Latvian normative acts and public broadcasters supervising institutions only partially envisage the interactive participation of individuals, it mostly depends on the initiative and inner policy of the broadcaster itself. Many factors have an impact on these processes, starting with the managers’ understanding and interest, and ending with technical and financial resources to implement ideas.

For a long time, one of the lowest public broadcaster financing levels in Europe made any process of innovation complicated in Latvia.

However, there have been quite a lot of projects in Latvian television and radio, which stimulated broadcasters’ dialogue with people, involving them in discussions on questions of social importance, as well as giving people the opportunity to advance their opinion to the political elite. The interactivity in both media concerns not only socio-political questions, but also allows consumers to organise their entertainment on-demand, choosing films, music, theatre performances they like.

These activities, as already mentioned, are mostly ascribable to the initiative of broadcaster’s managers and the production personnel. The basic principles and solutions of these activities

are dictated by the programme priorities of the present year and are codified in inner normative documents as the Employees Code of Ethics, structural units’ regulations on professional activities, and job descriptions of creative employees.

It is obvious that the rapid technological development and the changes of viewers’ and listeners’ habits pose challenges to public service media operators. They should become more diverse, open and interactive. These requirements are specified in the inner development programmes of both media.

In his management policy, the new Director General of Latvian Television characterised the change of status from public broadcaster to public electronic medium as a conceptual development direction. He looks upon this medium as a complex, multi-medial company, which uses up-to-date technologies, thus making it more widely and diversely available to every inhabitant of the country, as well as fostering an active dialogue with a wide range of society and narrow interest groups.

### Norway

One of the articles in the national public service broadcaster (NRK) Code of Conduct states:

“NRK shall be instrumental in promoting public debate and assist the entire population to acquire sufficient information to play an active role in democratic processes” (NRK Code of Conduct, Article 1 b).

Further on it is stipulated that

“the company shall be present in, and shall develop new services for, all important media platforms so as to reach the widest possible audience with its overall programme services” (NRK Code of Conduct Art. 2 d).

### Slovenia

Everybody in Slovenia is aware that the very reason for the existence and development of a public service broadcaster in Slovenia is to encourage democratic dialogue, to promote national creativity and to provide space for presenting opinions, stand-

points and activities of any kind of minorities.

The constitutional basis for the aforementioned demands made on the broadcasting system is found in the RTV Slovenia Act. Article 5 of this Act stipulates:

Journalists and editors of RTV Slovenia and others directly involved in the creation or production of RTV programming shall in their work in particular:

- adhere to the principle of truthfulness, impartiality and integrity of information;
- respect human individuality and dignity;
- adhere to the principle of political balance and pluralism of world views;
- adhere to the principle of constitutionality and legality in the formulation of programming, including the prohibition on incitement to cultural, religious, sexual, racial, national or other forms of intolerance; ensure impartial and integral provision of information, such that citizens have the possibility to freely form their opinions;
- adhere to the principle of political independence and autonomy of journalists; institute professional ethics for reporters and the consistent distinction between information and commentary in journalistic reports; protect children and young persons from content that could have a harmful effect on their mental and physical development, and respect universal human values.

Apart from that, political and ethnical minorities claim special protection of the law. According to the constitution, there are two autochthonous ethnical minorities living in Slovenia – the Italian and the Hungarian minority. The most recent RTV Slovenija Act dealing with the public service broadcaster provides for special radio and TV programmes to be offered for Italians and Hungarians and also for the Roma ethnical minority (compare Article 3, Section 1, fourth paragraph of the RTV Slovenija Act). The Slovene example of the public service broadcaster is certainly a role model for the whole of Europe.

### United Kingdom

The Communications Act 2003 specifies that broadcasters must fulfil certain criteria, and sets down the public service remits for each of the commercial terrestrial broadcasters,

which – as noted above – vary. These requirements are backed up by licence conditions. According to the Communications Act, s. 266, broadcasters must produce statements of programme policy (SoPPs) annually, as well as an annual review of the performance for the preceding year by reference to the relevant SoPP (SARs). The BBC must under its Charter and Agreement, s. 21, likewise produce a SoPP and an annual review: the BBC Trust reviews compliance with the SoPP in its annual report (s. 45 Agreement). Ofcom has produced guidance on SoPPs.

Ofcom under s. 264 Communications Act 2003 has the obligation to ensure that public service broadcasting as a whole satisfies certain conditions laid down in the Communications Act, including the obligation to

“provide, to the extent that is appropriate for facilitating civic understanding and fair and well-informed debate on news and current affairs in, and in the different parts of, the United Kingdom and from around the world”

and the requirement that the services offer

“a sufficient quantity of programmes that reflect the lives and concerns of different communities and cultural interests and traditions within the United Kingdom ...”.

Note that all broadcasters must comply with the requirements that news must be impartial: in the case of complaint the Ofcom Content Board will review impartiality but it has rarely found a violation of this requirement. It has been suggested that this impartiality requirement has been instrumental in the disengagement of some groups, as it may operate to stifle dissenting or marginalised opinions. One question Ofcom has posed recently is whether the impartiality requirement needs to be relaxed at least in relation to some, non-terrestrial broadcasters.

## Strategies to promote, facilitate and develop services for widening democratic participation

### Denmark

DR as the leading public service media operator in Denmark sees its role closely related to the Danish democratic society. As it was stated in the DR *raison d'être* from 1994:

DR – serving the public by empowering the individual to play an active role in a democratic society

In 2005 the DR *raison d'être* was reformulated by the Board of Governors, and it now describes how DR provides value for the society, for the culture and for the individual:

The mission of DR is to **inform, entertain and inspire**.

DR provides programmes and services for everybody. DR gives the general public plenty to choose from, plenty to think about, to puzzle over, to laugh at, to feel provoked by, to absorb them and to adopt as their own.

DR aims to be the frame of reference for the whole population, helping us to understand ourselves, our times and the people around us, and enabling us to act accordingly.

DR must constantly provide the general public with an independent, high-quality alternative to the commercial media.

DR fulfils its mission by

- » **generating value** for society, culture and the individual
  - » **setting standards** of credibility, independence, balance, variety and quality
  - » **providing quality** in every programme genre
  - » **building bridges** in the media landscape of the future in Denmark.
- DR generates value for the **society** by
- » promoting dialogue and understanding across divides
  - » stimulating the population to speak out, get involved, and meet others

» reinforcing the involvement of the general public in debates on our democratic society

» belonging to the country as a whole.

DR creates value for the **culture** by

- » providing shared experiences for the Danes
- » creating, supporting and reflecting broad and narrow arts and culture
- » supporting and challenging the Danish identity, language and history; in international contexts too.

DR creates value for the **individual** by

- » inspiring people to assume responsibility, act, and improve their lives
- » making the incomprehensible understandable and relevant
- » entertaining and by generating enthusiasm.

DR's strategy to promote a wider democratic participation is thus closely related to the concept of broad public service. DR is obliged to provide both the broad programming which brings Danes together and the more specialised programming for individuals and people with special interests. DR is the only media corporation committed to provide programming and services to everybody in Denmark regardless of race, gender, income, geography etc. and DR sees this unique role as a fundamental precondition for its ability to generate value for the Danish society.

The broad programming is accomplished for instance by P3 and P4, the most popular radio stations in Denmark and DR's main TV channel DR1, which brings Danes together to a wide range of programming such as the most watched daily news show, Friday night entertainment and DR's high quality drama series on Sunday nights.

At the same time DR caters for the individual and for people with special interests through a number of focused channels, programmes and services on radio, television and web.

The interplay between broad and specialised programming is key to DR's efforts to promote a wider democratic participation at all levels for those who

are already involved as well as those for whom participation is harder. It is also a key element in DR's strategy that democratic participation is a very broad concept and that promoting user participation and involvement on a broad range of issues stimulates the competences and the desire to participate in the democratic processes.

### Finland

There is currently only one public service media operator in Finland, Yleisradio (YLE). It results that it has a *de facto* monopoly of public service operations in Finland. YLE has a dedicated strategy to promote, facilitate and develop services that promote a wider democratic participation of individuals.

### Germany

German public service media (PSM) have a dedicated strategy to promote, facilitate and develop services that promote a wider democratic participation of individuals.

Under the terms of §11 paragraph 4 of the so-called Interstate Treaty on Broadcasting (*Rundfunkstaatsvertrag*<sup>3</sup>), public service media operators are responsible for a detailed programming regulation by laying down rules and guidelines (e.g. *Grundsätze für die Zusammenarbeit im ARD-Gemeinschaftsprogramm „Erstes Deutsches Fernsehen“ und anderen Gemeinschaftsprogrammen; ZDF-Richtlinien für Sendungen*). These guidelines define the aim of programmes in more detail and provide for instruments of implementation.

This should be exemplified by ZDF's „*Richtlinien für Sendungen*“ (ZDF Guidelines for programmes). Section I paragraph 3 ZDF-Richtlinien lays down that programmes should enable each individual to form its free opinion. For instance, in order to accomplish this, there has to be a clear distinction between newscasts and comments (compare Section I paragraph 5). Under the terms of Section II paragraph 2 ZDF-Richtlinien, programmes

shall give full information. According to Section III paragraph 1 ZDF-Richtlinien, programmes have to convey the principles of a *democratic* and social constitutional state founded on the rule of law. Programmes are obliged to criticise *undemocratic* attitudes (Section III paragraph 1). Within the programmes, common will to *democracy* shall find expression and diversity of opinions should be expressed (Section III paragraph 2). In addition, all parts of society shall have free access to the programmes (Section III paragraph 3). ZDF is obliged to work and inform impartially (Section III paragraph 5). Different points of view have to be presented equally (Section III paragraph 6). Considered together, these provisions form a dedicated strategy to promote and facilitate democracy.

Similar provisions can be found in ARD's guidelines and Deutschlandradio's declaration of self-imposed obligations on programming. In the context of ARD's annual report 2006, for example, the organisation gives an account of its activities of the past year and presents its programming prospects for the oncoming years 2007/2008. In order to guarantee comprehensive provision of information on current affairs, ARD offers more than six hours of news programmes every day. This offer provides a broad overview of all current issues and enables people to form their individual opinion.

### Latvia

According to Latvian law on radio and television, the basic principles of programme production are stated by the National remit. The basic principles of the National remit are reflected in the law on radio and television, as well as in broadcast licenses. These normative documents are based on general values of a democratic society, European Union regulations and priorities of a national character. Thus the flow of comprehensive information, editorial independence and plurality of views is guaranteed. All of that is necessary for the formation of individual opinion about processes in the country, Europe and the whole world. However, the normative acts do not

provide for the necessity of interactivity, which would allow for feedback from the viewers and listeners. The normative acts don't envisage the necessity for public broadcasters to function in a multimedia environment.

More detailed programme production policies is stipulated in the document, which states the National remit priorities for the present year; for every next year the broadcasters elaborate the project of the National remit and coordinate it with the National Radio and Television Board.

### United Kingdom

All public service media have a strategy to fulfil their relevant public service remit as shown in the statement of programme policy (SoPP) published annually, but the scope of this remit varies between the broadcasters (see s. 265 Communications Act 2003; BBC Charter, Article 3 and Agreement, s. 5). Thus the remits of channels 3 and 5, in that they require 'the provision of a range of high quality and diverse programming' are not as closely related to the wider democratic participation of individuals as those of the BBC and Channel 4. In particular the BBC Agreement specifies that one of the BBC's public purpose remit is for "sustaining citizenship and civil society" (s. 6 Agreement) and reflecting the United Kingdom's nations, regions and communities.

### Means used by PSM in order to interact with the citizens

#### Denmark

In general DR makes use of all relevant means to interact with DR users (which amounts to practically all citizens in Denmark). The traditional phone-ins are widely used in a large number of radio shows in all genres to facilitate public debates and interaction with the listeners. An example is "Poul Friis" – a very popular daily one-hour live programme on radio channel P1 dealing with subjects of current interest. Poul Friis is the programme host and starts each programme with an in-depth interview with the guest, who is a politician, an opinion leader, a chair-

3. <http://www.lfk.de/gesetzundrichtlinien/rundfunkstaatsvertrag/main.html> for the full text of the Rundfunkstaatsvertrag.

man of an association or a specialist on the selected current topic of the day. At programme start and several times during the interview Poul Friis invites the listeners to phone in and contribute with comments and discuss with the guest in the studio. After 15 to 20 minutes of interview the phones are open and any citizen thus has a chance to table his or her ideas and comments on the topic of the day.

Interaction through text messaging and e-mails has grown significantly during recent years, and DR's website (<http://www.dr.dk/>) is the home for numerous initiatives to stimulate debate and interaction. Dr.dk/debat is a large sub-site devoted to debate at all levels and on all topics related to radio and TV programmes or as pure internet services. The daily "P1 Debate" for instance combines a radio show with debate on dr.dk. Especially for the younger generation dr.dk is the home for a number of communities and clubs, where users can interact and participate, and DR is continuously exploring new ways where users can interact with each other and with DR.

As one example DR won in 2004 the prestigious Prix Italia for "Dogworld", a surreal cartoon community where Danish, Swedish and Norwegian youngsters aged 10 to 17 let their virtual tamagochi-like dogs chat, gather points in games, dig for bones, buy and trade items with each other and explore the Dogworld together. The users of Dogworld influence the development of the community in a number of ways and interact with each other – among other things the "news-papers" of the community and a number of debates. "Dogworld" is still active and provides a basic introduction to democracy for young people.

DR has also in recent years been very successful in bringing our shows and characters to life through events in "real" life. This way DR is able to interact more closely with the Danes and the participants plays a much more active role in the creation of programmes. DR has used this combination of programmes and events in a wide range of genres intended for both democratic and entertaining pur-

poses and DR intends to further develop this concept in the future.

In 1972 DR opened a special public access department named the "Tape Workshop" and invited Danish citizens to make their own radio programme on a subject related to their personal life, ideas and engagements and to get these programmes broadcast on the national network. Professional DR producers assisted to allow the citizens to make use of all the powerful tools of radio communication. The "Tape Workshop" had a capacity of producing 120 programmes a year with an average duration of 30 minutes. Later a similar public access department was established for TV programmes.

Professional radio producers were seconded to the Tape Workshop on rotation basis for one year periods and over the years more than 40 radio producers got a new insight in the value of involving ordinary people in programme production, an experience they brought with them in their future professional broadcast activities. Consequently it gradually became quite common to include substantial inputs from non-professionals in the DR radio programmes and after 17 years of active life the tape Workshop was closed in 1989. People had got access to participate in DR programmes without the need of a special public access department.

## Finland

YLE is still above all else a broadcasting company, providing radio and television programming to the whole of Finland. According to the company's 2006 annual report, it reached 92% of Finns with television and 67% of Finns with radio every week.<sup>4</sup> However, in most cases broadcasting tends to be more about distribution than interaction. This is probably one of the reasons why YLE provides also in the internet an increasing amount of interactive services related to its broadcast programming. In addition, it has created new and interactive media services and participatory platforms in the internet, which are relatively independ-

ent from its broadcast programming. In 2006, the YLE website was the fifth most popular in Finland with average of 768 000 hits per week. The Internet is already a very strong medium among the young and middle-aged Finns. The oldest citizens (74+) typically prefer other forms of communication.

According to an YLE audience survey in 2006, the three most important public service functions were: 1) providing official information and preparing for emergencies, 2) broadcasting to all people in Finland regardless of place of residence, and 3) providing reliable and independent news. This illustrates how YLE was considered above all else as a public broadcaster, providing news and information – which is of course a crucial function for any truly democratic process.

On the other hand and perhaps in some contradiction, another function very closely related to the democratic interaction of the citizens, which is programmes inspiring debate on current social issues, was ranked tenth in considered importance, which means that it was seen as less important than for example delivering live international sports events.

In addition to services for the Finnish-speaking majority of citizens, YLE is obliged to serve also minorities and special groups with particular programming especially for them. This was considered as the 6th most important public service function.

So, the company operations are most of all about providing programmes and services for citizens, but YLE is not particularly strong in direct interaction with citizens. YLE has recently tried a new sort of promotion and publicity campaign (YLE Kulmilla) which has opened YLE facilities in different cities for the public and brought some YLE personnel also from capital Helsinki to meet with regional audiences in person. But these events are rather rare and can be treated as exceptional.

It is interesting that the law now obliges YLE to support the citizen's opportunity to interact with each other but does not even encourage YLE as a company to interact directly with its

4. <http://www.yle.fi/yleista/kuvat/2006yleisokertomus.pdf>; <http://yle.fi/yleista/kuvat/2006vuosikertomus.pdf>.

owners, the citizens (see question 2). Perhaps because the members of the YLE Administrative Council are elected by the Parliament it has been thought that this provides citizens a sufficient way to interact with YLE indirectly through the elections.

(A recent case example of questionable manner of interaction between YLE and the citizens can be found in the process of digitisation of television. YLE had tested all the types of digital set-top-boxes available in the market but did not publish the list of devices which could not show YLE programmes with digital subtitles. The list was published by YLE only *after* it had first been published by the leading Finnish newspaper [*Helsingin Sanomat*]).

Besides providing different programming services for different audiences, YLE has created a number of internal policies and strategies to support and promote services that support citizen's democratic needs.

For example, the *YLE Programme Regulations*<sup>5</sup> emphasise the independence and integrity of YLE programmes, which are supposed to be also impartial and balanced within reasonable timeframe – and when possible, all the perspectives to the disputed issue should be included into the same programme. All these regulations aim for a diverse offering of high quality information, which is trustworthy and a reliable basis also for political debate and decision-making.

There is also an *YLE Policy on services for minorities and special groups*,<sup>6</sup> which states that “providing services for minorities and special groups means that people in these groups must be treated as equal members of the society”. In practice, YLE is providing services only to “significant” minority groups in their own languages, but for smaller groups they are developing services in basic Finnish.

The *YLE Gender Equality and Diversity Programme*<sup>7</sup> aims primarily to influence the company programming policy. Its objective is that YLE should

increase through its programming the gender equality between women and men in the Finnish society. This means at the basic level that program-makers should pay attention to the interpretation of the roles of men and women and there should be space for a set of values which is based on equality.

While the programmes mentioned above are most of all for internal use among the YLE program-makers, *YLE Values*<sup>8</sup> is perhaps a sort of a new tool for promoting the main ideas of public service ideology not only for the YLE personnel but also to the general public. It is a simple list of five things which YLE intends to support and cherish: “Finnishness”, reliability, independence, diversity and high quality.

### Germany

To illustrate the means, the term “interaction” should be defined in more detail. Interaction means the active communication between public service media operators and citizen.

In 2004, the Bundesländer decided to allow public service media operators to use online offers to get in touch with their users (see §11 paragraph 1, sentence 2 Rundfunkstaatsvertrag). These online offers have to provide programme related content and have to be linked to the programme. In consideration of these facts, the means used by the German PSM can be classified into two main categories: (1) the use of interactive technologies for the offer, and (2) the use of traditional ways of interaction of viewers with programmes (e.g. televoting, traditional public opinion polls during a telecast, etc).

Despite the complexity of this topic, this is not the place to enter into in a detailed or exhaustive examination of both scopes. Therefore, this report concentrates on the means using interactive online offers. These offers themselves can be classified into 2 categories:

» The first means can be characterised by the transfer of traditional forms of analogue communication (e.g. newsletters) into the digital world;

however, this kind of communication is rather unidirectional.

» The second means is more bidirectional and can itself be divided into two sections:

– One form of interaction is the communication between public service broadcasting operators and their users, e.g. users participate in interviews with experts via the Internet;

– The other means is the mediation of communication between user groups, e.g. public service broadcasting operators offer a platform for their user groups to enable them to have a discussion via the Internet.

