

## THE ROMANIAN PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA SECTOR AND ITS STAKEHOLDERS: AN OVERVIEW

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**Abstract:** *In this article I undertake a stakeholder-based institutional analysis of a national public service media sector in order to understand its complexity, but also in order to explore the realistic opportunities to become hubs of creative production and citizenship. The time has come to reconsider public options for the media, in the event of failing markets and uneven results of citizen or community journalism projects. One cannot impose quality journalism where there is no market demand for it, and one can hardly invent civil society in areas where there had been none. It is at least thinkable to envision democratic governance, pluralism, a public interest agenda, and fun in a sustainable public service media system. In order to explore the limits and opportunities of a given public service media sector, I undertake a stakeholder analysis of the Romanian public service media sector, starting from the international interested parts, moving to the national ones, up to the internal influential groups. This kind of approach allows for a realistic consideration of the workings and dynamic of a sector, giving space to all parties involved, and bringing a pointed perspective on the object of study.*

**Keywords:** *public service media sector, stakeholder, public service television, public service radio, Romania*

### **Public service media in Romania: the context**

At the moment, the public service in Romania is neither popular, nor is it a popular subject for academic research. The legacy of this field is that of being tightly linked to the former communist regime. Moreover, it is considered an obsolete form of media, and mainly a nepotistic state structuration. In Romania, the common term to refer to it is that of state media, the idea of public service media being quite new, and not yet popular. It is considered mainly a self-serving institutional setting for the ones working there, and not an organisational structure that observes its public service remit:

Journalists have learned to ‘resonate’ with what is required. We notice that over time journalists in public media have learned to meet the expectations of the political powers. A well-paid job, plentiful benefits, and especially job security in a state-funded organisation have diminished their impetus to protest against constraints on their editorial

independence or to criticise abusive interventions. (Surugiu, Ionescu 200)

The public service television and radio services are more often than not subject to heated polemics, than to sober academic scrutiny. This paper aims to start filling this research gap in order to understand the field in itself and for itself, an attempt to move forward and out of a tight circle of impossibilities.

### **Premises for the reconsideration of public service media**

In this article the main focus is the reconsideration of a venerable and quite honourable institutional setting that has served for decades the imagined communities of European nations: the public service media sector. The premise of this article is that the potential of public service media is currently insufficiently used as a civic and cultural resource for the democratic polity. In order to gain a first-hand understanding of the workings of the field and to envision policy solutions so that the public service media sector can accomplish its public service remit, a stakeholder analysis is useful. Moreover, I wish to move beyond simplistic views that conceive of media as either serving the power or serving the market. It is indeed the case that the ways and practices of instrumentalising media are very diverse (Dragomir); at the same time, there still exists a sector that defines and practices media as a public service (Dragomir, Söderström).

The public service media remit is a concept that came to wide Western European prominence after the Second World War in the context of reconstruction and assumed responsibility of the state to provide for its citizens in terms of information, education and entertainment. It is in this vein that the post-war years can be considered the golden era of the European public service media (henceforth PSM) systems. In the last few decades, though, the PSM sector has come under the fierce attack of the commercial competitors, which have contested the privileged position of PSM in a free market. Nevertheless, in most of Europe the PSM providers still occupy an important place in the media ecology (Donders). It is equally true that in the context of information incertitude many European citizens have turned to their PSM provider for trustworthy information.<sup>1</sup> In the last three decades, the supporters of PSM have shrunk to the stronghold of Central and Northern Europe.<sup>2</sup> At the moment, out of hundreds state media systems, only a dozen function as public services (Dragomir Söderström).

