



Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture



Diversité
des expressions
culturelles

7 IGC

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE DIVERSITY OF CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS

**Seventh Ordinary Session
Paris, UNESCO Headquarters
10 - 13 December 2013**

INFORMATION DOCUMENT

This document has been prepared in 2013 by the ARD in accordance with Resolution 4.CP 13 for the seventh session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. The author is responsible for the choice and the presentation of the facts contained in this Report and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization.



Public Service Media and the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions

- **Culture** as a concept per se is **broad, diverse and pluralistic**. Culture is not static, but **dynamic**. Its features as much as its understanding **alter and develop over time and with context**. The UNESCO convention reads: *“Cultural diversity refers to the manifold ways in which the cultures of groups and societies find expression. [...] Cultural diversity is made manifest not only through the varied ways in which the cultural heritage of humanity is expressed, augmented and transmitted through the variety of cultural expressions, but also through diverse modes of artistic creation, dissemination, distribution and enjoyment, whatever the means and technologies used.”* (art. 4 para. 1)
- In this perspective, **public service media are part of the culture**, the overall cultural fabric in their respective societies, **as much as distinct means and forms of cultural expression**.
- **Culture is part of the mission/remit of public service media**. E.g. the German interstate treaty on broadcasting (entry into force January 1, 2013) reads (art. 11): *“Under their remit, the public-service broadcasting corporations are to act as a medium and factor in the process of the formation of free individual and public opinion through the production and transmission of their offers, thereby serving the democratic, social and **cultural needs of society**. In their offers, the public-service broadcasting corporations must provide a **comprehensive** overview of international, European, national and regional events **in all major areas of life**. In so doing, they shall further international understanding, European integration and the social cohesion on the federal and state levels. Their offers shall serve **education, information, consultation and entertainment**. **They must in particular provide contributions on culture**. Entertainment should also be provided in line with a public-service profile of offers.”* Recital 17 qualifies: *“Culture means the following in particular: **theatre, plays, music, television plays, television films and radio plays, fine arts, architecture, philosophy, literature and cinema.**“*
- The public service media mission as such is broad and comprehensive in serving the needs of society. **Culture among other, equally important, genres is a central deliverable in the fulfilment of the public service mission**.

- The UNESCO convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions acknowledges (art. 6) that the Parties “*may adopt **measures aimed at protecting and promoting diversity of cultural expressions***” including those “*aimed at enhancing diversity of the media, including through public service broadcasting*”.
- The **role of public service media** in this respect not only involves **informing the public and thus raising awareness on the importance of protecting and promoting the diversity of cultural expressions**. They also and first of all **act as producers, commissioners, distributors and intermediaries of services (programme content) which are part of this diverse range of cultural expressions, which help create, protect and strengthen them**.
- In this perspective, **UNESCO** should examine how to support and promote public service media. The question to be answered is: **What are the political, regulatory, financial and overall societal conditions required for public service media to fulfil their tasks in keeping with the objectives of the Convention?** And: **How can UNESCO help develop, foster and sustain those conditions?** Any such UNESCO engagement may include a **critical assessment** of the role of public service media and the fulfilment of their mission in the light of its convention’s objectives.
- UNESCO should consider to support the **inadmissible need for editorial independence, organisational autonomy and appropriate funding** of public service media for them to fulfil their societal functions. Equally, UNESCO should acknowledge the **technological neutrality** of the definition and funding of public service media as well as of its fulfilment of tasks on a multimedia and multiplatform basis. Finally, UNESCO could consider to support the concept of “**PSM by institution**” as opposed to “PSM by tender” since the institutional constitution of public service media serves objectives such as independence, professionalism and continuity of service, all underpinning the protection and promotion of cultural diversity by the means of public service media.

What could the Parties to the 2005-UNESCO Convention on the diversity of cultural expressions do in 2014/2015 view of working on the role of public service media for cultural diversity?

The Parties could consider to

- engage in exchanging and discussing examples and **best practices** for the appropriate fulfilment of the public service mission in the field of culture;
- facilitate **bilateral, regional and international cooperation** in the field of public service media;
- reflect upon public service media in the context of ‘**culture and development**’ and ‘**culture and sustainable development**’;
- reaffirm their strong conviction that “*cultural activities, goods and services have both an economic and a cultural nature*” and “*must therefore not be treated as solely having commercial value*”; insist that this is respected and implemented when engaging in any trade liberalisation activity be it on a **bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral level**.