» Apart from the main strategy, public service media operators have initiated several studies on different issues related to social aspects. One of these studies is the ARD/ZDF online study 2007, in which operators prepared a report on the use of online offerings in Germany. (see: <http://www.daserste.de/service/studie.asp>). In the context of this study, ARD and ZDF questioned 1 820 people about their behaviour patterns concerning the use of the Internet.

### Latvia

In Latvia the interactivity of public media with their consumers takes place mainly based on the same methods as in the rest of Europe. The main instruments of interactivity are television and radio programmes, during (as well as before and after) which telephone or SMS voting, exchange of opinions and posting the questions are available.

Another popular means of interactivity is the internet, through which people are offered wider and more diverse possibilities to communicate with programme makers or other participants, to take part in the internet discussions and forums, expressing their attitude and asking their questions, finding out additional information about programme themes and their coverage.

Both Latvian television and radio have internet archives, where listeners and viewers can find wider information about themes of interest, as well as

5. <http://yle.fi/yleista/kuvat/ots.pdf>.

6. <http://www.yle.fi/fbc/palvelustrategiaEng.pdf>.

7. Available only on YLE intranet (in Finnish).

8. <http://yle.fi/yleista/arvot.shtml>.

watch and listen to the programmes they have missed.

Sometimes, especially where communication between public service media broadcasters and rural or elderly viewers and listeners is concerned, feedback is given in written form.

In addition to everyday communication with the people, meetings with different target groups on different levels are organised in order to identify consumers' opinion about programmes, to determine their themes and quality standards. The sociological research is done not only on audience ratings, but also on different aspects of programming in a more detailed manner, segmenting the interests of different audiences.

Public service broadcasters periodically have consultations with Latvian non-governmental organisations, in order to identify interests and desires of different population groups, represented by these organisations.

Once a year, Latvian television offers an internet questionnaire to its viewers and a press poll concerning the most popular programmes of the previous year. Almost all prizes, except special prizes, that are awarded are based on viewers voting.

In the run-up to the elections, public service media operators organise public discussions of potential and present politicians. In some discussions, viewers are enabled to participate and ask questions of their concerns to politicians.

Every year, public service broadcasters and the National Radio and Television Council organise workshops and conferences, during which discussions on public media activities and on themes related to supervision are held.

Unfortunately, in Latvia digital television has not yet been introduced in public broadcasting. Public services are still broadcasting with the analogue system. It is therefore not possible to use the additional interactivity offered by digital technologies. However, the state is determined to introduce digital coverage by 2012.

## Slovenia

The public broadcasting service in Slovenia provides several opportunities for support, encouraging and implementation of democratic needs of citizens. A formal and institutional framework for their liberties is provided by the RTV Slovenija Act and the statute of RTV Slovenija based thereof along with specially derived documents like "Professional standards and ethical principles of journalism in the programmes of RTV Slovenija" along with stipulations of the Media Politics Act of the Republic of Slovenia which provides an even stronger protection compared to similar regulations in other European Union countries by granting the right to correction. Each media and the electronic media are no exception in this, are obliged upon the demand by the involved to publish a counterstatement to the reports and statements, which have been published – in an equal length and at the same place. This causes particularly great problems to electronic media, and the measure, which has probably been meant for supporting democratic dialogue and the right to truth as well as objective reporting failed. It causes the objective danger that professional or even investigative journalism shall be replaced by an "opinion mailbox" without the option of appeal. In this sense it would be necessary to amend the act and include more specific definitions, since it has also opened doors to abuse.

Since 1 January 2008, there has been a special institution of ombudsman operating within the public service broadcaster RTV Slovenija in order to protect the interest of the public. The elected ombudsman with a 4-year term being not recallable and autonomous – although within the public service broadcaster (it is a body of the general manager and reports to the Programme Board of the public service broadcaster and thus directly to the public) – should provide the protection of the viewers' and listeners' interests, respond and mediate in their name, supervise any violation of the legal framework and ethical code, while on the other side he would also protect the integrity and independ-

ence of journalists and programme workers against unsubstantiated accusations. Worth mentioning also is that the document "Professional standards and ethical principles of journalism in the programmes of RTV Slovenija", as well as the activities of the ombudsman (whose reach still needs to be proven in practice, since this is a completely new institution), are a specific feature in Slovenia and cannot be found in every European country thus representing a solid concept for building democratic standards.

Unfortunately, there are no supplementary instruments used to promote, facilitate and develop services that support the citizen's democratic needs in Slovenia.

## United Kingdom

All PSM are broadcasters and use the broadcast media to communicate via their programming. The BBC website is one of the most visited websites on the Internet. Additionally, all have websites which support and in some cases go beyond their programming. These websites allow for interactivity; it is possible to sign up for updates through a variety of communications media (e.g. mobile phones, e-mail). Viewer response may also be via phone and text, though in the light of recent problems with premium rate phone-lines (mainly used for voting on popular shows or for competitions), both broadcasters and viewers may be more cautious about this mechanism.

Ofcom now undertakes a consumer experience survey which may include some citizenship concerns; it also has an online forum. The relationship between consumer and citizen has had its impact in Ofcom which was initially concerned only with consumers' concerns. Ofcom has taken some action to clarify the matter, not least by consulting on the relationship between consumer and citizen. As required under the Communications Act, it also is involved in trying to stimulate media literacy. Ofcom has also carried out a number of studies with regard to PSB and the genres of programming which might be seen as particularly important to the citizen. A

clear example of this is its report on the future of news. In this, it is carrying on work carried out in its time by the ITC. Nonetheless, it should be noted that some commentators have been concerned about how the citizen is represented within Ofcom. There is a consumer panel, but not one dedicated to the interests of the citizen. Citizens' interests fall within the remit of the content board. Although the content board has, in principle, a policy setting role, its main focus to date has been the review of complaints about breaches of the content code. Of necessity these complaints tend to focus on specific instances (such as the use of bad language) rather than look at the issue of quality, or the impact on citizens' democratic needs. Ofcom's view is that it has limited powers in relation to "Tier 2"

obligations, as the recent concern regarding children's television provision on ITV illustrates.

Indirectly encouraging the provision of quality and innovative programming are awards for groundbreaking television, such as the Royal Television Society (RTS) awards where there are numerous categories reflecting news provision. There are, of course, other awards at both national and international level. Outside the constraints of the broadcasting and film industries, the Politics Society likewise makes awards for political broadcasting (including satirical work).

#### **Audience/reach of new PSM services<sup>9</sup>**

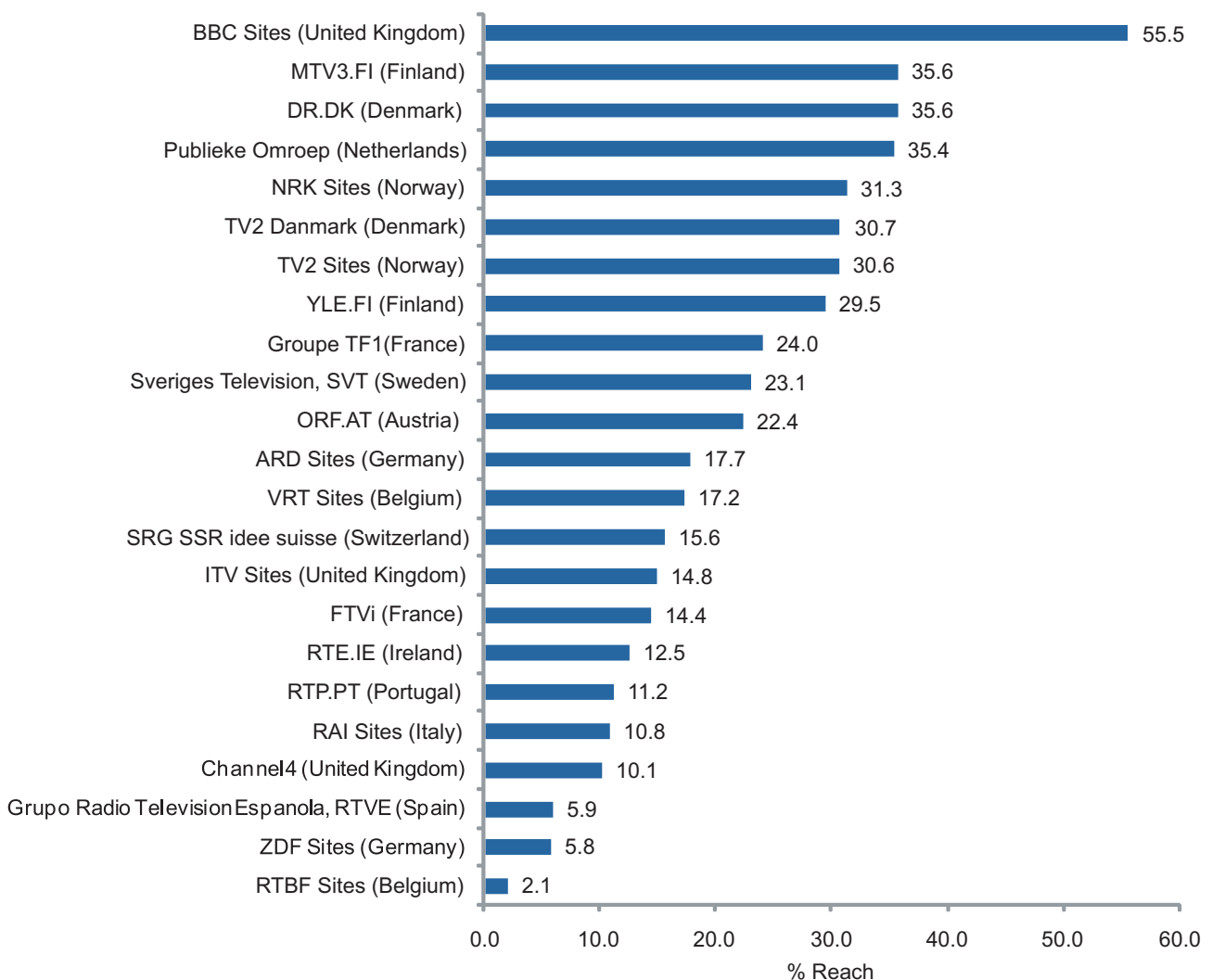
In March 2008 EBU members registered an average reach of 21.4%. (See

Table 1 below.) This means that 21.4% of the Internet population in the countries covered have visited a Member's web property at least once during that period. The BBC, MTV3 (Finland), DR (Denmark) and NPO (the Netherlands) have the strongest Internet appeal among users, with a monthly reach of more than 35%.

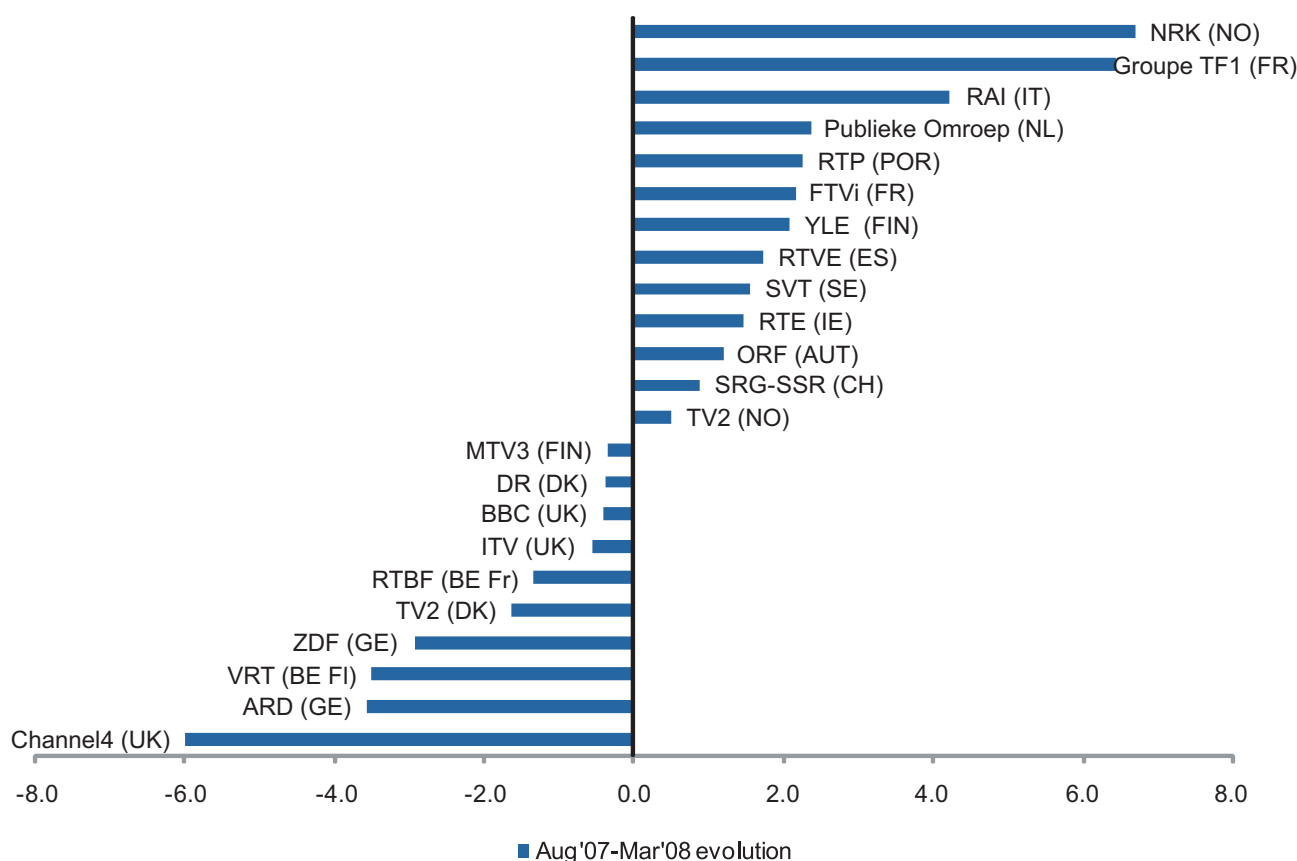
There is a great gap between members' Internet properties, and the scale of reach ranges from more than 55% to less than 2%. However, the vast majority of the entities reach one in ten Internet users.

9. This section refers only to the EBU members both public service and commercial.

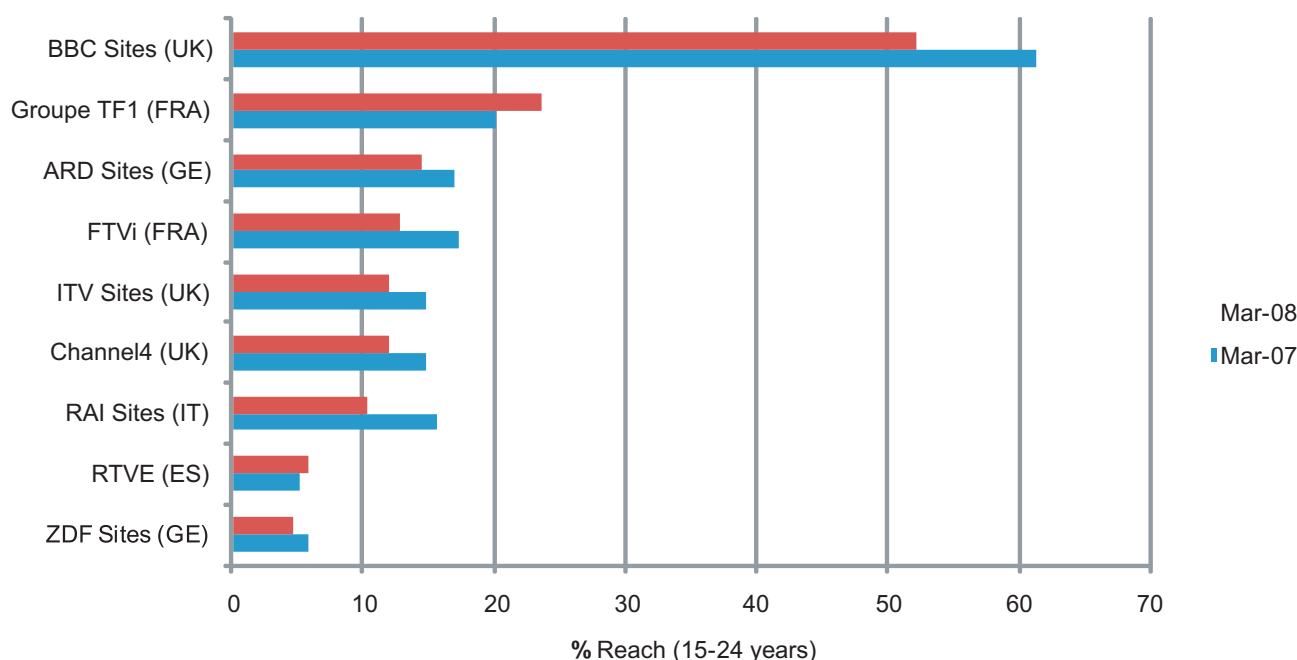
**Table 1. EBU Members' national Internet reach\* (March 2008)**



\* Defined as the percentage of the total universe accounted for by total site visitors. Source: EBU based on comScore Media Metrix.

**Table 2. Evolution of members' Internet properties\***


\* Source: EBU based on comScore Media Metrix.

**Table 3. Reach evolution – youth audiences\***


\* Source: EBU based on comScore Media Metrix.

As regards the development of reach for members' online entities, the majority of the sites show a positive trend

over the past seven months. (See Table 2 above.) The Norwegian public broadcaster NRK has increased the most,

with a growth of 6.7% between August 2007 and March 2008. Among the broadcasters that have suffered the

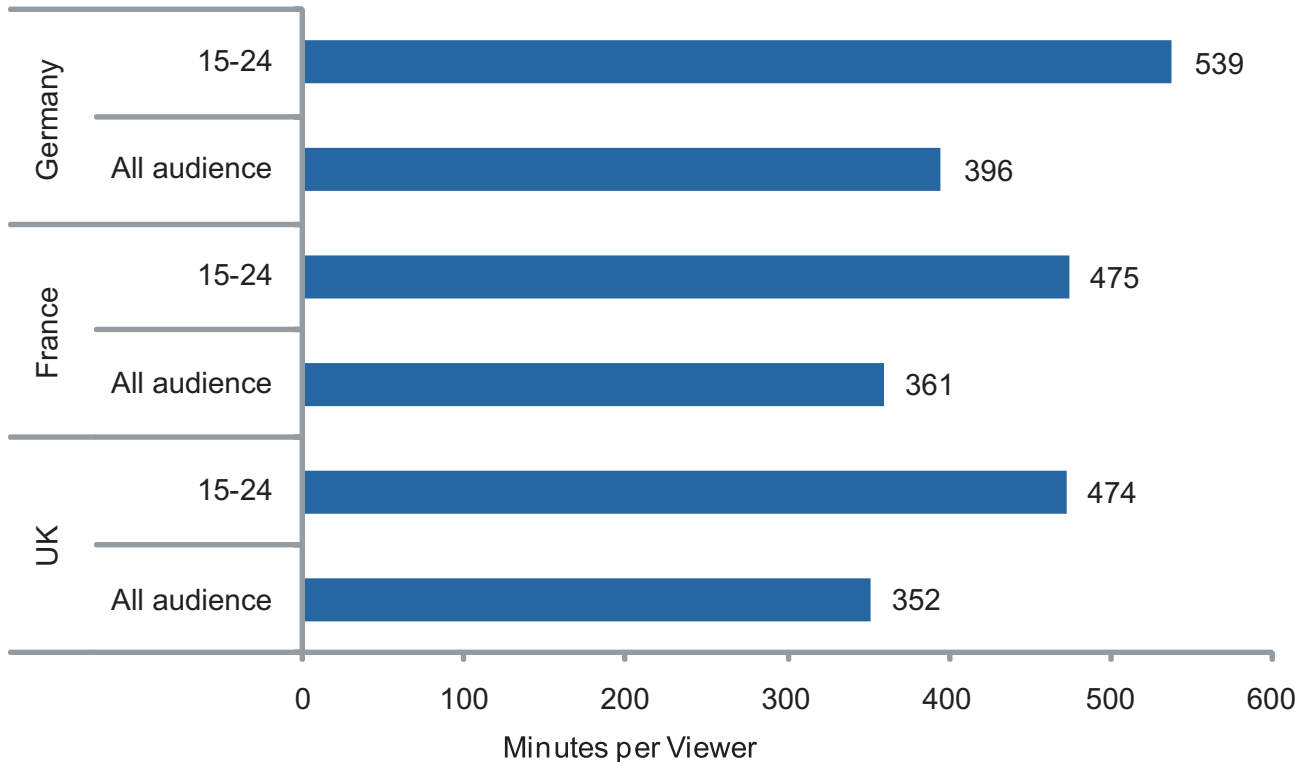
largest losses in audiences' attention in recent months are ARD in Germany and Channel 4 in the United Kingdom.