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ebu.ch/files/live/sites/ebu/files/Publications/MIS/login\\_only/psm/EBU-MIS\\_COVID-19\\_Crisis\\_PSM\\_Audience\\_Performance-Public\\_UPDATE.pdf](https://www.ebu.ch/files/live/sites/ebu/files/Publications/MIS/login_only/psm/EBU-MIS_COVID-19_Crisis_PSM_Audience_Performance-Public_UPDATE.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> See Nordicom, <https://www.nordicom.gu.se/en>

order to explore its realistic opportunities to develop as a hub of creative production and citizenship. The legal obligations regarding democratic separation of power, built-in mechanisms of checks and balances, transparency and accountability at the level of formal governance make PSM institutions good candidates for public scrutiny. Moreover, legal obligations regarding pluralism and diversity of content oblige the PSM providers to observe these principles. Nevertheless, financial (in)security makes a difference as to the capacity of complying with the specific legal obligations. It is interesting to observe that formally these organisations are defined as democratic actors in the polity, while when it comes to financing they are expected to function as a regular market player. Well, democracy is a costly institutional structuration, and the paradox of obligations but lack of means is an abiding problem.

### **Public service media vs Commercial media vs. Civil society media**

In order to make significant distinctions between different media I use a theoretical model – Rodney Benson’s – which proposes differentiation by ownership structure. Benson proposes a fourfold model, according to which there is the stock market media, the commercial media accountable to its stakeholders, the civic model accountable to its donors, and the public/state model that is accountable to the state and/or citizens.

In the last decades, public service media organisations have been under constant attacks from both commercial and civil society media. The former have defined public service media as unfair competition in the free market, the latter have pushed for the institutionalisation of grassroots civic media initiatives, at the expense of the large and obsolete national media. Both types of media have formulated legitimate claims to the media sphere and have found enthusiastic followers as well as funding. Commercial media are embodiments of the idea of entrepreneurship, trade, and free exchange, driven by supply and demand. Unfortunately, in the media sphere, this ethos has led to low cost, low taste and large scale media production (McQuail, Siune qtd. in Williams 17).

Waves of techno-optimism related to the development of the Internet have fuelled quite unrealistic expectations about the capacity of commercial digital platforms to serve endless civic, educational, and cultural ends (Castells). On the other hand, recent phenomena like mass disinformation and viral fake news (Ireton, Posetti) have sobered up the expectations about the new media. Recent contributions about digital platforms have clearly demonstrated that public service and public interest are not structural components of the commercial digital platforms. Fairness, accessibility, democratic control, and accountability are simply not part of the platform logic (van Dijck, Poell, de Waal).

Civil society media is quite deeply distrustful of the state and formal power. It attempts to fill the space between the state and the market. By the

same token, the commons initiatives have complemented the grassroots ethos. At the same time, research points to processes of incorporation of commons projects into the market (Meng, Wu). Moreover, I hypothesise that in young democracies civil society media are vulnerable to capture because of their limited size, their lack of sustainability when donations cease, and the lack of formal transparency and accountability obligations, other than those to the donors. Media capture describes the phenomenon whereby there is actually no practical separation of power between regulator and the regulated, a kind of “poacher turned gamekeeper” (Schiffrin 4).

### **The public service media sector and its stakeholders**

The larger theoretical framework against which I place the analysis is that of critical political economy of the media, with its focus on power (Murdock, Golding). Power is defined as the capacity of an actor to extend itself (Han). I apply the sociological vision that the intersection between structure and agency is where power manifests itself in institutionalised practices (Giddens). So far, sociological analysis has revealed the fact that the media field is basically a dominated one in relation to the economic and political ones (Bourdieu). When it comes to the Romanian case, in the first two decades after communism, media merely managed to be the voice of change, rather than exerting agency over its own transformation (Petre, 2012).

Stakeholders are institutional actors, interested parties, that influence the existence of an organisation (Freeman). In order to understand a field or a sector, one needs to identify the interested parties, their stakes and relative power. The unit of analysis in this research article is the public service media sector, with a focus on Romania. The research questions that guide this endeavour are: What are the main stakeholders when it comes to funding, governance, and editorial purposes? What is the stakeholders’ position at the level of the public service media sector? How do the stakeholders contribute, or block the public service remit of the public service media sector?

In the empirical section of the article I start from the large international stakeholders, and move on to the national ones, both external and internal. In this way, it is possible to draw a larger picture of public service media as a sector, not just as an organisational unit. This research applies the neo-institutional lesson that it is not enough to understand an organisation, but its environment should be studied as well (Powell, DiMaggio).

