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Public Service Broadcasting in Norway

Working Group 1: The Role of Regulators in the Supervision of PSB Activities

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Structure of the presentation

- The Public Service Landscape in Norway
 - The Public Service Broadcasters
 - The Public Service Remit
 - The Regulators and the supervision of Public Service
- Current debates and future challenges
 - Public Service in a digital environment
 - Independent Monitoring Bodies
 - State Aid and the definition of the Public Service Remit
 - Assessment of the value of new services

PSB now and in the future

- Will public service content be delivered by commercial broadcasters as well as NRK in a digital future?
- How to define the public service remit
 - Policy challenges in the efforts to maintain a strong, healthy national broadcaster as the main provider of public service content in accordance with the state aid provisions of the EEA Agreement
 - Assessment of the value of new services
- Independence of monitoring body

The Norwegian PSB Landscape

- **The Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK)**
 - State owned
 - Licence fee-funded
 - Core activity: Two television channels (**NRK1** and **NRK2**) + Three radio channels (**P1**, **P2** and **P3**)
- **Commercial broadcasters with a public service remit**
 - Private owned
 - Self funded
 - One television broadcaster: **TV 2** and two radio broadcasters: **Radio Norge** and **P4**.

The Public Service Remit

- **NRK:** General provision in law that states that its purpose is to provide PSB and related activities
 - **NRKs public service remit is further defined in NRK's Statutes**
 - **The Statutes are stipulated by the general assembly, which is the Norwegian Minister of Culture and Church Affairs**
 - **The public service obligations defined to the core channels; NRK1, NRK2, P1, P2 and P3.**
 - **The criteria stipulate obligations to be achieved within NRKs core television and radio channels as such, and not by every channel**
 - **The obligations are defined fairly vague, and there are few quantitative measures**

The Public Service Remit

- **The private, commercial broadcasters:** The PSB obligations are imposed according to the Broadcasting Act, but outlined by their licences.
- The commercial PSB Television Broadcaster:
 - **TV 2's public service remit is stated in its licence of 15 October 2001.**
 - **The obligations are defined fairly vague, and there are few quantitative measures.**
 - **Licence expires 31 December 2009.**

The Public Service Remit

- The commercial PSB Radio Broadcasters:
 - **Radio Norge and P4's public service remits are stated in their licences of respectively 20 December 2002 and 27 June 2003.**
 - **Both applications editorial plans and description concerning programming are included in the respective licences, and by doing so define the obligations fairly concrete and in many regards with quantitative measurements.**
 - **Expiring dates are 31 December in 2013 for both licences.**

The Monitoring of PSB

- The NMA monitors all the PSB broadcasters fulfilling of their public service remit
 - An annual assessment of the PSB Broadcasters
 - Monitoring on a regular basis
- The Broadcasting Act entitles the NMA to impose sanctions on broadcasters who do not comply with their public service obligations
 - Except for NRK: The NMA has just an advisory function towards the Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs
 - The Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs is also the administrative appeal body in these cases

Independent Monitoring Body

- A current hearing proposal:
 - Establish an independent complaints board to deal with decisions in broadcasting cases, and thus to give the NMA more independence.
 - The independency is proposed to comprise the NMA's annual assessments of the PSB-broadcasters, but **not the decisions** that follows from the annual report or from regular monitoring when the NMA find that the **public service broadcasters** do not comply with their obligations

The Public Service Remit and New Services

- Clear remit:
 - Make a detailed list of activities that are considered to be a part of the remit
 - Assess which new media services that fall within the scope of the remit, such as a Public Value Test
- Proportionate funding

PSB in the digital future

- Commercial providers will not deliver everything we as a society want from broadcasting.
- A political goal to maintain NRK as a strong national public broadcaster, being able to evolve and adapt to the rapidly changing media landscape.
- NRK should not be the only provider of PSB. It should also be delivered through some commercial broadcasters in exchange for certain privileges
- But what incentives can be found?

PSB now and in the future

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