The BBC and Groupe TF1 are the most successful in attracting young users to

their sites. (See Table 3, page 16.) More than half of the 15- to 24-year-olds in the United Kingdom visited the BBC web property at least once, and the reach for TF1 is 23.7%. While most properties have a reach of more than

10%, RTVE and ZDF seem to have more difficulties in reaching younger people.

**Table 4. Time spent on online video consumption – Youth vs all audiences (January 2008)\***



\* Source: EBU based on comScore Media Metrix.

Most broadcasters have lost reach among young users over the past year. TF1 (+3.5%) and RTVE (0.8%) are the only broadcasters to have gained ground, while the others show decreases in the share which range from 1.2 to 9.2 points.

### Online video consumption

Young people spend more time online and have a higher consumption of online video content than do older generations. The computer has become a part of their everyday life, and the success of sites like YouTube have led to an explosion of sites providing audio and video content online. Media companies are revising their entire business models to increase the spread and availability of video material.

Table 4 above shows the amount of time that Internet users spend con-

suming online content. The data demonstrates that young users spend more time streaming or downloading videos than average users. 15-24 year olds spent some five hours or more on online consumption in January 2008, i. e. approximately 115 minutes more than average users. Young people not only spend more time consuming online video; they also watch more videos than do average users.

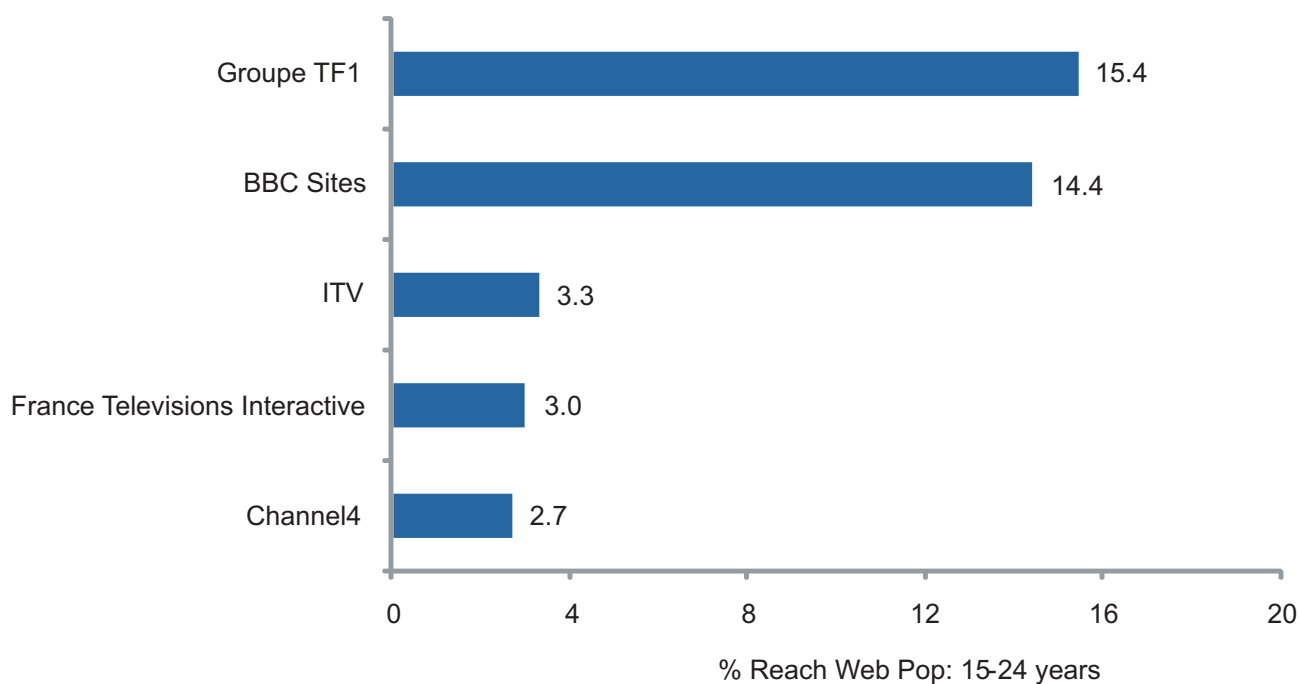
It is important for broadcasters to have a strong Internet presence, and the online video reach for members' web properties shows that TF1 (15.4%) and the BBC (14.4%) are the most successful in attracting younger users with their content output. ITV, FTV Interactive and Channel 4 all have a monthly reach of about 3% monthly reach.

Table 6 on page 18 shows the average time young viewers spend on online consumption and the number of

videos they view. TF1 and Channel 4 lead in terms of videos per viewer, but, users seem to spend less time on each video. The web property where young users spend most of their time is Channel 4, 230 minutes in January 2008. Channel 4 offers a free catch-up streaming service, 4oD, with television, films and music content available 30 days after broadcast. The site includes a large number of full length programmes, which is probably driving the time per viewer. Other sites seem to be used for shorter format programmes and clips.

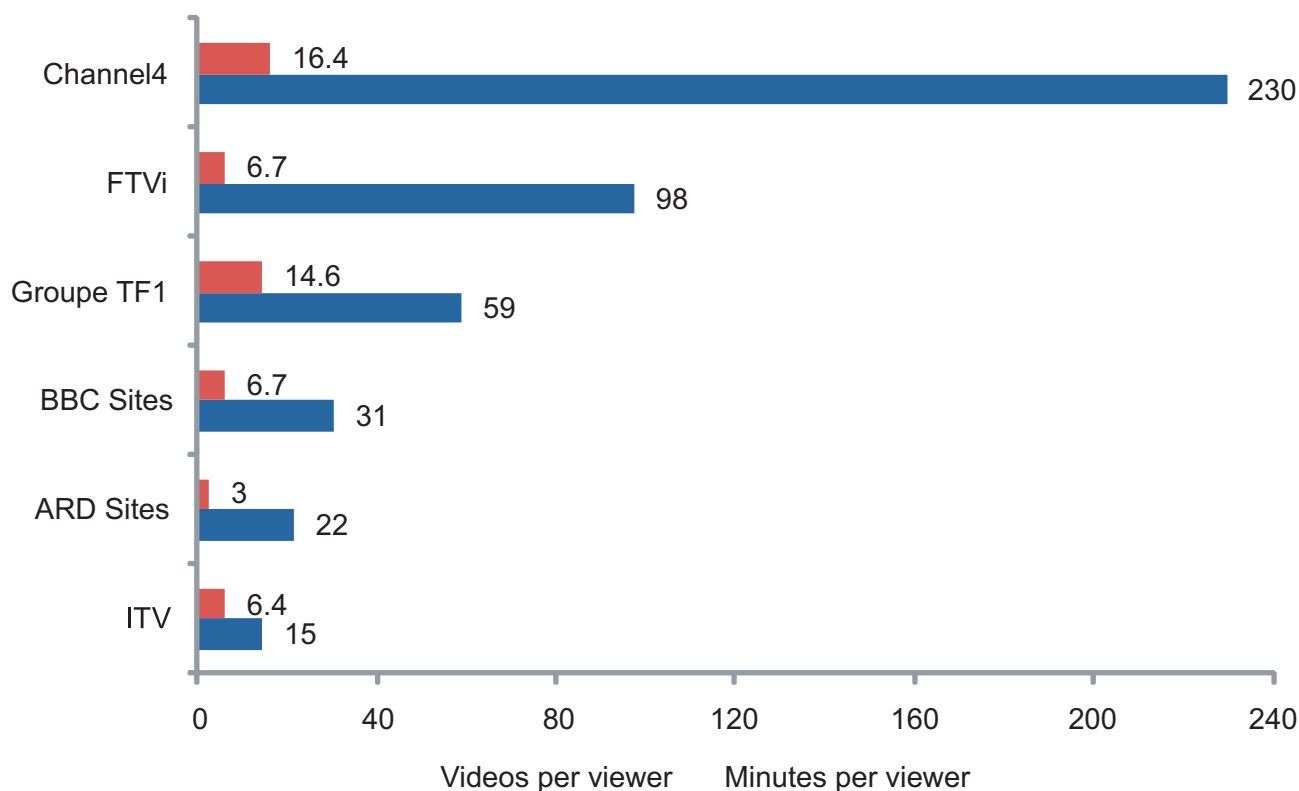
The conclusion based on the data is that users go to Channel 4 and FTVi sites to look at fewer but longer videos, while at the BBC and TF1 sites users tend to spend less time but on more videos.

**Table 5. Monthly reach of online video content on members' sites – youth audiences\***



\* Source: EBU based on comScore. Note: The ZDF web property did not register sufficient reach to be included in the data reporting this period.

**Table 6. Time spent on online video consumption on members' sites – youth audiences (January 2008)\***



\* Source: EBU based on comScore.

## Good practice examples of PSM programmes/services aiming at wider democratic participation of individuals

Democracy is not limited to elections; it is an ongoing process, and media activities between elections might be even more important for maintaining democratic participation, than media coverage of elections *stricto sensu*. Despite the complexity, PSM companies are doing a lot to promote, facilitate and develop services that support citizens' democratic needs. Space does not permit detailed or exhaustive examination. There are dozens of possible examples at least as good as those offered here. Our examples illustrate PSM's role in democracy, with emphasis on participation and PSM's broader role in nurturing democratisation.

Below is a compendium of good practice examples of programmes/services promoting wider democratic participation of individuals. These examples are organised in five summary categories<sup>10</sup> that are treated in turn: Information; Facilitation; Collaboration; Democratisation; Mobilisation.

### Information

Every PSM company provides news across platforms. News is a vital service to democracy that is of deep PSB heritage and broad continuing importance. News services are very familiar, but it is crucial to observe that PSM news is unique in casting an equally critical eye on economic actors as well as political actors and due to their non-profit status, in so far as public funding and editorial independence are secure. Full scale coverage and in depth information is a particular aspect in this category provided by every PSM company. The idea is to organise content that is currently in the news in combination with documents and other materials to give users robust opportunities to develop a deeper understanding beyond the transitory surface story. On-demand archives of previously broadcast material present an aspect of great importance in this category of PSM services. This is in development practically everywhere. The

information aspect also refers to the transparency function of PSM with regard to political decision-making.

### Facilitation

A range of services are offered by PSM companies that enable individuals to explore a variety of issues and topics in order to learn new things of personal relevance. These services facilitate deepening of insight and securing enlightenment in ways that are educative rather than educational. The difference lies in the approach to pedagogy. An educational approach is the historic lecturing model while an educative approach is interactive and communication-based. The election engine system is a common example in PSM. Online games could also be a useful means to enhance the general knowledge and comprehension of the society. Such services are particularly attractive to young audiences.

### Collaboration

Web 2.0 describes the development of social networking online. A host of such services are popular today, especially YouTube, Flickr, MySpace and Facebook. Less often remarked but of keen importance for constructing democratic discourse are social networking services offered by PSM companies that integrate broadcast and online services in connection with user-created content of thematic interest.

### Democratisation

The role of PSM is not only in promoting individual participation with regard to a specific issue or in a particular situation, as important as that is. The role of PSM is also of broader importance in supporting the on-going project of democratisation which nurtures perspectives, routines and involvements that construct democracy in society.

### Mobilisation

The last category to be treated focuses on services that assist citizens in personal efforts to be active with regard

to social movements and involvement. This is a new frontier so there are not many examples yet.

## INFORMATION

### *Finland – Elävä Arkisto (Living Archive)*<sup>11</sup>

On-demand archives of previously broadcast material present an aspect of great importance in this category of PSM services. This is in development practically everywhere. YLE's Living Archives (*Elävä Arkisto*) in Finland, pictured in Screenshot 1, page 20, is a good example (<http://www.yle.fi/elavaarkisto/>). The company's editorial staff organises historic material in topical categories that users can review and explore at whim. It is thus a knowledge generating experience and not a purely informative one. Many PSM companies have the longest histories and deepest archives in their respective countries. Considerable investment has been underway for about ten years to digitise vast catalogues of archived material, and in every PSM company this project will continue for years to come. Such service links radio and television programmes, national cultural and social heritage, in both current and historic terms, with on-demand services via company web sites.

Huge on-demand archive containing over 4 000 background articles connected to over 300 hours of television programmes and archive films and 700 hours of radio programmes. The service is mainly focused on Finnish history and culture but the archives also include plenty of international material. The archive is constantly being updated and new material is added.

The archive is organised into various categories (Finland, World, Sports, Culture and entertainment, Home and leisure, Children, Top-rated, Latest).

10. These five categories have been proposed by G. Lowe (see above, page 6).

11. Helsingin Sanomat 17.10.2004, p. C5; <http://www.yle.fi/elavaarkisto/>; [http://blogit.yle.fi/elava\\_arkisto\\_yhteista\\_historiaa\\_aanin\\_ja\\_kuvin](http://blogit.yle.fi/elava_arkisto_yhteista_historiaa_aanin_ja_kuvin).



Screenshot 1. Finland –Elävä Arkisto (Living Archive)

The categories are divided in subcategories relating to specific topics. The subcategories itself are again subdivided into various subjects with the connected archive films. For example, the category *World* is divided into:

- ▶ One subcategory on crucial events in men's history such as Romanian revolution, Chernobyl accident, Watergate scandal, 9/11, Tsunami
- ▶ One subcategory on wars and armed conflict, containing material of the battle of Stalingrad, D-Day, Vietnam war, Falklands war
- ▶ One subcategory divided into regional history sections such as European history, American history, Asian history, Latin American history, African history
- ▶ One subcategory on famous historical persons like Einstein, Yuri Gagarin, Margaret Thatcher, Anna Politkovskaya, Princess Diana
- ▶ One subcategory on social phenomena such as socialist life in Cuba, the *Rainbow Warrior* incident, youth prostitution in Japan, Mormons in Utah.

The category *Culture and entertainment* is divided in subcategories on:

- ▶ Musical artists, music clips and rock stars

- ▶ TV series and television programmes
- ▶ Eurovision song contest
- ▶ Symphony orchestras
- ▶ Famous filmmakers
- ▶ Art, famous painter and men of letters
- ▶ Older films and TV spots
- ▶ Films about the world of science from its beginning to the present date
- ▶ Cabaret, theatre, magic shows
- ▶ Other related matters

Besides the video on demand section, there is also a radio section "The Living Archive Internet Radio". Over the web radio it is possible to listen to a stream of old radio programmes 24 hours a day.

The YLE programming archive services on the Internet were launched in September 2003 under the name of YLE Arkki. This service contained primarily radio programmes from the past, which were offered both in a form of continuous web radio service as well as on-demand services under different themes with additional background information. Some parts of the YLE Arkki web radio programming was also broadcast on FM in Kuopio, Turku and Lahti.

Besides about 700 radio programmes (400 hours), YLE Arkki offered also

some still pictures and television programmes from the YLE Archives. The oldest available radio programmes were from the 1930s, but most of the materials were from the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. Among other interesting programmes, this service made available to all people for example the only known recording of Adolf Hitler having a private conversation.

Despite its innovation and high cultural value, it seems that YLE Arkki was not a big and immediate success. After a year in the web it was not familiar even to all of YLE employees. The service continued for a couple of years without much publicity. Then, at the 80th birthday of YLE on 9 September 2006 it was re-launched with an updated concept, additional content and a new name: YLE Elävä Arkisto (Living Archive).

The service is offering now 550 hours of radio programming, 160 hours of films and TV programming. The oldest films among approximately 1 000 video clips were 100 years old from 1906. Every programme or programme sample was supported with an article which connected the material with its context in time and place. In addition, the historic materials were also organised in differentiated thematic and topical categories. Besides the programmes, the new service

contained 2 500 photographs, 2 200 articles providing background information and 250 different thematic packages. The web radio service with archive programmes still remains as a part of the service, but its role is now less central.

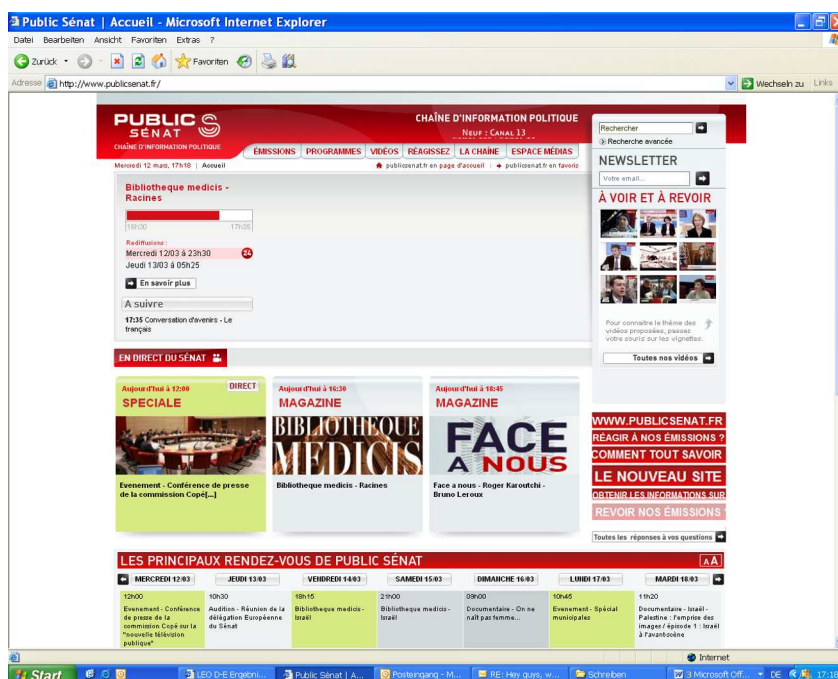
The main purpose of the Living Archive has been to make available the common cultural heritage from the archives to as many Finns as possible using the means of the new technology to give the citizens an idea of the past of the nation through the programmes and their context. For example big news events, interesting

people from past decades as well as different phenomena of life have offered thematic structures for the editors of the archive.

Although the number of audio clips in the service was at first almost twice as large as the number of video clips, there are now more video than audio clips available in YLE Elävä Arkisto. Recently the service published its 5 000th video clip, while the number of audio clips is now also over 3 000. Altogether the service offers 680 hours of radio and 750 hours of television programming from the past decades. In an average week, the archive editors may

add about 20 audio or video clips to the service. Programmes are selected based on suggestions from the audience, weekly voting system and the ideas from the archive editors.