### **International stakeholders: UNESCO**

UNESCO is a respectable international organisation that provides with research, media education, guidelines, and the understanding of the main

principles and directions for the global public service media.<sup>3</sup> It has been an active stakeholder and a promoter of the public service values in the media worldwide. The interest in media as public service finds its roots in the developmental agenda of UNESCO, corroborated with an older aim regarding reducing disparities in terms of information flows, access, and opportunities around the globe. Currently, “UNESCO’s mandate in the field of public service broadcasting is to support and promote comprehensive action focusing on the role and functions of public service, and in so doing to take the advice of the international, regional and national professional organizations concerned and of the National Commissions.”<sup>4</sup> We observe that the role of UNESCO has more to do with supporting and promoting, than with direct intervention.

In the decades before the fall of communism UNESCO had been a leading crusader for a new communication order, but that agenda has been gradually replaced by an agenda focusing on educating and promoting journalistic values:

professional news media acts as a guardian of public interest. It is an important component of the checks and balances that form part of a democracy. By disseminating trusted information to citizens, the news media enables citizen participation in development and strengthens accountability feedback mechanisms. Citizens cannot exercise and enjoy their citizenship in the absence of crucial information and knowledge, which well-trained journalists are better placed to provide.<sup>5</sup>

UNESCO discretely supports and promotes public service media and its values around the world.

### **The European Broadcasting Union (EBU)**

EBU is perhaps the most important European public service media stakeholder when it comes to legal standards and professional cooperation. It is a professional association based in Geneva, and European public service media providers are members of it. In its own definition, EBU is “the world’s leading alliance of public service media.”<sup>6</sup> It has a very strong legal division, specialised in media law, and it provides expertise and research reports to its members as well. No less important, it has lately taken a proactive advocacy stand towards demonstrating the public value of its media members. The

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/media-development/public-service-broadcasting/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/media-development/public-service-broadcasting/unescos-mandate/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://en.unesco.org/unesco-series-on-journalism-education>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ebu.ch/home>

Romanian public service media providers have recently benefitted from input from EBU. Nevertheless, the reports are not binding, but function as recommendations for improvement. It is up to the individual member organizations to implement or not the key recommendations. At the same time, membership and the legal and policy advice are not cheap, and it is up to the individual members to pay the EBU fees. At the same time, one can understand the relative importance of various member organisations when looking at the EBU committees and their leadership. Romania does have two executive members from the public radio, but none from the public television; they the Romanian representatives serve on the international and training committees.<sup>7</sup> If we consider the past membership, where there had not been any representation whatsoever, the current situation is an important step forward.

### **The Council of Europe and the European Audiovisual Observatory**

The Council of Europe is an international organisation founded in the wake of World War II to uphold human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe. One of its subsidiaries is the European Audiovisual Observatory, which gives provides with information and research on the audio-visual industry, public as well as commercial. One specific aim is to provide up to date information on the stages of implementation of the European directives related to media and copyright.<sup>8</sup> The self-assumed mandate of the EAO is “to reply to a distinct lack of information and transparency concerning this industry. To the present day, it continues to provide a comparative European overview of the audio-visual industry in 41 different countries as well as detailed analysis of national and even regional industries.”<sup>9</sup> The Council of Europe has been a constant, if discrete, supporter of public service media. Its mandate it not to regulate, but it can issue recommendations, which are nevertheless not binding to the member states. In its declarations, the Council of Europe urges for the independence of the national public service media providers, in the spirit of the founding agreements of the European Union.

### **The European Commission**

The European Commission is the most active body of the European Union from the point of view of regulation and policy implementation. It seems to function both as a legislative and as an executive body, while the elected European Parliament is struggling to expand its duties as a proper legislative. The European Commission is the home of the European directives, that is the European laws, including the ones that legislate media. At the moment, the Romanian media sector is incorporating two main directives, the new form of

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.ebu.ch/groups?type=committee>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.obs.coe.int/en/web/observatoire/avmsd-tracking>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.obs.coe.int/en/web/observatoire/what-we-do>

the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD), and the Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market, formally the Directive (EU) 2019/790.