The concept update, new looks and services as well as additional publicity have now made the Living Archive a great success story in Finland. YLE Elävä Arkisto website has about 80 000 visitors in an average week, and the pages are loaded about a million times every week. The service and its editors have won numerous awards during the last two years.



Screenshot 2. France – La Chaîne Parlementaire and Public Sénat

### France – La Chaîne Parlementaire and Public Sénat

This is a prime example of the role of PSM in promoting transparency in political decision-making. *La Chaîne parlementaire* is a French public service television network responsible for broadcasting activity from the National Assembly of France and the Senate of France. It is available through digital terrestrial television "TNT". It was created in 1999 on the request of the National Assembly of France. It started by broadcasting twice a week, Tuesday and Wednesday, in the afternoons on France 3. On 8 February 2000, the channel started broadcasting activity from the Senate

of France. The channel broadcasts 24 hours from the Assembly followed by 24 hours from the Senate in a pre-arranged order. On 31 March 2005 the channel obtained its own TNT frequency. The channel provides for online videos of the debates, too, which are available in the categories "Videos relating to the different programmes", "Most frequently watched videos" and "What's currently on".

### Germany – ARD

ARD offers a specific online service (<http://www.ard.de/>) which is based on the internet presence of the nine regional public service broadcasters. In terms of content, the provided offer is related

to ARD's TV programme and is free of ads and sponsorship. Amongst other things, ARD provides for several multimedia on-demand services related to the newscast "Tagesschau". "Tagesschau" is the oldest and most popular evening newscast in Germany, with its 8 o'clock format. It reached an average of 5.96 million viewers per day in 2005 and an average of 5.73 million daily viewers in 2006, which relates to approximately 20% of market shares within that period of time<sup>12</sup> (see <http://www.tagesschau.de/multimedia/multimediaindex2.html>). Beside audio and

12. [http://www.ard.de/intern/basisdaten/fernsehnutzung/zuschauer\\_20und\\_20marktanteile\\_20der\\_20fernsehn-/id=55062/1a2pojg/](http://www.ard.de/intern/basisdaten/fernsehnutzung/zuschauer_20und_20marktanteile_20der_20fernsehn-/id=55062/1a2pojg/).

video services, live streams and animated graphics, one of these multimedia services is an on-demand archive of all "Tagesschau" broadcasts since January 2002 (<http://www.tagesschau.de/multimedia/video/videoarchiv2.jsp>). This service allows Internet users to watch all "Tagesschau" broadcasts either in real time or to watch singular news reports selected in advance. Users are enabled to have a review of former events of the day. Furthermore, this offer links a television programme to an on-demand service. It enables users to gather customised information in order to fill gaps in knowledge concerning former political and social occurrences. Generally speaking, this service helps to create general knowledge and calls peoples attention to daily news.

#### *Germany – Phoenix*

Phoenix is a public service television broadcaster, operated by ARD and ZDF. The legal basis of Phoenix is determined in the third Amendment to the Inter-State Treaty on Broadcasting. Through this Amendment, ARD and ZDF are permitted to operate two additional special interest channels. Today, Phoenix is one of the most popular news channels in Germany. In terms of content, Phoenix's remit is stipulated in the principles of programming, which lay down that the channel should conduce to the formation of opinions on political issues, background information should be furnished and even complicated matters shall be presented in a coherent manner. In addition, Phoenix acts as a non-party television broadcaster which aims to inform in a balanced manner.

Therefore, its programme is focused on the coverage of events by reportage, news broadcasts and documentation. By offering uncommented live television coverage of political or other events that are important for society, Phoenix provides impartial information, which allows spectators to form their opinion without the exercise of any (editorial) influence.

In addition, Phoenix provides a concomitant service for deaf people by

translating the "Tagesschau" (see above) into sign language. This particular service enables deaf people to take an active part in the process of formation of opinion and guarantees them free access to information. The Phoenix "flagship" of updated information is the newscast "Der Tag", broadcast from 11 p.m. to midnight every day. The duration of one hour guarantees comprehensive and profound reportages. In the format "Vor Ort", Phoenix broadcasts live interviews, press conferences, plenary sessions, etc. By providing broad information, people become more aware of current events and are enabled to take part in public discussions.

#### *LATVIA – PSM news and current affairs programming*

The news services of the public broadcasters actively communicate with their viewers and listeners, inviting them via internet (<http://www.ltv1.lv/lat/raidijumi/zinas/>, Latvian Television and <http://www.latvijasradio.lv/>, Latvian Radio) to inform them – the broadcasters – by phone or letters about important socio-political events, as well as to express their attitudes about the events, personalities and decisions covered in news.

Listeners to Latvian Radio have the possibility of listening to all radio programmes on Internet too. Users are able to listen to radio programmes from previous years, starting 1 July 2004, which are archived (see <http://www.latvijasradio.lv/program/>). The Latvian Radio news service website regularly publishes the latest news, Latvian Television has made a big step towards quality Internet television, in co-operation with one of the biggest Latvian Internet portals, Apollo, creating the archive website of Latvian Television (see <http://www.ltv1.lv/lat/raidijumi/zinas/>). Not only the most important present programmes are archived, but these programmes of previous years are also gradually digitised (starting with the first video recordings from the 1970s). Most importantly, this archiving is carried out in high resolution, which provides a quality picture on a full screen monitor. Viewers more and

more use this possibility, as it allows watching the favourite TV programme in appropriate format and good quality.

#### *Slovenia – Dedicated parliamentary TV channel*

The RTV Slovenija Act anticipates "a special national television channel intended to provide live transmissions of sessions of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia and its working bodies". This novelty became fully operative only with the beginning of 2008 as immediately after admission of the Act there were neither technical solutions (full equipment with cameras in all relevant rooms of the Parliament) nor available frequencies (terrestrial frequencies in the state were already taken). In the meantime all the technical problems were solved – the Parliament is fully equipped for this task and on the field of distribution the public service uses digital frequencies and a combination of special channels on cable networks.

To make the viewing of the work of the Parliament more familiar and so implicitly also the democratic participation of individuals it is important that the channel, besides the plenary sessions of the Parliament, also broadcasts all the more important session of parliamentary committees where most of the parliamentary life unfolds and so offers to the interested public a view into the essence of parliamentary work. The scheme of the channel is broader – it summarises and broadcasts the sessions of the European Parliament. RTV Slovenija was in the framework of EBU in 2006 the initiator of a special seminar on which the representatives of European public PSM services and representatives of parliamentary channels exchanged their experiences of covering the work of Parliaments and agreed on closer co-operation. They will begin to exchange longer reports on the most important sessions and decisions of national parliaments, which will strengthen the sense of importance of parliamentary democracy and different experiences (also innovations) through it; it would also influence the way the European Parliament is covered (and the proce-

dures of its elections) so that this could also be brought closer to the citizens.

#### *Slovenia – The “Europe in Person!” radio programme*

Radio Slovenia offers a useful example that illustrates PSM effort to provide a distinctive service within traditional broadcast media and not only in the new media context. In the *Europe in Person!* programme, the producers search out people across Europe who give voice and personality to the rich variety and ordinariness of life in Europe today. The programme works to lower boundaries in perceptions by cross borders in representation. Much emphasis in the 12- to 15-minute features is keyed to the person's views on Europe and ideas about different European societies.

#### *United Kingdom – News and current affairs programming*

All the United Kingdom's public service broadcasters carry news and current affairs programmes, and the majority of the United Kingdom's population gets its news from a PSB service. According to Ofcom research, approximately half of consumers consider that news programmes make them feel part of the democratic process. As well as the national news programmes, both the BBC and ITV provide regular regional news bulletins; and the BBC also has a network of local radio stations providing local news and discussion of national, regional and local issues.

Aside from the news bulletins themselves, long-running national programmes dealing with politics and matters of public interest include *Today* (Radio 4 breakfast-time programme that has been running for more than 50 years and is almost an institution in its own right), *Newsnight* (BBC2 current affairs programme broadcast on weekday evenings), *The Week in Westminster* (Radio 4 weekly political review), *Panorama* (BBC1's flagship investigative documentary series), *Dispatches* (Channel 4 investigative documentary series), *Any Questions* (Radio 4) and *Question Time* (BBC1). The latter two programmes are

based on audience questions to a panel of politicians and other public figures and are held in a different location each week. *Question Time Extra* extends the coverage of the debate on BBC News 24, with discussion of viewers' comments sent in by e-mail and text. A children's version of *Question Time* has also been broadcast.

The BBC's long-running programme *Newsround* is the only news programme aimed at, and featuring news and current issues of interest to, children. As a late afternoon, post-school programme, it has in the past reported a number of breaking news stories ahead of the main evening news bulletins. More recently, the *Newsround* programme “The Wrong Trainers”, dealing with child poverty, won an RTS Award and, according to the BBC, triggered national debate.

Digital developments have allowed broadcasters to broadcast more news (for example, BBC News 24, a 24-hour news and current affairs channel), as well as develop specific channels focussing on matters of public interest and concern. BBC Parliament is dedicated to the coverage of politics and regularly broadcasts live or recorded coverage from the United Kingdom Parliament, the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh and Northern Ireland Assemblies. It also has a programme focussing on developments in the European Union: *The Record Europe*.

Most television and radio programming in the United Kingdom is now supported by the broadcasters' websites, which provide further information on issues covered in the programmes as well as dealing with issues not featured, and also allow users to submit their own comments on current stories and to suggest topics.

#### *United Kingdom – BBC – “Today” website*

Radio 4, the BBC's national talk and current affairs radio channel in the United Kingdom, produces the *Today* programme which is a good example, in this case linking radio and the internet (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/today/>). The *Today* website is the legacy of an

earlier popular programme strand called *The Great Debate* (1999-2003) which provided dialogue about news items especially focused on civic issues. The *Today* version features an issue of the day, typically related to national or international political concerns that affect Britain. The online site includes an archive of past issues and an overview of the issue currently under debate. This is a typical PSM service. Also increasingly typical the *Today* case offers participants opportunity to influence the radio programme's substance and approach via their questions and input, and by suggesting issues for future programmes. Such examples could also be treated under the Collaboration category. This is important to observe because much that PSM is doing is multi-dimensional – it is explicitly cross-platform and cross-genre. Finally, although this example links PSM radio and internet, the aspect is generalisable to television programming where similar formats are common, as well.

The *Today* website offers a large variety of audio interviews audio reports, podcasts and contact opportunities relating to both current political affairs and historical events of national or international importance. The online site is structured in the following category groups:

► **Today:** offers the main current topics at a glance. Updated reports, interviews and news of the day are presented in a well arranged manner.

► **Listen Again:** Lists audio clips from the most recent programmes emitted by Radio 4. This way, customers can listen again to programmes which have been emitted 7 days back. Moreover, there's also an Audio Archive where audio files have been saved from 2003 on.

► **Latest Reports:** Pictures and audio files from reports are available in the categories Politics, Science and Nature, Arts & Culture, International, Miscellaneous;

► **Interview of the week:** You can listen to interviews with political and social decision makers such as Kofi Annan (on how urgently Africa needs to solve the Kenyan Crisis), Culture



Screenshot 3. United Kingdom – BBC Radio 4 – The Today programme

Secretary Andy Burnham (on plans to give every school child five hours of “high quality culture” per week) and Minister Liam Byrne and Conservative Damian Green (debating the validity of Britain adopting Australian immigration practices)

» **About Today:** Offers video documentaries chronicling “A Day In The Life of Today” and showing the presenters of the *Today* programme in front of the camera

» **Today at 50:** Offers a journey through the ages by letting famous people describe their memories about great moments in history, as reported by *Today*.

» **Message Board:** Gives viewers and listeners a chance to participate in discussions and debates on what’s currently in the news. Every day, journal-

ists start discussions based around the big issues of the day and then incorporate the customer’s views into future programmes. A typical discussion topic is for example: “Should school leavers be made to pledge allegiance to Queen and country at citizenship ceremonies?”

» **Contact Today:** Offers the opportunity to text the *Today* team comments, complaints, etc.

## FACILITATION

### Austria – ORF

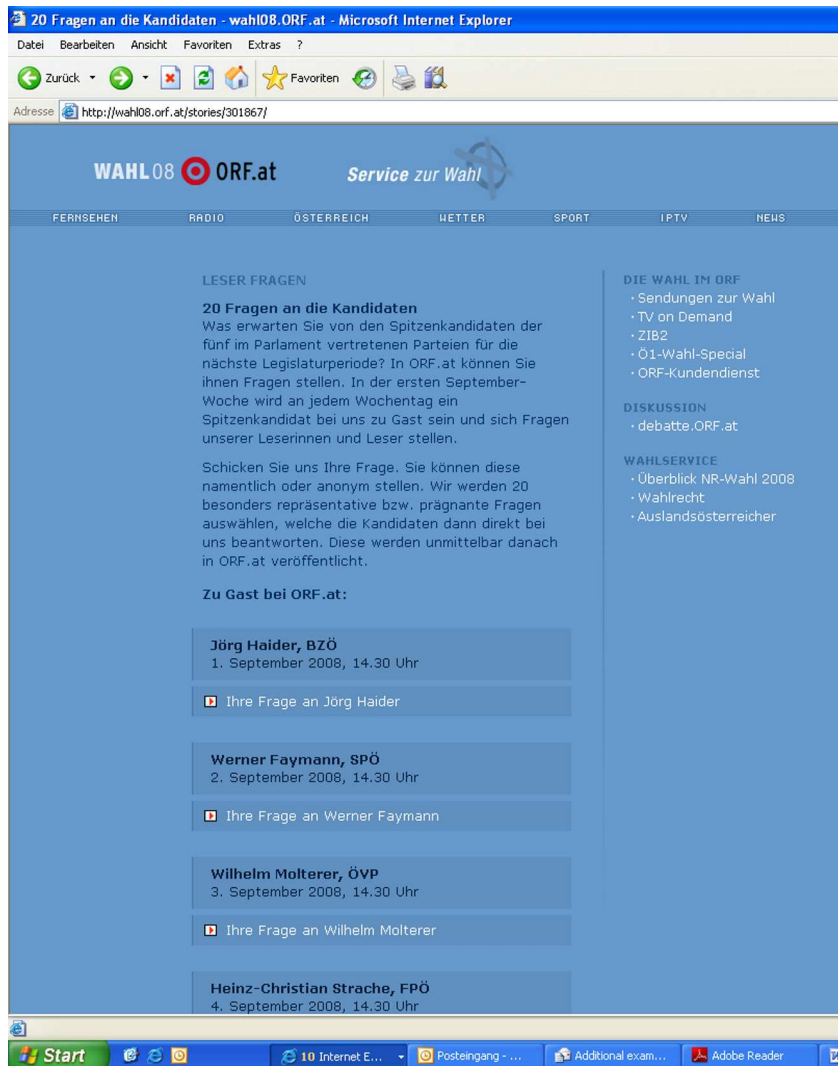
ORF has an online initiative where users can post their most relevant questions to the main candidates of the principal political parties. The ORF team then selects 20 most interesting questions addressed to each candi-

date. The answers are published online.

### Denmark – DR

There are numerous examples of programmes and services aimed at stimulating a wider democratic participation and there is a long tradition in DR for involving citizens in programming – not only as vox-pop but as sources of knowledge, experience and opinions. Worthy of mention are the daily radio programme “Poul Friis” on P1 with phone-in debates on current topics, public debates combining radio or TV shows with internet debate and “Dog-world”, where young people between 11 and 17 years of age are learning democracy through playing games.

The DR internet portal <http://www.dr.dk/> is an important instrument for public



Screenshot 4. Austria – ORF

debates on democratic and political issues. For essential topics DR creates special debate sites with access to programme material – radio and TV programmes, news-clips etc on demand or as podcasts – links to additional background material and invites the internet users to participate. Examples on such debate topics are the Danish engagement in the war in Iraq, Muslims in Denmark and how you can influence public planning of public areas in your town.

For several years DR had a weekly TV programme with a 30-minute interview with a minister, politician or other influential person. After the 30 minutes the discussion continued as a radio programme, where the viewers – now listeners – could phone-in and table their ideas and comments and discuss with the guest in the studio.

Every Thursday evening the programme “Debatten” on TV channel DR2 has a live political debate to focus on a topical issue and the debate continues on dr.dk where it can go on for a long period and where people who were not able to watch the programme on air can get it on-demand or as a podcast.

#### *General coverage of parliamentary work*

To make the political debates available to everybody and to stimulate interest in the political life in Denmark, DR transmits during daytime live from every assembly and debate from the Danish parliament (the Folketing) on one of its main channels (DR2).

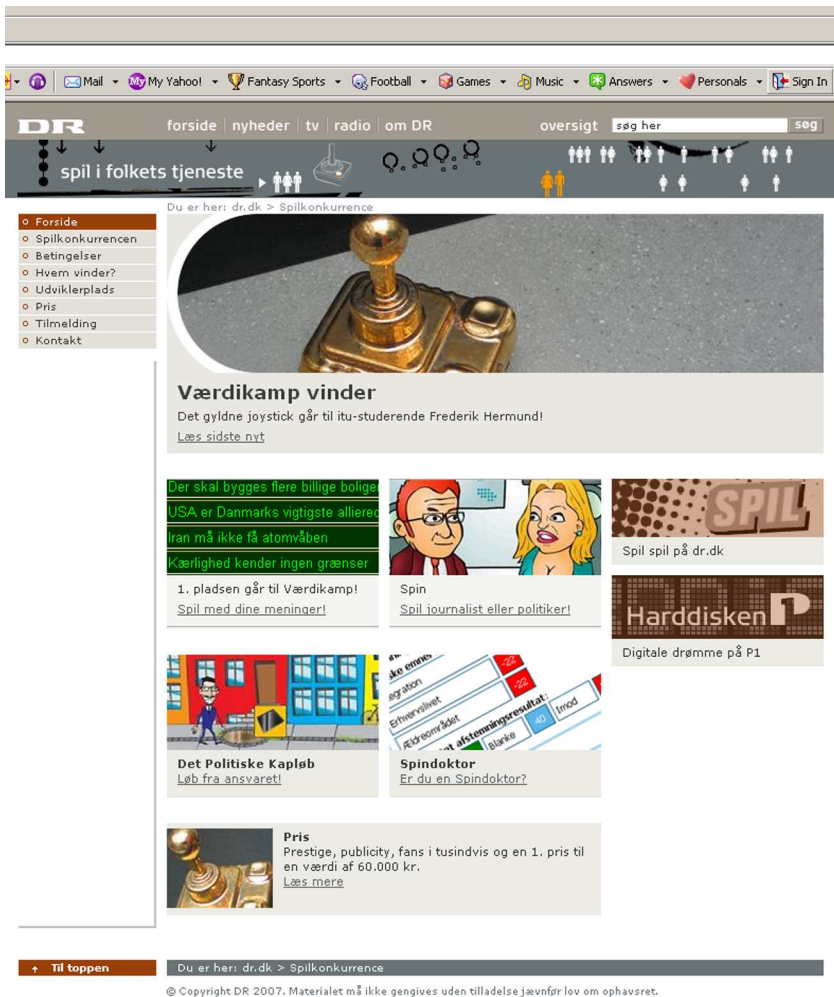
#### *Specific actions in pre-election phases*

DR's role when there is a democratic election is one example on how DR tries to promote a wider democratic interest and participation. During the

latest elections for the Folketing in October 2007, DR made a concerted effort to stimulate interest and participation in the election for everybody in Denmark. Through the overall slogan “Understanding your choice” (“*Gør det noget valget er til at forstå*”), DR's coverage of the election was aimed at making the election understandable and relevant for everybody. As a part of this DR launched a number of initiatives specifically aimed at promoting a wider democratic participation. These included:

► On the day the election was called DR launched a major campaign to allow the Danes to express their opinions, upon which were the most important issues in this election. Viewers, listeners and users were invited to cast vote on 10-15 issues and to contribute with their own issues. During the first 2 days more than 40,000 votes

Screenshot 5. Denmark – DR



were cast and the results fed into DR's general coverage of the election. P4 the most popular radio station in Denmark initiated a number of local debates where the central issues were brought to life through local cases and discussed by local candidates and audience. The debates were broadcast live on P4.

►► The most advanced and comprehensive overview in Denmark of all candidates in the election was established by DR and made available online on dr.dk. The overview was fully searchable and had a number of features designed to make it easy for everybody to compare opinions and political views and select their favourite candidate.

►► In 24 hours for Denmark (*"Et døgn for Danmark"*) was an initiative aimed at promoting interest in politics among the younger part of the population. Six leading politicians from the

big parties youth organisation were brought together for 24 hours to solve the central political issues and find a common vision for future Danish society. The event was covered around the clock through webcam, DR's News Channel DR Update and in news programmes on radio and television.

#### *"The battle between values"*

Another unique example provided by DR, which has been developing online games with a distinctly public service character: in 2006 DR hosted a competition and the top four winners are available at <http://www.dr.dk/Spilkonkurrencen/> (pictured above, Screenshot 5). *Værdikampen* ("The battle between values") is related to a controversial political issue in Denmark (the right-wing government's sceptical position towards progressive values). Players learn what the values are about how where they personally

stand in relation to them. Another game establishes a dilemma and two players work through the implications. Other games encourage users to analyse political spin in publicity clips and statements. DR is currently developing similar games related to coming parliamentary elections.

#### *Finland – YLE – Vaalikone (Election Engine)<sup>13</sup>*

Election Engine in its current form can be described as a Finnish invention made in YLE. The election engine enables citizens to discover which candidates most closely represent their personal views and interests. Candidates fill out a questionnaire which users later fill out as well and then click on a dialogue button. The "machine",

13. <http://www.yle.fi/vaalit/2007/vaalikone>; <http://blogit.hs.fi/unski/maanantai-192200732merkinta>; <http://www.jyu.fi/ajankohtaista/arkisto/2007/02/tiedote-2007-09-18-16-44-55-854236/>



Screenshot 6. YLE's Election Engine, Finland

which is a software programme, compares the user's answers to each of the candidates standing for election and reveals the 'distance' between the user and the candidates. The site offered by the Finnish PSM operator, YLE, for the last parliamentary election is a good example of this type of Facilitation: <http://www.yle.fi/vaalit/2007/vaalikone/>.

By now, practically all other major media outlets in Finland have also created their own election engines, which means that if candidates now want to be available in all main election engines, they must answer several different sets of questions in advance.

According to a recent study regarding election engines, about 25% of the people who voted in the Finnish parliamentary elections in 2003 had used at least one election engine in order to find a suitable candidate to vote for. Among the younger people the

number of election engine users was almost 50%.

Although the election engine was introduced in Finland by YLE, the problem is that the company does not have any special rights to this kind of service. After nine "engine-assisted" elections in Finland, there are now so many election engines available on the web that the whole idea may probably soon suffer a sort of inflation and related fatigue among users – especially when different engines give you different results. The YLE election engine can remain important only as long as citizens find it better and more trustworthy than the other options.

#### Germany – ARD (NDR and WDR)

In addition to current affairs focussing on North-Rhine Westphalia, WDR.de produces online specials covering background stories and providing in-

depth analysis of topics beyond news. There are specials on "climate change", <http://www.klima.wdr.de/>; "cultural diversity and migration", <http://www.integration.wdr.de/>; "Europe today" <http://www.europa.wdr.de/>; and "education", <http://www.schule.wdr.de/> – to name a few. All specials can be accessed via the right-hand navigation bar. A striking example is the recently-launched special on world religions at <http://www.religion.wdr.de/>.

With its five parts, on Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and Hinduism, the special provides a wealth of insights into the beliefs and concepts of each of the religions. It also takes a close look at the daily lives of believers and religious groups in North Rhine Westphalia with their specific situation and also their conflicts. The range of on-demand audios and videos from many of WDR's programmes and channels makes this special on world reli-

gions a true multimedia experience. There is also a content area specifically geared towards children. Like all WDR.de specials, <http://www.religion.wdr.de/> offers various participatory elements. WDR encourages and invites users to communicate with editors and among each other. Many of the current reports offer a guestbook feature and make it possible to comment on events. As an example of the focus on religious events taking place in the respective region, NDR covered comprehensively on television, radio and online the 97th German day of Catholics in *Osnabrück*. Further information is available at: <http://www1.ndr.de/nachrichten/niedersachsen/indexkatholikentag2.html>

During the general election in 2005 in Germany wdr.de participated in the joint election special of ARD, which was hosted on the main news site <http://www.tagesschau.de/>, named after the main evening news bulletin "*Tageschau*". In addition to normal election coverage, with polls, demographics, profiles of the candidates and parties, the main election issues, etc., the site also offered two different yet corresponding blogs. One was the "professional" blog, in which political correspondents of the public service network ARD offered their views and analysis of events. The other one was the citizens' blog ("*Bürgerblog*"). Five users of the wdr.de home page from different parts of Germany, with different backgrounds were selected to cover the election campaign and to offer their views regarding the matters on which politicians and media were focussing.

The coverage of elections and election campaigns also constitutes a focus for various offers on-line of, for instance, NDR. A wide variety of chats with politicians, of polls and surveys, specials and dossiers are important elements of content online.

In addition, NDR television and NDR radio offer vast, detailed coverage and background information concerning elections on the European, federal, state and regional levels. The aim is to raise political awareness and interest in democratic participation. As regards the recent election on the regional

level, NDR television informed its audience in even more detail by splitting its prime-time programme geographically into different "windows".

To encourage citizens to contribute and participate in political and societal debates and developments, NDR television offers a specific programme called "*Kühn & Kollegen*" which invites citizens to voice their interests and actively supports citizens in defending and maintaining their rights. Further information is available at [http://www3.ndr.de/ndrtv\\_pages\\_std/0,,SPM16252,00.html?redir=1/](http://www3.ndr.de/ndrtv_pages_std/0,,SPM16252,00.html?redir=1/).

The radio programmes of WDR contribute in various forms to the process of forming political opinions, e.g. via interactive call-in programmes like the weekly "*1LIVE-Sektor*" (<http://1LIVE.de/>) dedicated especially to the young audience and listeners, the weekly "*WDR 5 Tagesgespräch*" and the weekly "*WDR 2 Arena*" which is partly accompanied by off-air events. These programmes mainly reflect current political and societal subjects, while the programme "*WDR 5 LebensArt*" focuses on practical aspects of daily service and "*WDR Funkhaus Walraffplatz*" specifically concerns media-related issues. There is also a specific media-related programme on television, offered by NDR called "*Zapp*", which reflects critically on the role of the media within the process of opinion-shaping. Further information is available at [http://www3.ndr.de/ndrtv\\_pages\\_std/0,,SPM2488,00.htm?redir=1/](http://www3.ndr.de/ndrtv_pages_std/0,,SPM2488,00.htm?redir=1/).

WDR Radio follows with "*Hörspiel plus*", an unconventional approach to interactivity in the form of radio plays (radio drama), dedicated to a current political or societal debate, complemented by a call-in-programme.

Another interactive and multimedia programme is offered daily by NDR radio ("*NDR 1 Radio MV Klartext*"), which discusses topics with listeners in the north-eastern *Land of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern*. This radio talk show offers listeners the possibility not only to voice their opinions as in a call-in programme but also to discuss matters among each other, on air, online or by telephone.

WDR also organises, off-air events in the public sphere, e.g. "*Hallo Ü-Wagen*" (WDR 5), which invite citizens/the audience to public places (squares, streets, etc.) to become involved in discussions, which – complemented by the opinions of experts – are broadcast live.

WDR Radio provides, last but not least, off-air events especially for the youngest listeners. They take place in schools or pre-schools and are connected to the programmes "*Lilipuz macht Schule*", (<http://www.lilipuz.de/radio-hoeren/lilipuz-macht-schule/>) and "*Bärenbude-Klassenzauber*" (<http://www.wdr.de/unternehmen/machdichschlau/baeren-bude.jhtml>).

### Germany – ZDF

In advance of the elections to the German Bundestag, ZDF offered a programme called "logo! Kinderreporter interviewen Spitzenpolitiker" (see <http://www.goldenerspatz.de/filmfestival/2003/katalog/information/logo.pdf>). This programme was especially aimed at children and allowed them to put questions to politicians. Although the targeted audience of this programme (for minors) was not entitled to vote, political understanding and interest thereby was already raised at an early age. Today, this format has moved to KiKA, a special interest channel for children, operated by ZDF. This is another example for the dedicated strategy that German public service media operators pursue to promote and facilitate democratic participation of individuals.

### Latvia – Public Service Television and Radio

Another relevant example of game-oriented play in PSM efforts to facilitate insight and enlightenment is Latvia's "*Latvijas Televīzija*" (<http://www.ltv1.lv/lat/forums/>). Topical questions are posed online and people participate in offering answers. The results are assessed and provided as summary information. The answers open new opportunities for discovery. One recent topical question was "what kind of Latvia do you want to live in 25 years from now?"



Screenshot 7. Latvia – Public Service Television and Radio

### Programmes in pre-election periods

From periodical programmes, which invite listeners and viewers to participate actively in the process of expressing opinions, the pre-election programmes must be mentioned, which are produced before the local government elections, as well as Latvian Parliament and European Parliament elections. Mostly, these broadcasts are discussion programmes, of which the basis is formed by discussions and former and present politicians' answers to questions of national importance. Sometimes, these discussions take place in the studio with participation of journalists, experts and non-governmental organisations, sometimes they take place outside the studio, are live or recorded. When discussions take place on outside localities, usually the local people are invited. Thus, they are enabled to par-

ticipate in the discussion and ask questions of their concern. But unfortunately it can't be said that lot of citizens strive to use this possibility. In fact, the programme makers are mostly forced to ask non-governmental organisations of the respective region, regional media and already familiar activists for attendance, in order to gather substantial number of participants in the show. It is difficult to say what the reason for this low activity is. Most likely, there is a certain distance between the "ordinary" population and governing circles. Sociological researches also reflect in whom people trust. Unfortunately, the politicians, parliament members and government members are very low on this scale. There is an overall informal opinion that, whomever citizens elect government, no improvements can be expected as the governing forces only care for their parties and themselves.

However, irrespective of the individual passiveness, these pre-election programmes are popular among viewers and listeners. Their ratings are rather high.

### Netherlands – Teleac/NOT – Citizenship Assimilation Test

A further example is the Citizenship Assimilation Test that was a national television show produced by Teleac/NOT, the educational public broadcasting foundation in the Netherlands. People participated at home via the Internet in taking the national test immigrants must pass as a requirement for Dutch citizenship (<http://www.nationaleinburgeringtest.nl/>). Dutch citizens got a clear idea of what the government has defined as essential to become a citizen, and with what necessary understanding of Dutch values and culture. The test was so popular



Screenshot 8. Citizenship Assimilation Test, the Netherlands

that more than a million visitors took it in 2005. The results raised so much reaction that Teleac/NOT forwarded the thousands of responses to the responsible ministry and have kept the site live. The interesting thing is that a majority of Dutch participants failed to pass. The program and the site generated public debate on the meaning and usefulness of this type of exam.

The Dutch educational public broadcasting foundation Teleac/NOT provides visitors with the possibility to take the test immigrants must pass as requirement for Dutch citizenship. The site has the following structure:

► **Home:** The online test is presented and differences to the actual test are explained. Above, two pictures are opposed: one of a "real" Dutch person who was born in the Netherlands and one of an immigrant. The corresponding text is saying: "Avowed

Dutchmen: Is Victoria Koblenko better nationalised than Jacques d'Ancona?" There's also a link provided to an immigration site where immigrants can get information about the Netherlands, the test and the application process.

► **Do the Test:** the visitor can go straight to the test and fill in the online form.

► **Do the Test by TV:** In 2005, the test was done publicly via TV and internet. The results are published at this site.

► **On TV:** Tells about the television show that took place in 2005, confronting some candidates on the question "who is better integrated?"

► **Give your opinion:** Visitors are encouraged to give their comments on the questionnaire, the questions and the whole campaign.

► **About the Test:** Tells about the background of immigration in general, the TV game in 2005, the candidates and the experts that were deciding and gives information about the questionnaire. Provides a link to "The group of avowed Dutchmen", a site that lists the personal histories of different Dutch people with immigration background.

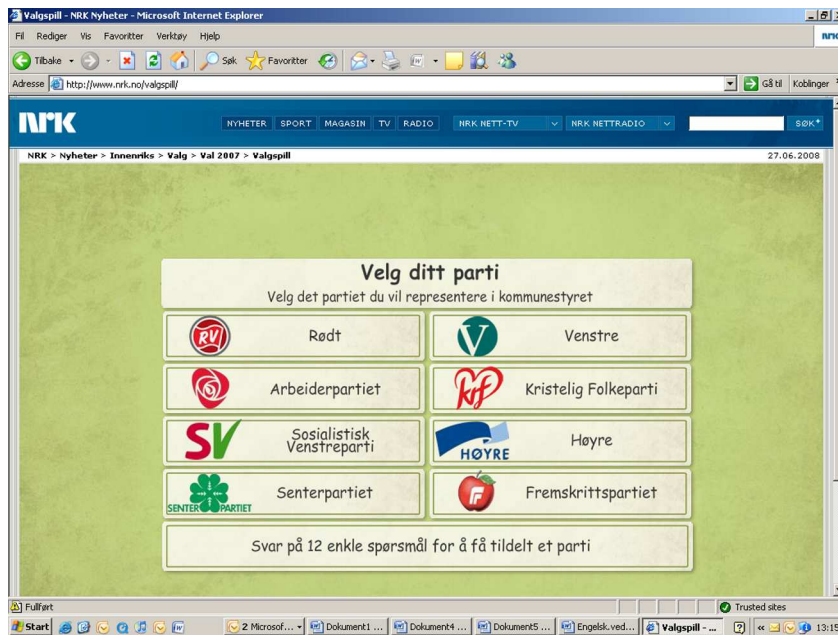
► **Links:** Provides links to immigration-relevant sites.

*Norway – NRK – The Election Game: How to conduct a County Council*

One of the articles in the NRK Code of Conduct states:

"NRK shall be instrumental in promoting public debate and assist the entire population to acquire sufficient information to play an active role in democratic processes."

A game on NRK's website (<http://www.nrk.no/>) is The Election Game, which was



Screenshot 9. The Election Game on NRK's website, Norway

published in connection with the County Council elections in 2007.

The players are invited to act as a politician and to conduct a County Council. Each player must choose to represent a political party. The political goals are presented for the different parties. The player then receives 100

million NKR as starting capital. There are 20 000 inhabitants when the game starts, and the objective is to increase the number of inhabitants as much as possible. The challenge is to spend the money in the best possible way on schools, roads, culture and sport, nursing homes, and the other aims of

the player's political party. Last but not least, the wages for the player and other politicians on the County Council have to be paid.

The game covers a four-year period – the same as an election term – and every year the player has to decide how to spend the money.



Screenshot 10. The Asylum Game on NRK's website, Norway

### Norway – NRK: *The Asylum Game*

On its website <http://www.nrk.no/> NRK has *The Asylum Game*. Players are invited to choose a citizen of another country outside Europe, preferably from Asia or Africa. The goal is to obtain asylum in Norway – a country which is regarded

as respecting democratic values and human rights. The players are presented with facts about why persons have to flee from their home country and on the way players have to solve a number of problems as they obtain more information about the countries they enter on the journey to Norway.

The problems include; how to leave their home country when this is not legal. How to enter Europe on the road to Norway, how to travel, how to approach the authorities and what the conditions are for the right of asylum.



Screenshot 11. Norway – NRK: *The Local Market Place*

### Norway – NRK: *The Local Market Place*

*The Local Market Place* is a site on each of NRK's regional websites. Visitors are invited to comment on and debate the regional offer of programmes, local news, cases and events. They are also invited to upload pictures and videos as part of, or in addition to, the text.

### Slovenia – RTV – Data mining

A different angle is evident in an online service offered by Slovenia's RTV – Odprti kop <http://www.rtvlo.si/odprtikop/>). Translated "Data mining", the service enables each individual user to investigate topics of personal interest to learn about issues in the news or relevant to the public sphere. This is essentially a specialised search engine programme that functions on the basis of closed captioning subtitles and video streams.

### EBU – Youth News Exchange

The EBU Youth News Exchange is a daily multilateral exchange of programme items for children's news

magazines. These programmes cover current affairs events from the young person's perspective, in language that children can understand. By clarifying the context of and background to world events, children are given the tools to understand the news that they are exposed to through the media. The main objective is to ensure that children are not unarmed in a society of communication where information would in any case reach them, and to help them to understand the concepts of "good news" and "bad news" in their vision of the world.

Followed by numerous children, and often used in schools to help pupils understand current affairs, these programmes are also watched by adults, who appreciate the clear, simple explanations.

The YNE is part of the Eurovision News Exchange (EVN), which permits EBU members to exchange news items on a reciprocal basis. Members can review offers daily at <http://www.eurovision.net/>.

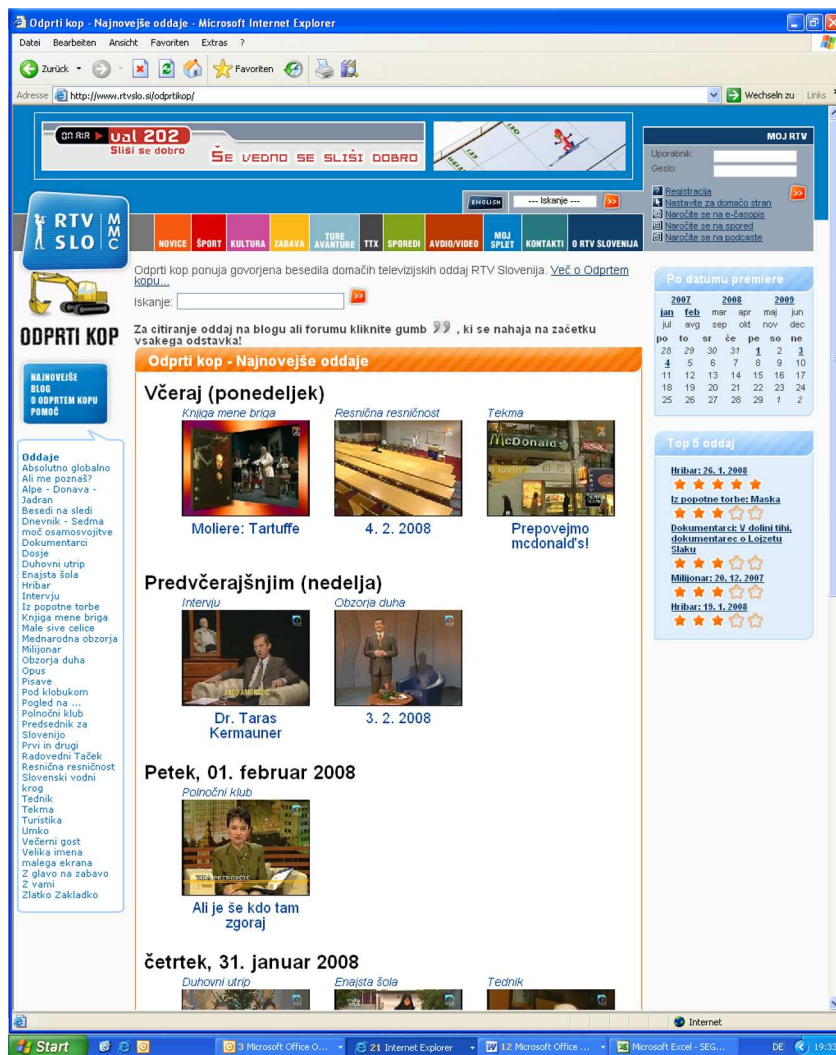
The exchange is financed by Eurovision members (active members of the EBU). Associate members and other television broadcasters may gain access on a contractual basis.