Generally speaking, at the level of this institution, there is more enthusiasm for the market than for public service, and this institutional branch is struggling to make sure that the public service media organisations do not represent unfair competition to their commercial counterparts. The EC is careful that the public service media providers do not receive unfair state aid, and thus distort the market.<sup>10</sup> The Commission is not a supporter of the public service media providers, and it has even introduced requirements that oblige the public service media across Europe to prove their public value, and to pass a public value test. Thus, we witness “the emergence of tests to approve proposals of new public services – tests that are often seen as resulting from European Union (EU)-led competition policy processes” (Moe 207). Interestingly enough, meanwhile EBU is instructing its members how to prepare their files in order to pass the tests and meet the competition requirements.

### **The Committees of Culture and the Audiovisual of the Romanian Parliament**

When it comes to the national stakeholders of the Romanian public service media sector, the Law 41/1994 regulates the functioning of the Romanian public service media, composed of The Romanian Society for Radio (in Romanian, SRR) and The Romanian Society for Television (SRTV). According to the law, the two organisations are under the control of the elected Parliament (Art.2). The specialised committees of Culture, the Arts, and Mass-mediated Communication at the level of the Senate and the Deputy Chamber represent an important stakeholder, as it is there where the selection and validation of the governing bodies of the public media organisations takes place every four years, or more often if the annual reports of the two organisations are invalidated by the Parliament. The law stipulates that if the annual report of the two organisations is not validated by the Parliament, their councils of administration are dismissed.

The professionalisation of the specialised parliamentary committees in charge is quite limited, the committees of culture being considered rather decorative in the larger economy of parliamentary design (Petre, 2009). The composition of these committees is quite diverse, including artists, poets, and many people of various backgrounds, unrelated to the media. The current president of the committee is specialised in cultural diplomacy, one of the vice-presidents graduated Law, the other Theology; the members come from insurance, security or software companies, others from the fields of classical

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<sup>10</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/competition/state\\_aid/reform/broadcasting\\_communication\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/reform/broadcasting_communication_en.pdf)

music, maths, philosophy or marketing. There is only one member that has the credentials of a broadcasting media producer.<sup>11</sup>

In the Romanian institutional design – of French inspiration –, the media is placed alongside culture and the arts, which is an obsolete structuration in the context of the accelerated marketization of the media field in the recent decades (Petre, 2010). Rather than offering a legislative overview, the Parliament functions sometimes as a threatening guard to the public service media sector.

### **The Romanian Council of the Audiovisual**

In the early nineties there was a large western driven policy effort to set up a specialised institution for licencing and the observation of the legal requirements regarding the audio-visual sector in Central and Eastern Europe; that had just emerged from communism (Harcourt). The main idea driving this large effort was that of opening the markets and removing the practices of censorship as intervention on content before airing, and replacing it with post-airing monitoring, as stipulated by the law. Censorship had been a well established institutional setting, firmly set under the vigilant eye of the communist governing power (Mustață). The externally driven action of setting up autonomous audio-visual councils had to do with a conscious effort of separating the media from the governing power, and making the audio-visual media sector accountable to a specialised body and the citizens, rather than to the power in office. It is the audio-visual council that is in charge with licencing the new entrants into the national audio-visual media sector. According to Stavre (449), “between 1990 and 2016, the National Audiovisual Council (CNA) has [*sic*] released over 300 radio and television licenses”, directly contributing to the diversification of the media offer from a single monopoly, to a very dense, and fragmented, audio-visual media landscape in Romania.