## COLLABORATION

### Finland – YLE Extrem Web community<sup>14</sup>

The Swedish-speaking youth radio channel of YLE, YLE Radio Extrem (X3M) opened a new kind of meeting place for its audience on the Internet in May 2004. It is a website where content is mainly created and generated by the users of the website. Participation requires registration and obedience to the rules of the community. Within less than a year over 5 000 young people in the Swedish-speaking language minority in Finland registered for membership in this web community. The popularity of the service exceeded all the original ex-

14. <http://www.yle.fi/extrem/>; <http://yle.fi/yleista/kuvat/2004vuosikertomus.pdf>.



Screenshot 12. Slovenia – RTV – Data mining

expectations and today the community has over 25 000 members.

Most of the users are young people between the age of 14 and 25, but there are also some older users. There are many ways to participate in the online community life: you can have discussions in different clubs with other users about different subjects or you may for example write your own web diary. One of the purposes is to offer young people an anonymous discussion forum where you can talk also about sensitive and difficult issues. But YLE Extrem is of course also trying to increase audience loyalty and commitment to YLE services via this network platform.

In addition, the web community provides a direct connection between the programme-makers and their Swedish speaking youth audience. YLE Extrem is responsible for all Swedish-speaking

programming for young people in YLE, so the users – the members of the community – can give ideas and communicate directly with the people responsible for youth programming both in radio and TV. The system works also the other way round, to provide an additional channel to inform members about interesting YLE programming.

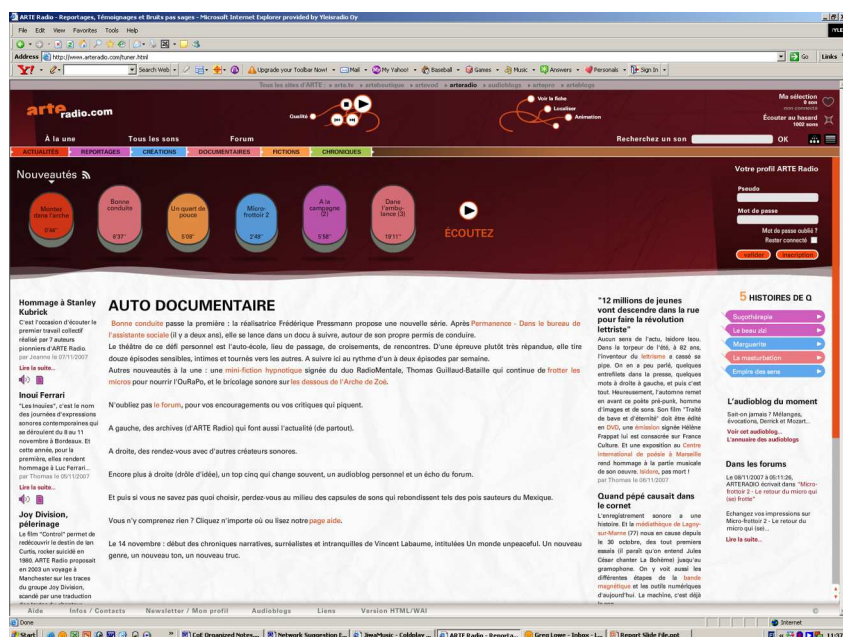
It is obvious that this direct connection with the audience helped YLE Extrem to survive and continue its services on FM in November 2007. At that time the current CEO of YLE, Mikael Jungner had announced that the company would probably close down the present analogue radio services of YLE Extrem on FM and move part of the services into the web in order to save money. This plan was cancelled after loud public outcry from both the public and the politicians – and even a

demonstration of young people in front of YLE headquarters in Helsinki. The result was that another channel was closed down instead of YLE Extrem.<sup>15</sup>

#### France-Germany – ARTE – an open platform

A fascinating development is underway at ARTE, the Franco-German PSM operator (pictured below). In ARTE radio ([www.arteradio.com](http://www.arteradio.com)) this PSM provider uses the creative commons licensing approach to all the content. Especially interesting is the open platform nature of the enterprise. Listeners are producers submitting material which is posted on the site. ARTE offers the space and the contents are posted

15. [http://yle.fi/extrem/news/parad\\_artikel.php?id=14322](http://yle.fi/extrem/news/parad_artikel.php?id=14322); <http://www.hs.fi/kulttuuri/artikkeli/Ylen+Radio+Extrem+s%C3%A4%C3%A4stynneen/1135232151129/>.



Screenshot 13. France-Germany – ARTE – an open platform

with the ambition of building a community partnership between user-created content producers and ARTE radio's own work and production. Amazingly the operator is able to do this with 3.5 employees and a reported budget of €175 000 annually (Gire, 2007).

ARTE Radio is a web on-demand radio. It's operated by the French part of the Franco-German PSM. It offers a huge amount of reports and audio files, strictly non-commercial and without advertisement. The internet radio does not offer any music or commentary but rather special sounds, compositions, montages, mixes. The productions are usually made by the listeners themselves (sometimes in collaboration with the Radio personnel) and then, after a selection process, put online. Every production accepted and published will be paid by the radio. The short audio files usually concern topics of everyday life, partnership, politics, the world, imagination and literature and are supposed to be funny, emotional, educative or impish. The audio files are always presented with the author's name, the category of the creation, the publication time and a short description about the file's content. The site has the following structure:

- Up-to-date: lists every submitted material by date of issue for the last four years
- Reports: lists audio files thematically classified in the following categories:
  - Personal and intimate reports
  - Reports about society and everyday life
  - Miscellaneous
  - Artistic productions.

#### Germany – ARD

The last example offered from the range of ARD activities is the "Hart aber fair Faktencheck". "Hart aber fair" is a political talk show, which moved, because of its success, from WDR television (WDR means *Westdeutscher Rundfunk Köln*; which is one of the nine German regional public service broadcasters that together form the ARD) to the ARD programme at its peak time. The show is one of the most popular formats dealing with political issues in Germany. It reaches up to 4.72 million viewers on average per broadcast which relates to 18.5% of market share. Because of its enormous popularity, the show was awarded several prizes (e.g. in 2003: "Deutscher Fernsehpreis" in the category: "beste Informations-sendung"; in 2005: Hanns-Joachim-Friedrichs-Preis für Fernsehjournalismus, and in the same year: Adolf-

Grimme-Preis in the category: "Information und Kultur"). One of the specialities of the format is the so-called "Hart aber fair Faktencheck", a special online service, offered by the editorial staff of the show. Within the scope of this Faktencheck, autonomous experts examine the degree of truth/correctness of comments that were made during the telecast. These examinations are available on the Internet one day after the show was screened. These expert's examinations are classified into three categories depending on the validity of a comment: a green plus-sign means that the claim made during the telecast was totally correct; a yellow circle implies that the claim was partly correct and a red minus-sign indicates a false assertion. Although the classification in only three categories sometimes seems to be too cursorily and comments might be taken out of their context, it allows users to get a general overview of claims that had been made during the telecast. Furthermore, interested groups are enabled to get an idea of the credibility of participants in the discussion round and therefore this increases transparency of political issues. In addition, because panel members know about this online service being offered, they will have a clear incentive to answer in all conscience ([http://www.wdr.de/themen/politik/1/hart\\_aber\\_fair/faktencheck\\_080305/index.jhtml](http://www.wdr.de/themen/politik/1/hart_aber_fair/faktencheck_080305/index.jhtml)).

Furthermore, an ARD study group comes up with concepts concerning new procedures for topic selection of documentation. This helps to create even more target-group-oriented documentation and therefore increases public interest in common public concerns.

#### *Germany – ZDF*

Beside traditional broadcasting offers, ZDF provides for several online services related to its broadcasting programme. Inter alia, ZDF operates several chats and blogs, which present a platform for interested groups to discuss about daily updated news and matters (see <http://chatsundforen.zdf.de/ZDFde/inhalt/16/0,1872,3930480,00.html>). The chats offered are particularly popular, since they facilitate public exchange of ideas. This popularity can also be illustrated by the number of people, taking part in the ZDF chats and blogs: on 15 April 2008 there were 356 853 members registered and 1 254 587 comments in the discussion forums (<http://chatsundforen.zdf.de/ZDFde/inhalt/24/0,1872,1400024,00.html?dr=1>). In order to avoid the appearance of a non-regulated area, ZDF defined binding guidelines for the use of its chats and blogs and imposed data privacy regulations (<http://chatsundforen.zdf.de/ZDFde/inhalt/3/0,1872,2345059,00.html>); for example, comments must be made in English or German, chats and blogs are based on the principle of democracy, users must respect freedom of expression, etc. Aside, chats are supervised by ZDF in order to guarantee a fair and proper discussion. This service, operated by ZDF, allows users to form a public opinion, in particular by enhancing the exchange of opinions and it facilitates the self-critical examination of the own point of view, which leads to more objectivity.

#### *Latvia – Public Service Television and Radio*

##### *Youth programmes*

In Latvian Television, one of the pioneers of interactivity is daily youth programme “SeMS”. Here, the notion SMS is already encoded in the title of the programme.

In the programme “SeMS”, viewers are enabled to discuss online via SMS, to express their opinion about the theme of the programme, as well as about any other theme of their interest. Needless to say, several problems arise in this form of communication. The biggest problem seems to be that it is very difficult to keep the young people to a certain discussion, sustained by programme producers. Mostly these chats, regardless of the programme theme, are used for making acquaintances online. Such an environment even attracts criminally-minded people and paedophiles. The simplest way to combat these phenomena is the censorship of SMS, which really is carried out, in order to avoid rudeness and announcements of a criminal character. One thing is to forbid specific SMS, but even more important is to gradually educate the young individual to become socially active and more responsible. Although the form of the programme is very attractive and it is very popular among its target audience, the programme producers must strive in order to focus youth chats on the theme, which is discussed in the studio during the programme. The programme is mainly focussed on youth themes, which are music, style, friendship, sex, psychological problems, sports, etc.

However, SMS is not the only interactive link between “SeMS” and its audience. The programme provides for its own website (see <http://sems.ltv.lv/>), where one can find a lot of additional information about the programme themes and its presenters. On the website, young people are invited to send their questions, which are answered during the next programmes. Mostly the questions are very topical and quite open. This helps to figure out young people’s loyalty and their desire to find answers to significant questions.

##### *Cultural and entertainment programmes with high level of interactivity*

The Latvian Television programme “100 grams of culture” must also be mentioned in more detail. Although the culture theme in Latvian media is of a rather conservative nature, this

cycle of programmes is produced in quite an up-to-date form, trying to change the public opinion about culture as something hard, serious and sometimes boring. The form of the programmes is subordinated to this intention: By the use of online voting about the theme of the day, public service media operators try to identify the dominating opinion of society on particular cultural questions. The programme regularly takes part in Latvian Television internet website forum (see <http://www.ltv1.lv/lat/forums/>) urging the society to discuss different controversial themes, for example: “Do we need the Days of Art?”, “What is the amount you would be ready to donate to the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the country?”, “Why do you like or don’t like the Latvian currency?”, “Should the cinema financing from state budget be increased?”. These questions are directly oriented towards active participation of people in socially important questions. They urge individuals on using his or her democratic rights, with his or her opinion indirectly influencing the process of decision making in the country.

Finally, different entertainment and music programmes should be mentioned, in which viewers and listeners are enabled not only to participate in evaluation of different games and competitions (for example the Eurovision Song Contest), but also to influence the programmes’ content directly by choosing certain contents (for example, definite pieces of music on Saturday classical music concert on Latvian Radio 3 Classic channel, or choosing a week-end night film or theatre show on Latvian Television). These activities are based on the fulfilment of audiences wishes, but at the same time it is the way, how to gradually involve usually unresponsive viewers and listeners in programmes.

##### *Participation in award granting*

Annually, Latvian Television organises voting and awards its best programmes. Although it is an inside activity, in recent years, viewers’ opinion is given a greater role. Now, viewers are participating in the process of

nomination, as well as in the evaluation of the nominees.

In fact, almost all the main prizes are awarded on the basis of viewers' votes. Such a possibility of annual evaluation identifies the programmes most honoured by viewers and shows the professionals behind the programmes. At the same time, it is a democratic instrument, which enables the society to express their opinion about their public medium.

#### *Slovenia – Public Service Radio and Television*



#### *Specific programmes catering for the needs of ethnic groups and Slovenes living abroad*

RTV provides for special broadcast offers dedicated to autochthonous and ethnical minorities. The programmes concerning protection of minorities are produced regardless of the relatively small number of people watching them in relation to the total number of population. The Italian national community (the programmes are broadcast from the regional studio in Koper/Capodistria) can be proud of its 24-hour radio and 10-hour TV programme in Italian language (every day), while the Hungarian minority has a new and modern broadcasting centre in Lendava/Lendvai producing 18 hours of radio programme per day and a daily 60 minutes TV broadcast. Apart from that, there is also a weekly radio and TV programme for the Roma ethnical minority (30 minutes once a week).

A special feature of this programme offer is that it does not only consist of programmes prepared by members of these minorities as subjects (although for all of these programmes there are

also supervisory bodies in place with the majority of members coming from these ethnic minorities) but also that all these programmes are dubbed or subtitled in the generally spoken Slovene language thus providing information for the majority population and fostering understanding and interaction.

It needs to be said that there are also members of other neighbouring nations living in Slovenia (Serbs, Croats, Bosnians, Macedonian, Albanians), mostly from nations of the former common federal state Yugoslavia. Important for their media information is the free access to radio and TV programmes from their now new countries of origin provided by the Slovene cable network operators. Plans regarding the so-called open programmes in cable systems are under way which would also allow their mutual communication and sharing information within the territory of Slovenia and with the most of population.

Worth mentioning also is the particular or specific feature of Slovene broadcasting regarding cross-border territories. Just as there are ethnical minorities in Slovenia as a result of borders created in the course of history, Slovenia also has its own minority in neighbouring countries; namely Austria, Italy, Hungary and Croatia. The Slovene minorities in all of these countries are living a full and active life. In all of these countries (in some more, in others less) they also have access to media or operate media of their own. The public service broadcaster in Slovenia (RTV SLO) brings periodic radio and TV programmes in Slovene language from Italy, Austria and Hungary.

A model of excellent collaboration is the cooperation between the regional centres of RTV Slovenia in Koper/Capodistria and the RAI regional centre for the region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia (RAI 3), which every day on its regional programmes directly rebroadcasts news programmes in the Italian and Slovene language (two each every day) thus building not only the atmosphere of cohabitation, raising the mutual level of provided information,

motivating for mutual contacts but also providing a better understanding and respect for the nations and life along the border. In this context, there is also the cross-border radio and TV project by neighbouring countries (regions) Slovenia, Austria, Italy, the Italian part of Switzerland, Croatia, Bavaria and Hungary called Alps-Danube-Adria which in 2007 celebrated its remarkable 25th anniversary of continuous co-operation thus being considered the longest-running project of cross-border cooperation in the field of public service broadcasting in Europe. This programme brings into life democratic participation all of the people across this historically turbulent part of Europe. Nations and cultures from this area which have been divided in times of the iron curtain thus belonging to different social systems and social orders started to establish ties way ahead of the fundamental historic changes in Europe.

Multimedia centre (MMC) is the new media department within public service broadcaster RTV Slovenija and has been created to develop new media. The department provides applications and possibilities that permit user interaction and participation through various forms of expression – text, pictures, audio and video; as creators or commentators, as writers or photographers, etc. Some of this user-generated content (UGC) is used on special web pages, dedicated to UGC, and some of it is part of official editorial pages and even radio and television shows. The UGC is selected on the basis of editorial criteria and then added to the official web pages. Parts of it are broadcast in the Infochannel (split-screen application), as well as in various TV shows.

A web portal makes it possible for users to:

- » Comment and/or rate news and Television/Radio shows on the web
- » Write news, which is published in a “your news” section. Some parts are later selected by editors and added to regular news sections
- » Chat with interesting people, such as sport champions, celebrities and politicians.

» Submit UGC, such as blogs, forum videos, audio, etc., which may also be published on teletext or on the editorial parts of the website or even broadcast on radio or television.



The Media centre also offers interactive services such as quizzes and surveys, and audio and video content is accessible both live and on-demand. Users can also comment on television and radio shows.

#### Sweden – Public Service Radio

From a diversity perspective, SR offers an arena on the web for radio broadcasting free from advertising and independent of political and economic influence. It has a brand with high credibility and strives to offer a democratic forum both online and through its radio transmissions. Examples of online services to promote diversity, freedom of speech and democracy are:

» Web news offered in 16 different languages through the international section of the site. This service has a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural focus and is primarily intended for immigrants and minority groups within Sweden.

» Web-radio channels in Finnish and Sami for these two minority groups:

– A web and DAB channel called “Sisuradio” with all programmes in Finnish.

– A web channel called “SR Sami” with news and programmes in Sami, the language of the Swedish minority group, 24 hours a day.

» P3 Star community – one of the more popular SR programmes “P3 star”, aimed at younger audiences, has an online community open especially

to teenage girls. It aims to create a discussion forum built around interactivity and freedom of speech, a place where young people can communicate and express their opinion, but also ask questions to experts concerning sex, love, relationships, parental issues, etc.

» Largest venture ever in relation to the governmental elections in autumn 2006.

» Ring P1 (call P1) – a forum where people can call in to the radio programme and have their say about various topics. This programme, transmitted on a national level, has been given great attention and a website has been created in connection with the programme.

#### United Kingdom – BBC

According to the Superbrands Web Survey, the BBC is the most trusted brand on the web. Trusted brands which stand out on the online market will be more than ever in demand in the next stage of web development. In an attempt to stay relevant and to reach out to Internet users with its public service values, the BBC has launched a range of new interactive services and projects, such as:

» Website and podcasting for disabled persons – website reflecting the lives of disabled people, including features, quizzes, podcasting, blogging, a community message board, etc.

» **Have your say** – a part of the website where users can propose discussion subjects, ideas for a news item, send their own videos or photographs, vote on various topics, etc. Sometimes e-mails are read out direct on air.

» **Climate change experiment** – in partnership with Oxford University – inviting users to participate in the world’s biggest climate prediction project and contribute to the debate on global warming. An interactive project with the goal of raising awareness and understanding of climate change. Over 250,000 users downloaded the software to participate.

» **One day in Afghanistan** – a project initiated by BBC News Interactive, showing pictures of Afghanistan

from people around the world. Depicting people living in poor conditions supplied by users, pictures taken by mobile phone, etc. Raising awareness about living conditions in other countries and at the same time strengthening the BBC’s journalism by integrating UGC.