The institutional analysis of the National Audiovisual Council (CNA) shows that this stakeholder has steadily professionalised, it has come a long way from general discussions about culture to genuinely producing and enforcing secondary regulation (Petre, 2010). It generally serves its function as the legal watchdog in the media. The composition of the committee shows that the members are to a certain extent professionals with media and public communication careers that recommend them. In this respect, the current composition of the CNA shows that half of the members come from journalism and public communication, and the rest from other fields such as law, politics, or civil society.<sup>12</sup> It is an organisation that is expanding its duties to observe

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.cdep.ro/pls/parlam/structura.co?cam=2&leg=2020&idc=10>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.cna.ro/-Membrii-Consiliului-.html>



contents in the new media, as the revised Directive on Audiovisual Services extends its span to media on demand and media streaming. The more technical branch of the organization is in charge with licencing, and the observation of the technical requirements of the ones that ask for the right to air. In terms of the direct relation with the public service media organizations, the National Audiovisual Council (CNA) is applying the same rules to all the media players.

### **The Councils of Administration and the Steering Committees of SRR and SRTV**

The CAs of the two public service media organizations represent the executive branch of internal governance, together with the steering committees that apply the decisions of the councils of administration. The CA represents the link between the organisations and the national legislative, while the committees represent the executive body made up of the leadership of the two organisations. The election mechanisms, and the prerogatives of the council of administration are specified by Law 41/1994, in Article 19, and Article 27. We find that in the council there are members proposed by the major political parties represented in the Parliament, as well a representative proposed by the institution of the presidency, one by the government, and two representatives of the employees. The council of administration is expected to provide the strategy of development and the editorial vision; it is in charge with the economic and personnel restructuring; it organises the competition for the positions in the steering committees; it is in charge of budgeting and investments.

The expectation of both employees and the Parliament is that the councils successfully govern and solve all current and long-term problems of the organisations. At the same time, the councils are limited on multiple fronts: on the one hand, by the political parties that nominate most of the members; on the other hand, by the Parliament, which can, and does, invalidate the annual reports. No less importantly, senior employees gathered around representative trade unions resist changes that can affect their *status quo*.

I believe that the highest expectations and the tighter limitations are placed on this governing body, and the real space for action is severely limited by institutional design. I have had discussions with a former member of one of the councils of administration, who recounted a situation where reorganisations were to be undertaken, and the council faced strikes from the unions, while at the same time being summoned to provide explanations in Parliament and before the Romanian Council of the Audiovisual. Practically, there was no real option for decisions to be implemented. The executive can be and is blocked, while the internal stakeholders blame the councils of administration and the leaders of the organisations when the situation is not

good. At the level of the public television, there is a constant struggle between the leadership and the unionised employees<sup>13</sup>.

### **The President Director General (PDG) of SRR and SRTV**

The general director is mandated by law to run the current operations at institutional level. It is the leader of the executive, of the councils of administration as well as of the steering committee, and is elected by the CA from within its members. The mandate is subsequently further validated by the Parliament. At the same time, “the PDG is effectively selected by the ruling parties and is either a party member or someone closely affiliated with the ruling party and willing to do the government’s bidding” (Surugiu 199).

According to Article 28 of Law 41/1994, the general director applies the decisions of the CA. At the same time, he/she has the prerogative to validate, as well as to dismiss, heads of departments, to contract third parties for specific services, to represent the organisation at the international level, and is in charge with budgeting, according to Article 28/e. We observe that the powers of the general director are quite large and at times are contested by the employees, who complain that the director is abusive in terms of personnel decisions, that he/she travels too much abroad, that the financial decisions are not correct; as the public communication of the trade union members shows<sup>14</sup>. The concentration of power can indeed be considered a vulnerability under the current reading of the law.

### **The professional associations of journalists and artists**

In Romania, artists are better organised and better represented at the institutional level than journalists are. The so-called creative unions have enjoyed the status of organisations of public utility for decades, while the journalists have had a single organization that enjoys this status, and only for one decade now.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, this status was obtained because it could prove that it is a union of creation, as the recognition is given by the Ministry of Culture. A union of journalists is recognised as being of public utility only because they can be included in the definition of the Ministry of Culture, which manages the creative unions. Nevertheless, there are many employees of the public service media organizations who are members of this professional association, as the consultation of the list of members attests.<sup>16</sup> Besides the

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<sup>13</sup> Agerpres News Agency, *Digitalizarea presei și independența instituțiilor de media, printre temele dezbătute la conferința dedicată mass-media*, 2019.