» **Live from Ethiopia** – UGC project – reporting live from Ethiopia without a fixed agenda. Readers’ questions submitted by e-mail set the agenda, and the villagers tell their stories direct, using only simple equipment – laptop, digital camera and a satellite link. At the same time a BBC reporter covered the event for BBC Television and the World Service – the BBC is making its journalism more interactive.

#### United Kingdom – the BBC – Creative Archive

A related example of a PSM web 2.0 production in association with television and using archive material, was the BBC’s Creative Archive project in 2006 (<http://creativearchive.bbc.co.uk/>). Although assessment appears to still be underway, the thrust of the project was fascinating as participants could access archived BBC materials specifically designated for their use in personal productions. This experiment was on the cutting edge of what is often referred to as “remix culture” and was very popular. It will be interesting to see how this type of exciting collaborative approach can be developed further for promoting individual participation both in and through the media.

As in the case of the BBC4 Today programme, there are many examples of ways that PSM companies are incorporating public opinion, personal observations, and categorical analyses to fill out the substance of content in radio and television programmes. All such efforts are clearly about enabling collaboration. It is important to understand that although such happens quite generally in broadcast production today, outside of PSM it is most often in conjunction with productions such as the commercial entertainment hit, Big Brother. In PSM it is often

and fruitfully focussed on civic interests via current affairs programming.

#### United Kingdom – various public service media

Broad engagement with public debate is unlikely to occur if only the dominant or mainstream voices are heard. Indigenous minorities have their views reflected via and specific services aimed at their regions (e.g. BBC Wales, BBC Scotland; S4C), as well as Welsh language and Gaelic programming. These services provide more focus on matters of importance to the relevant region. It should be noted however that young people and people from other minority groups are disengaged from the provision of news, and perceive mainstream news providers as biased.<sup>16</sup>

The digital dividend might provide more scope for local television, though see criticism of Ofcom's approach which is to put public service interests behind a market led approach to allocating freed-up spectrum.<sup>17</sup>

Radio stations, based regionally, tend also to cover regional and local stories. Typical fare for radio programmes (on both BBC and commercial radio) is the current affairs phone in, though the extent to which this encourages involvement with the public sphere rather than the reiteration of long-held views is debatable. An exception to this comment may perhaps be made in respect of the *Groundswell* series, originated by BBC Radio Nottingham, but picked up by other local radio stations. In *Groundswell*, the station assisted local communities to organise debates on a matter of neighbourhood concern, the resulting debate then being broadcast. This is citizen-led current affairs programming showing engagement on the part of the audience with the subject matter.

## DEMOCRATISATION

### *Europe and beyond – PSM joint project "Why Democracy?"*

The best current example of what PSM is doing here is in the *Why Democracy?* project ([www.whydemocracy.net](http://www.whydemocracy.net)), pictured below. *Why Democracy?* is a collaborative production of public service broadcasters from across Europe and around the world. These include the BBC (United Kingdom), DR (Denmark), YLE (Finland), ZDF (Germany), SBS (Australia), SABC (South Africa), ARTE (France), NHK (Japan), and many more. This is about growing public interest and stimulating public involvement in democracy today. This initiative is supported by the EBU (Eurovision), the Danish Film Institute, the Ford Foundation, Sundance Institute in the USA, and many others. In October 2007, ten one-hour films that focus on contemporary democracy were broadcast in what is reportedly the world's largest ever factual media event. These can now be screened online and there is ample opportunity to join in dialogue and debate. More than 40 broadcasters are participating with an estimated audience of 300 million viewers. Each participating broadcaster will produce a locally-based season of film, radio, debate and discussion to tie in with the global broadcast of the *Why Democracy?* documentary films. This will result in 20 short films dealing with personal, political and rights issues around the theme "What does democracy mean to me?"

This project is large-scale and long-term, and also international in complexion. It is also important to observe that the funding and production represent a viable example of civil society organisations working co-operatively via PSM. Given the scope and scale of this initiative, it simply would not be possible without the institutional framework provided by PSM with its emphasis on democratic culture and practice.

*Why Democracy?* is a collaborative production of public service broadcasters from across Europe and the world. It is a documentary project using film to

start a global conversation about democracy.

Since October 2007, ten one-hour films and 18 short films focussing on contemporary democracy have been available at the world's largest ever factual media platform. More than 40 broadcasters on all continents have participated in the project, with an estimated audience of 300 million viewers.

The films are made by independent award-winning filmmakers from around the world, including China, India, Japan, Liberia, USA, Bolivia, Denmark, Afghanistan, Egypt, Pakistan and Russia. The subjects of the films take a wide-ranging and in-depth look at the world we live in today. They include, for example:

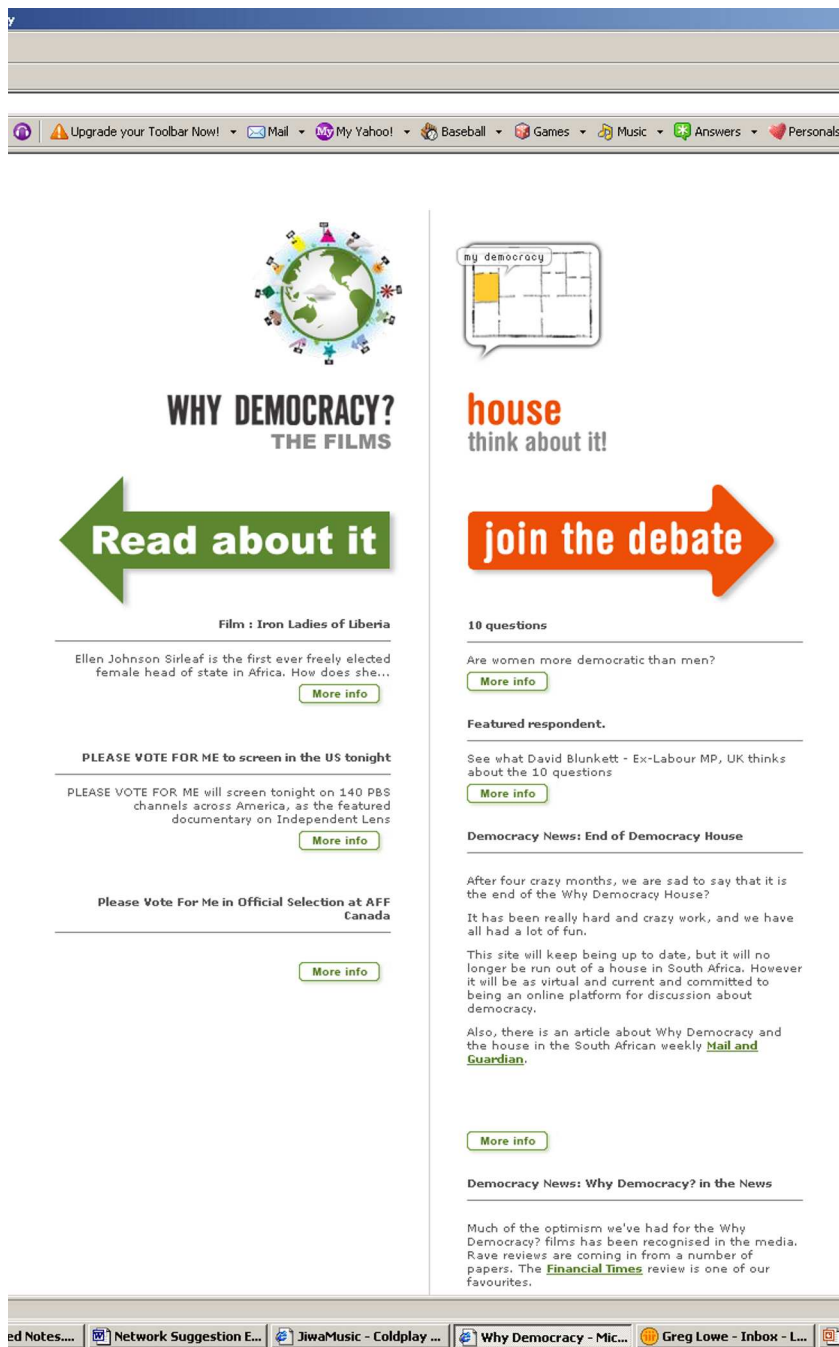
» **Bloody Cartoons:** a documentary about how and why 12 drawings in a Danish provincial paper could whirl a small country into a confrontation with Muslims all over the world. It asks whether respect for Islam combined with the heated response to the cartoons is now leading us towards self-censorship. How tolerant should we be, it wonders, of the intolerant. And what limits should there be, if any, to freedom of speech in a democracy.

» **The Kawasaki Candidate:** Can a candidate with no political experience and no charisma win an election? Perhaps – if he is backed by the political giant, Prime Minister Koizumi and his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). In the fall of 2005, 40-year-old, self-employed Kazuhiko "Yama-san" Yamauchi's peaceful, humdrum life was turned upside-down when Koizumi's LDP party chose him at the last moment as its official candidate to run for a vacant seat on the Kawasaki City Council. With zero experience in politics, no charisma, no supporters, and no constituency. The Kawasaki Candidate offers up a microcosm of Japanese democracy.

» **Dinner with the President:** What are the implications for democracy in Pakistan when secular political parties have succumbed to the Islamic agenda? What does it mean when the army appears to be the only force able to contain the opponents of democ-

16. Ofcom, *New News, Future News*, 2007

17. Harrison, J., "Ofcom, local TV and public purpose" (2008) 13 (1) *Comm. L 3*



Screenshot 14. Europe and beyond – PSM joint project “Why Democracy?”

racism, the armed Islamists? The filmmaker talks to diverse individuals, from labourers to intellectuals, from street vendors to religious right wing political party members, and from journalists to industrialists. What is their idea of democracy in Pakistan? What is their idea of President Musharraf’s vision of a modern Pakistan? Dinner with the President questions the role a military leader can play in guiding a state towards modern democracy.

» Taxi to the Dark Side: Over one hundred prisoners have died in suspi-

cious circumstances in U.S. custody during the “war on terror”. Taxi to the Dark Side takes an in-depth look at one case: an Afghan taxi driver called Dilawar who was considered an honest and kind man by the people of his rustic village. So when he was detained by the U.S. military one afternoon, after picking up three passengers, denizens wondered why this man was randomly chosen to be held in prison, and, especially, without trial? Five days after his arrest Dilawar died in his Bagram prison cell. The doc-

umentary, by award-winning producer Alex Gibney, carefully develops the last weeks of Dilawar’s life and shows how decisions taken at the pinnacle of power in the Bush Administration led directly to Dilawar’s brutal death. The film documents how Rumsfeld, together with the White House legal team, were able to convince Congress to approve the use of torture against prisoners of war.

Besides, the *Why Democracy?* website offers the following categories:

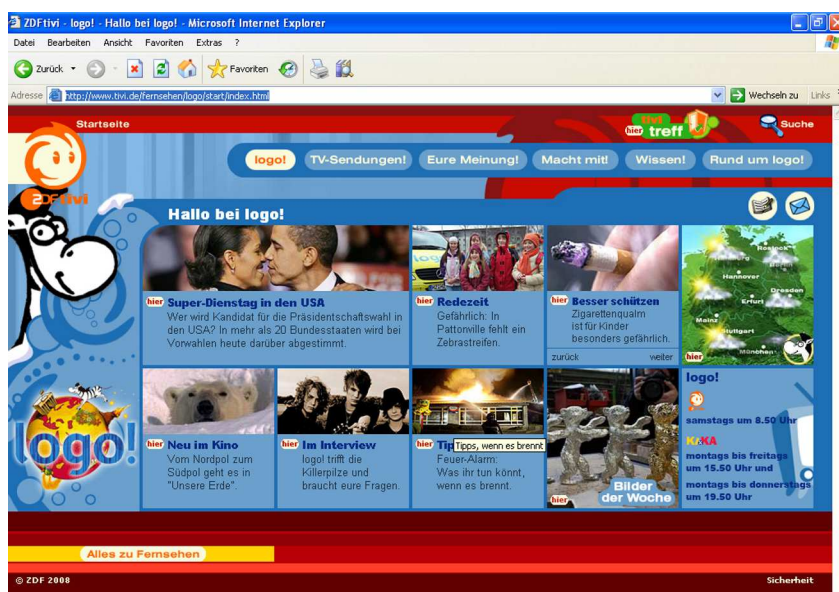
- » About: gives a short introduction of the topic
- » Recent News: lists latest news about current events and political incidents that are of relevance to democracy in the world.
- » 18 short films: the films were made by emerging filmmakers across the planet. Innovative and sharp, they take a sideways look at our world.
- » Why democracy House: Why Democracy House brought a group of young people from all over the world to Cape Town, South Africa, to help guide and build the project's online conversation about democracy. From July till October, the House residents lived together, ate together and worked together, creating parts of this website and sharing a wide variety of views about politics, culture, film and life with each other and with the world. Inside the "democratic house" the visitor can find interesting sub-categories such as:
  - » Library: lists everything you want to know about democracy
  - » Debate: provides the opportunity to engage in a discussion about democracy, politics and media

- » Polls: Gives visitors the possibility to vote on current questions. For example. "Who would you vote for as president of the world?" Choices ranging from Ban Ki-moon and Barack Obama to Vladimir Putin. Or "Are Democracy and Capitalism compatible?" or "Is religion more powerful than politics?"

## Germany – ARD – "50 years of European Parliament"

The next example is an ARD-operated online game with a public service character. Under the heading "50 years of European Parliament", the public service media operator provides for a game, which helps users to refresh their knowledge, respectively to acquire knowledge, about Europe, in particular the European Parliament. After having started the game, users are asked to answer 8 questions concerning Europe and the European Parliament (e.g. "Who was the first president of the European Parliament?", "How many delegates are allocated in the European Parliament?", "What are the rights of the European Parliament concerning the budgeting?"). The participant is offered 3 given answers

from which he can choose one. After having made his decision, the participant is given the right answer together with a short explanation. At the end of the test (after having answered all eight questions), the user is offered a closing assessment. It should be critically noted that the eight questions, which are posed, are always the same and that, therefore, the game might be perceived as becoming boring soon and that the gain of knowledge is limited. On the other hand, this online game implicates one major advantage, which is that users get involved in European policy and European decision-making processes. Therefore, the game sparks general interest in Europe in an interactive way. As soon as people's interest grows, they can consolidate their knowledge on their own. Thus the offered game can be seen as a initiator of public interest in European policy and therefore, it creates a more transparent and citizen-centric policy (see <http://spiel.tagesschau.de/quiz/frage.php>).



Screenshot 15. Germany – ZDF – "Logo!"

## Germany – ZDF – "Logo!"

Of course there are many PSM projects of smaller scale, on-going practice, and domestic emphasis as well. Among the most important of these are various programme strands

offered for children. All such programmes and online services feature news and information designed to nurture an appreciation for democracy. A good example is *Logo!* a daily production of the German PSM opera-

tor, ZDF. This programme provides news for children with lots of explanation and background information at a language level appropriate for children's understanding and in a way that is suitable to their interests. Users can

see a stream podcast of "logo" in the ZDFmediathek section <http://www.zdf.de/>. Research has found that adults also use the service because the producers present complicated things in ways that are easy to understand.

#### *Germany – ZDF – "Europa-Wahl-O-Mat"*

Another example is the "Europa-Wahl-O-Mat" in advance of the elections for the European Parliament in 2004. Encouraged by the positive experience that has been made with the Wahl-O-Mat in the run-up of the elections for German Bundestag in 2002 (at that time, 3.6 million people used the Wahl-O-Mat), ZDF offered this online service in collaboration with the European Parliament and the so-called Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (Federal Agency for Civic Education). Due to the fact, that for many people, elections for the European Parliament appear to be very obscure and the institution is seemingly far away from their (immediate) concerns, ZDF aimed at making the elections more responsive to the general public. The Wahl-O-Mat was mainly targeted at first and second time voters since these groups of people are the key users of online information offers. Furthermore, these population groups tend to be the less informed concerning political issues. In terms of content, users could comment on 30 assumptions taken from official manifestos of the eligible parties (for example one of these assumptions was: "Turkey should become/shouldn't become a member of the European Union"). The Wahl-O-Mat then compared constituents' answers with the different manifestos and revealed disagreements and common grounds. The Wahl-O-Mat entailed several advantages: first, especially first and second time voters dealt intensely with the election for the European Parliament. Secondly, the Wahl-O-Mat allowed users to differentiate between similar but still divergent manifestos. Furthermore, users learned about their own attitude and were enabled to form their individual opinion. Finally, the process of election of the European Parliament became more transparent and there-

fore more comprehensible to the users: they were encouraged to elect their favourite candidate or party since they realised that their vote counts a lot.

#### *Germany – Deutschlandradio*

The joint corporation of ARD and ZDF, Deutschlandradio, offers the so-called Euro-blog (<http://euroblog.dradio.de/>). This special service is provided in corporation with several partners (e.g. Bertelsmann Stiftung, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, European Commission, Goethe Institut, *Die Zeit*, a German weekly newspaper, and BRF, the Belgian Broadcasting company). First offered during the German Presidency of the European Union Council of Ministers in the first half of 2007, users here can communicate via internet on European matters, in particular. The offered platforms for discussion are divided into different categories and start with a short article which forms the basis for discussion (e.g. one discussion was about the question whether the European Union needs a Constitution). There are up to 245 comments written from users concerning one issue. In order to avoid the impression of non-regulated areas, these blogs need – to a certain extent – to be regulated by law. Therefore, Deutschlandradio has imposed several guidelines, including a data protection notice (e.g. comments must adhere to principles of legality; they must be phrased politely and must not contain any defamation). By offering this platform, users are enabled to exchange their views and therefore it helps in the process of free formation of opinion of individuals and in the formation of a public common opinion. People get the chance to take a firm stand and to try to convince others from their point of view; this leads to self-criticism and greater objectivity.

#### *Latvia – Public Service Television and Radio*

In a country, in which democracy is only 20 years old, it is very important that public media help the population to understand the essence and possibilities of the democratic system, available to every citizen of the country.

An important group of programmes, where the public service broadcasters most actively promote the democratisation of society, are socio-political programmes, such as discussions, talk shows and analytical programs.

A weekly analytical programme is called "De Facto" and is produced on the basis of Latvian television news service. The main task of this programme is to help people to study and analyse economical and political processes within Latvia and the European Union. The programme producers investigate analytically in some of the most important events or decisions of the previous weeks, analysing the causes and trying to predict the consequences, which will take place in near future. „De Facto“ can be considered as one of the opinion makers within the Latvian society. The central news programme of public television „Panorama“, as well as „De Facto“, are on top of the rating lists. That proves the public loyalty to the news service and to information and analytical conclusions which are provided. Very often other Latvian media, when distributing information, quote facts and opinions provided by Latvian television news service.

The political talk show "What is going on in Latvia?" is the most active one in this sphere. The programme is broadcast every Wednesday evening, reflecting the most important events of the week, which have perturbed all of the society. Usually, members of Parliament, as well as representatives of non-governmental organisations, media and experts take part in the show. The show is very controversial by its nature. Its participants represent different views, so that one can expect sharp discussions, insults, unmasking and sometimes unexpected announcements. It is the most popular socio-political show in the country. "What is going on in Latvia?" has its own website (see <http://www.knl.lv/galvena>), where all the previous shows are archived, and scripts of the previous shows are deposited. The shows are segmented so that internet users, when entering a key-word, can find all kinds of information about certain themes on the website. In addition,

the main themes of the previous shows are observed, following the events' developments. Before the show, the theme of the upcoming programme is published on the website. Users are asked to express their opinion on a definite question of socio-political importance. The answers are summarised and thus the opinion of parts of the society is identified.

During the show, viewers are invited to express their opinion on the theme. On the bottom of screen, three or more possible answers on the definite question are faded in and viewers can vote by phone. The questions are usually very strict, e.g. "Do you trust the present Parliament?", "Which of the existing political parties should form the Government?", "Should the 'Pride' of sexual minorities be allowed in Riga?", etc. Certainly, the results of this poll cannot be considered as sociologically objective, but from the activity of the telephone voters, the public opinion as well as the importance of the theme can be felt. There have been attempts to influence the result of the telephone voting, so that programme producers were forced to state a limit of incoming calls from one and the same phone number.

Another programme of socio-political genre is "The First Persons of the State". As it can be seen from the title, one of the most influential persons in the

country takes part in this programme, answering to journalist's questions about socio-political activities. This programme is aimed at understanding the position of the respective official in the process of tackling important problems. The questions are not only prepared by the journalist, but also to a great extent are based on the questions forwarded by the audience. It is possible to send questions via internet (<http://www.ltv1.lv/lat/raidijumi/dokumentalie/322/>) as well as by phone or letters.

Programmes on European integration issues must be also mentioned. These programmes aim at familiarising the audience with common concerns and problems of the European Union, as well as disclosing the possibilities offered by the European Union.

There are two programmes on Latvian Television, which are devoted to this theme, which are "Eurobus" and "Kidnapping of Europe". "Kidnapping of Europe" in an attractive way tells viewers about people in every European country. The initial point of the programme is the presentation of a number of stereotypes, formed by Latvians about foreign countries and their population, as well as the demonstration of foreigners' impressions about Latvia and Latvians. Gradually, during the programme, it becomes obvious, whether these stereotypes and impressions are well-founded or whether the reality is entirely different.

At the same time, Latvian viewers have the possibility to identify themselves with the representatives of other nations and become aware of the topical questions, problems and solutions of the respective country and its population. Taking into consideration that foreigners, who settled in Latvia permanently, take part in the programme, it is possible to discover, what Latvia looks like from the foreigner's point of view. Very often, if the foreigner comes from a country which possesses old democratic traditions, his/her view on the local problems, as well as on global processes helps to develop Latvian democracy. The "Eurobus" invites to use possibilities offered by different European Union funds and programmes, by illustrating practical examples, which already function.

Both programmes can be seen on the Internet (<http://www.tv.lv/>). Viewers are invited to call and write their comments about the theme on the internet. The answers are given either in writing or in one of the next programmes. If the theme of the programme has been close to one's everyday concerns, for example, about the comparatively cheap construction company of precast dwelling houses in Estonia, which is founded with the support of European Union funds, viewers' attendance is very high.



Screenshot 16. Election coverage of TVP – Poland

### Poland – TVP

TVP has contributed to promoting democracy by:

» *launching Bielsat Channel*, a satellite channel to promote democratic values and human rights in Belarus (programmes are aired everyday in Belarusian);

» *launching the news channel “TVP Info”* and scheduling slots to:

- provide trade unions and employers’ organisations with opportunities to present their positions on key public issues;
- provide political parties with an opportunity to present their positions on key public issues;
- enable supreme State authorities directly to present and explain State policy;
- ensure possibilities to broadcast election programmes by participants in the election campaign; Telewizja Polska SA made accessible all programmes dedicated to parliamentary elections in Poland in 2007. On the election website apart from public information, news and debates, also accessible were election news and links to proper institutions. The reason for creating this website was to promote society’s participation in elections through wide access to information and related content (<http://wybory.itvp.pl/>).

### Slovenia – Public Service Radio and Television

There are several programmes and services part of the RTV Slovenija programmes which provide a wide democratic participation.

#### *Radio programming addressing issues relevant for democracy*

For example, the complete 2nd programme of Radio Slovenija (Program 202) is not based only on a contact concept but also constantly provides opportunities for listeners to be directly involved in creating the programme. The programmes are based on an interactive concept, which opens wide possibilities for participation. A special project in this framework is the “personality of the week, month and year” project where listen-

ers can vote for the most positive or negative political or other publicly active personality which left its handprint in recent time thus expressing their attitude towards the developments within the society. If looked at concretely, such participation voting is connected to the presentation, explanations and comments of actual political, economical and cultural events, which are evaluated and criticised by the public phoning in. This is an important although not also an empirical sampling of the intersection of the public opinion. Its speciality is that using the majority of the votes they do not only elect the most positive personage of the week, that distinguished itself with a decision, a step forward, or an event in the positive sense of development of democracy, but also a markedly negative apparition or personage – which should present a reminder or admonition against repeating such practise. In any case it stimulates the participation voting as the listeners answer after their own accord and prove in what way a certain event has marked them.

Another example of such interactivity is the programme “Studio at 5” broadcast on the first programme of Radio Slovenija (duration up to 90 minutes, daily) which focuses on interactive confrontation with current issues of everyday life. This programme is about the possibility of direct dialogue with the members of public offices that have to, in the frameworks of the show, answer the presented questions of the listeners and respond to their criticism. The show often has, when dealing with the most actual questions, so many calls that it is not possible to include them in their entirety into the show’s timeframe, often the members of public offices remain in the studio also after the show has ended and continue their dialogue with the listeners, they also help themselves through séances over the internet.

#### *TV programmes with a focus on politically or socially relevant developments*

TV Slovenija features several of such contact programmes starting from the morning programme to weekly shows

on politics “Hot seat” (60 minutes), monthly research-analytical programme with interactive live dialogue “Target” (60 minutes) to the weekly 20-minute consumer programme promoting a critical attitude towards quality and level of the market offer along with an interactive dialogue with market players. Most of these programmes are broadcast in prime time.

As regards “Hot Seat”, it is mostly about the confrontation of members of public offices and of confrontation of opinions between the position and opposition. It deals with actual themes of current politics. The show is open for viewer calls. The interest is often larger than the capacity to absorb all the calls. The show also includes the base question on the main theme, at which the viewers respond with television voting. This is often a problematic part of the show, as television voting is – in comparison to calling on the show where the viewers must present themselves – anonymous and so the possibility of manipulation from certain interests groups is possible, however, it nonetheless motivates thinking.

The “Target” is an example of an investigation show that dedicates itself in detail to an ardent problem, problems in general and social mistakes. The theme is handled in an investigational and documentary manner; while showing pictorial and documentary inserts it confronts various actors in the studio. Also a group of viewers that are invited into the studio because of special interest, affection or experience with the theme at hand, is in dialogue with them. It is an example of a solid show that stimulates social dialogue, confrontation and clearing and solving of problems, the nature of which is almost never black and white.

The consumer show, and the format that is used for it, is a novelty in the offers of TV Slovenija. It is intended to give a platform to the criticism of consumers towards the market offer, help with grading of products and their offers and with the strengthening of consciousness and consumer rights. The show was made after examples of some similar successful shows abroad; its important ingredient is the profes-

sional analysis of products (quality, ingredients, safety, power-saving, etc.). The format was made in co-operation with responsible offices of the European Union, which also co-financed its development. In the second half of 2008, RTV Slovenija in cooperation with EBU (European Broadcasting Union), should organise in Slovenia an educational seminar intended for all public broadcasters in Europe, the intention of which is benchmarking the best formats for such show and raising the general quality of the programmes in Europe that are also of vital importance to the democratic participation.

An increasing number of TV programmes is getting interactive, with a special category among them being the entertainment programmes, which are increasingly building on the response of the audience. Even so is the offer of the multimedia programme (on line, Internet) which is completely based on interactivity, encouraging responses, commentaries and catering to requirements of the users – meaning the auditorium. This is also a new form of democratisation and communication within the society (<http://www.rtvlo.si/>). This form has also provided a framework for dialogue with expatriates and the external world in general and is fostering it.

#### United Kingdom – the BBC

##### Digital Democracy – get involved



The BBC has set up an initiative called Digital Democracy. It is a web-based project with the aim of opening up dialogue with users about democratic institutions, i.e. the United Kingdom

institutions and the European Parliament. The goal of the project is to:

*"[...] create a destination for the very best of BBC and third party political content in a multi-media gallery that offers convenient access to live and recorded content from debating chambers across Westminster, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and the European Parliament. The service will strive to make information around the institutions, their representatives and key issues more accessible, more interesting and more engaging."*<sup>18</sup>

Along with the project, a blogging site has been opened where senior BBC staff have an open dialogue with people interested in the subject.

### MOBILISATION

This is a new frontier so there are not many examples yet. But one very good example is provided by the BBC.

#### United Kingdom – BBC's Action Network

The BBC's Action Network (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnetwork/>) service (which has now closed) provided advice and tools to people who wanted to run campaigns on mostly local concerns. Action Network producers leveraged the BBC's television and radio networks to publicise the range of self-organising groups who were using its database to store documents and communicate via messages and email alerts. The service maintained distance from Government and was careful not to endorse particular campaigns or be directly involved.

The BBC's Action network service provided people with the tools and the platform to start a campaign and change something in their local area. Anyone could contribute to the site and most of the content was written by the public and reflected their views. The BBC did not endorse the campaigns or opinions on Action Network. The aim was to help people get involved in their local community, whether through raising an issue that they thought was important or finding a group that they wanted to join. The site also provided a wide range of guides to help people take the first

steps towards taking action: from information on how to become a school governor and an explanation of the planning laws, to guides on how to set up and run a small campaign or pressure group. Action Network wanted to help people campaign about an issue, make contacts and get advice, and finally make a difference in their local community.

The site had the following structure:

» On top, the three major goals of the project were outlined: share your concerns, find like-minded people, make a difference in your neighbourhood

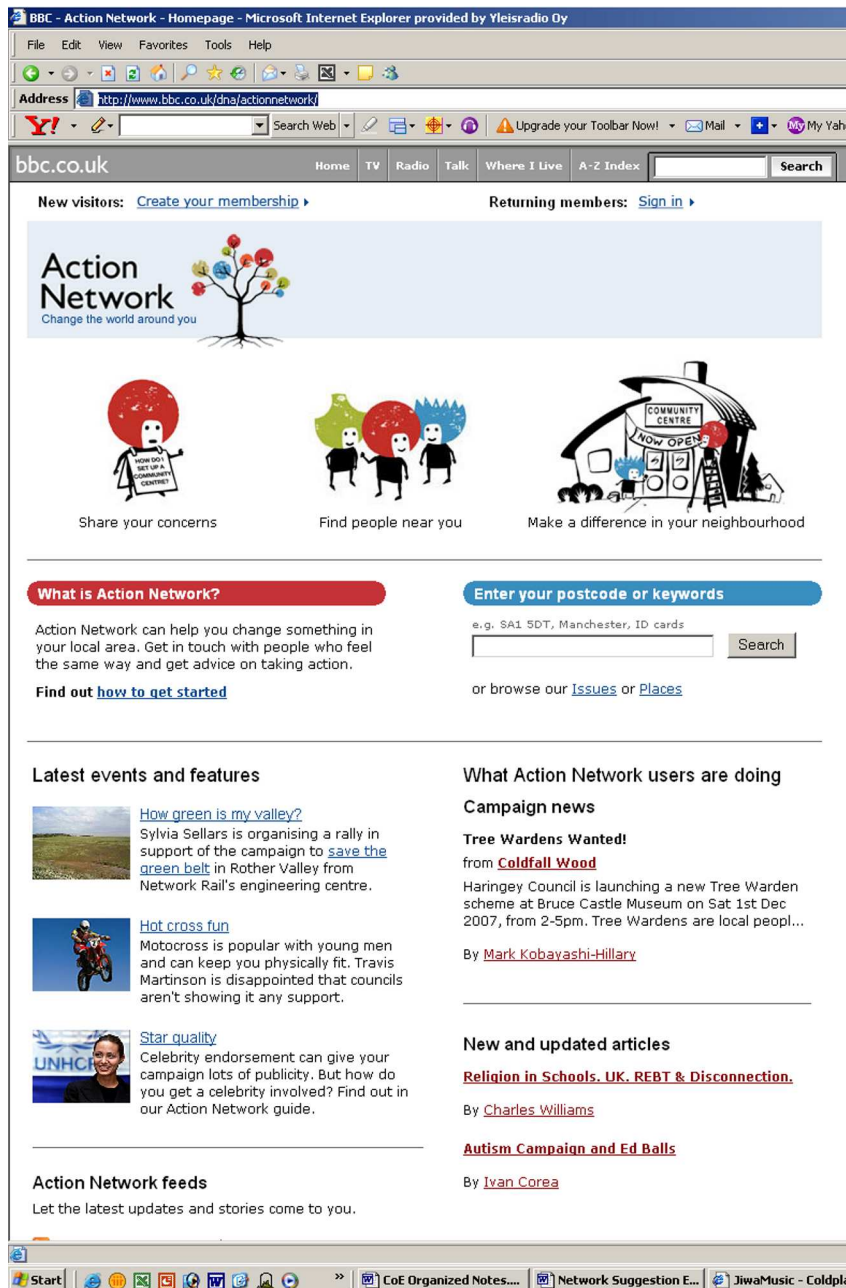
» At the left hand side, the visitor could find the link to the main content, giving information about how to start a campaign or how to get involved in some action. A new campaign could be started by using the "Campaign edit page" which was provided by the Action Network.

» At the right hand side, the visitor could search for already existing campaigns in his neighbourhood. Another possibility was to search for topics or subject-matters. The actually existing campaigns could be visited, comments could be posted and you could vote whether you support or oppose a special campaign.

» Furthermore, the site offered several other categories relating to latest events, updated articles and campaign news.

The growth of social networking and other sites led to the Action Network being closed and may influence the future decisions of PSM in this area.

18. BBC website, *Digital Democracy – get involved*, April 2008.



Screenshot 17. United Kingdom – BBC's Action Network

## Conclusions

The report shows, through representative examples from around Europe, that PSM are very aware that their role in promoting democratic participation of individuals is a crucial one and an important reason for their special status in the European media landscape. Several member states have also recognised the need for a dedicated role of PSM in this regard and have therefore included specific tasks related to the topic in their PSMs' remits. In other member states, while

there might not be a specific reference in the remit, it is at least understood that the general (and universal) task of PSM to inform the public carries with it an important significance for the democratic processes and the public's approach to them.

It can also be seen from the report that the strategies PSM follow increasingly take account of the possibilities the new technologies open up. This ranges from making use of additional spectrum available through the digital

switchover (making special-interest broadcasting channels easier), facilitating the public's access to content through non-linear offers, to increasingly interactive services offered via the internet.

Some of the examples mentioned, however, also show the ease of use and often relatively low cost of the new media mean that many services that in traditional broadcasting only PSB could offer are now easily offered by private commercial or non-com-

mercial operators. For instance, the election machine described as an example is now commonly offered in many European countries by different operators. Also, social networking sites might make some PSM offers less necessary/important, as has been mentioned in the report regarding the innovative BBC's Action Network. General blogs and forums operated by PSM might also easily appear as an unwanted duplication of private offers, so a lot of thinking on differentiation will be necessary. It is also not unthinkable that in the future, in many instances, PSM's role might be to kick-start some new innovative offers and then let other actors provide them. Some other examples show one-off offers, that temporarily provide a critical insight into political policy options pursued by governments or promoted by political parties (an example of this is the Dutch Citizenship Assimilation test).

However, there also can be no doubt that informing the public in a truthful, objective and credible way about politics and everything they need to know will remain one of the most significant tasks in which PSM can contribute to the promotion of democratic participation of the individual members of its public and in which very useful use can be made of the new communication technologies. In this regard, it must be noticed, however, that the majority of offers encountered by the researchers seem to have a strong basis in traditional broadcasting. Further innovation is to be expected. Ideas mentioned in the report such as citizen blogs during election campaigns seem very useful.

Longer-term examples on how a promotion of democratic participation of individuals is possible, as described in the report, include:

- » dedicated parliamentary channels, giving viewers a first-hand knowledge on the issues debated and decided by the legislator;
- » on-demand offer of news and information programmes;
- » Internet offer of background information to TV and radio reports;

» offers for young people, especially via technical modes they prefer (internet, mobile phones) that facilitate their critical understanding of media reporting and democratic processes;

» objective pre-election reporting on all platforms that increases the transparency of political processes (such as through a comparative analysis of party positions) and also gives viewers, listeners and users the opportunity to discuss, comment and exchange opinions;

» games for users that make them experience the functioning of the political system and the complexities of political actions (also for young people);

» specific offer (such as internet offers and web radio) that is addressed to those citizens or residents of foreign origin or nationality and that for various reasons (such as language barriers) will not follow the regular media, keeping them informed about politics and democracy;

» international or pan-European co-operation projects that focus on democracy issues.

One of the important ideas flowing from this report is that given present-day developments in the media landscape/market, communication technologies/platforms, public's interests/expectations, and in order to survive and maintain their crucial role in democratic societies, public service media have no other solution than getting closer to the public. They should do it, primarily, by promoting broader democratic debate and participation, with the assistance, among other things, of new interactive technologies, offering the public greater involvement in the democratic process.

PSM could fulfil a vital role in educating active and responsible citizens, providing not only quality content but also a forum for public debate, open to diverse ideas and convictions in society, and a platform for disseminating democratic values. At the same time, PSM should provide adequate information about the democratic system and democratic procedures, and should encourage participation not

only in elections but also in decision-making processes and public life in general. Accordingly, one of PSM's roles should be to foster citizens' interest in public affairs and encourage them to play a more active part.<sup>19</sup>

The examples provided in this report show that to achieve the objective of a wider democratic participation of individuals, PSM must adapt their **strategies** and **internal policies** to the new technological and social context. Member states, for their part, must set a clear **remit** for PSM and ensure **appropriate conditions** to enable them to use new **technical** and **technological means** to better fulfil the remit and adapt to rapid changes in the current media and technological landscape, as well as to changes in the viewing and listening patterns and expectations of the audience.

In order to achieve these goals, it appears that PSM must increasingly strive to move away from one-way communication to reinforced dialogue and afford the public both access to varied information as well as a possibility to engage and participate in the democratic dialogue. In order to continue to be of relevance in today's media environment, they will have to be creative and quickly and decidedly make advantage of new technological possibilities. They will also continuously need to strive for distinctiveness from other media and might need to be ready to move on once it is clear that this distinctiveness has been eroded.

The success of PSM in achieving their goals will depend also on the extent to which they manage to reach those citizens that tend to be left outside the political processes. PSM will therefore have to work on different platforms and might need to design different services, including services in different language where this is necessary to reach national minorities or immigrants. They might be well advised to make use of the possibilities technology gives to listeners, viewers and users to design and produce their own

19. See Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec (2007) 3 on the remit of public service media in the information society.

content but will again be very cautious not to indiscriminately duplicate UGC offers by private operators. PSM will also have to be very conscious of the dilemma between devising easy-to-use, time-saving products in order to reach those parts of the audience that are not willing to spend too much time or energy on complicated issues and at the same time avoid the risk of oversimplifying and, again, losing their distinctiveness. If this dilemma can be

overcome, mobile services might have a significant interest for PSM, although the group's research has found little examples of these in the domain of democratic participation so far.

The Council of Europe might participate in the debate on how to achieve this goal by continuing to deal with the topic of media's, and in particularly PSM's role in promoting democratic participation of individuals, regularly appraising the potential of new tech-

nologies and media evolution and taking note of new examples of good practice. It might also, where and when relevant, develop a standard-setting instrument to help and support member states in their task of defining the PSM's remit regarding the promotion of democratic participation and in defining their general media policy in this regard.



**Media and Information Society Division**  
**Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs**  
**Council of Europe**  
**F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex**  
[www.coe.int/media](http://www.coe.int/media)