<https://www.agerpres.ro/cultura/2019/03/06/digitalizarea-presei-si-independenta-institutiilor-de-media-printre-temele-dezbătute-la-conferinta-dedicata-mass-media--269890>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.mediasind.ro/>

<sup>15</sup> HG nr.472/07.05.2008

<sup>16</sup> <https://uzp.org.ro/tabel%20membrii%20UZPR%202021.pdf>

only public utility journalist union, there are several strong professional organisations of artists, and many employees of the public service media sector are part of them. The collective rights organisations – OGC<sup>17</sup> – are equally important, because they manage the royalties for the intellectual property rights. Except for news, which do not qualify as intellectual creation, all other forms of creation are protected under the current law and can bring royalties to the rights owners. Many employees of the two public service media organisations are also registered members of an OGC, and receive royalties.

### **Representative Culture and Media Branch trade union**

In order to be able to negotiate for its members, a trade union needs to prove that it is representative, with more than half of the employees as its members. The representative trade union from the media and culture sector, Media Sind, represents the public service media employees in their negotiation for the collective work contract.<sup>18</sup> It is interesting to observe the long war between the leadership of the public television and the trade union, the former contesting the right of the latter to represent the employees in the negotiation for the collective work contract.<sup>19</sup> The leadership is accused by the employees of the public television that they subcontract activities that could be performed by the employees themselves, causing financial losses to the organisation. More explicitly, in Article 15, point 19 of the collective work contract draft, the employees require that the organisation give priority to its own employees, rather than to collaborators. On the other hand, in Article 17 of the same document, the employees ask for their own right to have multiple contracts with multiple organisations. Moreover, under the current understanding of the law, they are as well free to receive royalties for copyright from third parties. Those demands are legal under the current legislation, the Work Code, the Copyright Law 8/1996, as well as Law 41/1994.

The biggest challenge for trade unions is to prove that they are representative and trustworthy. In Romania, people do not really like, nor trust, trade unions because of the legacy of subservience of the trade unions to leadership during the communist period. The general trust in the institution of trade union is low in Romania, at around 20%.<sup>20</sup> Recently, the two employee representatives that were supported by the trade union for the public television council of administration did not receive enough votes in the internal elections

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<sup>17</sup> <https://orda.ro/organisme-de-gestiune-colectiva/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://docs.google.com/a/mediasind.ro/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=bWVkaWFzaW5kLnJvfG1lZGllhc2luZHZxneDoyZjdlNjMyY2UyNTZlZmRl>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.mediasind.ro/comunicate-l/curteadeapelbucurestiaconfirmatprinhotararedefinitivalegalitateafunctionariimediasindintvr>

<sup>20</sup> <https://curs.ro/sondaj-omnibus-nov-dec-2018/>

held at the level of the organisation.<sup>21</sup> This shows that the trade union is not quite a powerful point of reference for many employees. Moreover, not everybody who works is represented in the trade union, but only the ones who have a work contract. The Labour Code defines work as the activity undertaken under a work contract. The copyright agreement is not considered work. It is considered that the person indeed works, but for himself/herself. The person sells the result of work, not the work itself (Martin, Ulmanu). Thereafter, these contributors are not protected by the Labour Code but fall under the principles of the Commercial Code. It is interesting to observe that quite many journalists, especially the young ones, have short-term work contracts, that put them in a very precarious position; some of them eventually decide to give up altogether (Petre, Nănescu).

### **The employees of SRR and SRTV**

One of the most interesting things when studying the composition of the population of employees, especially when it comes to the public television, is that the editorial staff does not form the majority when compared with the employees that provide technical and bureaucratic support.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, in the media field, since the new Labour Code was enforced in 2011, there has emerged a new category of precarious journalists, either collaborators on short-term contracts or copyright holders, who do not have a work relation with the media organisation (Petre, Nănescu). The temporary or copyright status does not provide this category with the right to unionise, because these persons are not defined as full-fledged employees by law. At the same time, at the level of the public television and radio organisations, the support personnel is generally employed with full rights, and unionised. This situation provides the junior editorial staff with a weaker voice and power of negotiation than the rest of the personnel. The ageing of the full-time editorial employees is yet another issue, along with the accumulation of editorial, managerial, copyright, and patrimonial privileges in the upper stratum of the editorial staff.

Moreover, from the early nineties on the public service sector has been steadily losing specialists to the private media sector. The production capacities of the public service television has been constantly shrinking, while the public radio fares much better. When it comes to the internal structuration of the two organisations, siloed work dominates the public television, making it difficult for the various departments to collaborate, and moreover producing serious overlapping of attributions and task distribution. In each Silo, there are

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.bursa.ro/mediasind-contesta-rezultatul-alegerilor-representantilor-salariatilor-in-ca-al-tvr-intrucat-au-fost-depistate-fraude-majore-03608445>

<sup>22</sup> [http://media.tvrinfo.ro/media-tvr/other/202103/structura-si-numarul-de-posturi-10-02-2021\\_55356900.pdf](http://media.tvrinfo.ro/media-tvr/other/202103/structura-si-numarul-de-posturi-10-02-2021_55356900.pdf)

support people who support only one segment, making a lot of activities resource consuming, and the general productivity of work generally low.

### **The audiences of the Romanian public service media**

From the annual reports of the public radio<sup>23</sup> and public television<sup>24</sup> we can read that the public service radio is far more popular than public service television. According to current ratings, the public television hardly hits the top ten televisions.<sup>25</sup> At the same time, the public radio is in the top three radios in the country, covering both urban and rural areas.

Meanwhile, the young population has massively migrated towards the new media, and the public service providers are struggling to meet the digitalisation desiderata set by the European standards, becoming more and more present online. One positive development is that the main news site of the public service television<sup>26</sup> has significantly improved its traffic within the last two years. The pandemic context and growing disinformation in the new media has made people turn towards trustworthy informational sources, and it turns out that public service media is considered to be one. At the same time, the young audiences are not really aware of a distinct public service media with a specific mandate; they are not quite sure what media is and how it differs from other contents that fall under no editorial responsibility and obligations.

### **Conclusion**

The public service media sector is a complex one, and there are a myriad of stakeholders that influence the life of the public radio and public television in Romania. The research undertaken here has not exhausted the topic, but represents an overview of the main interested parties involved. Following this institutional analysis, some conclusions can be formulated. The international stakeholders give the general directions, they provide benevolent guidance, and some education. At the same time, except for the European Commission, which legislates via specific directives that ought to be introduced in the internal legal system, they do not have a direct and significant input into the workings of the two organisations. The Parliament is exerting its power by rejecting annual reports and dismissing councils of administration. In their turn, the councils of administration are contested by the employees and their representative trade unions. The employees themselves are divided between the senior, unionised and privileged, and the young, collaborators, and not unionised.

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<sup>23</sup> <http://www.srr.ro/RadioRomania/rapoarte-20>

<sup>24</sup> [http://www.tvr.ro/raportul-de-activitate-2020\\_31704.html#view](http://www.tvr.ro/raportul-de-activitate-2020_31704.html#view)

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.paginademedi.ro/audiente-tv/sinteze-lunare/audiente-prime-time-septembrie-2021-20413946>

<sup>26</sup> <http://stiri.tvr.ro/>

At the level of the Romanian public service media sector, the regimes of financing and governance are similar for the two organisations, the public radio and the public television. Both receive most of their money from the state budget, and are regulated and overviewed by the same type of executive bodies, deriving from a common law. Nevertheless, the two organisations are very different in their regimes of production. The public television seems to be organised around third party production and promotion, while its own capacities of production and innovation are quite limited. Further research is needed, though, in order to examine how different regimes of production create very different capabilities of fulfilling the public service remit at the editorial level.

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