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Research project: Public service broadcasting in multicultural sphere – the case of Poland, Slovenia and Great Britain

The aim of the project is to look at the set of relationships and dependencies between the concepts of multi-culturalism and media policy in Poland, Slovenia and the United Kingdom. The aim of the author of the project is to research the degree to which a policy of multi-culturalism has an impact on the public service broadcasting and to what extent these take into account cultural pluralism. A point of reference for the actions undertaken in Poland and Slovenia will be the experience of Britain. It will, therefore, be an attempt to answer the question to what extent can the British model be an example for countries such as Poland and Slovenia.

Today it is quite common, particularly in the context of the events in France and Holland, to talk of a crisis of multi-culturalism. In a number of countries this policy will have to undergo a process of change on many levels. Of course in Europe different policies concerning multi-culturalism are conducted and they are defined and assessed in different ways. The concept of cultural pluralism incorporated in the legal framework of the European Union, is also reflected in the media. The aim of this project is to show to what extent the public service broadcasters, in view of their broadcaster's remit, will have to take part in this process. The study of strategies and regulations and the circumstances governing the media is to show the accessibility and presence of ethnic, national and religious groups in the media. The media, with the public service broadcaster's remit they have, have a huge role to play in promoting the varied cultural reality of Europe. In many European countries, depending on their social mix, the media help support the process of inter-cultural dialogue. The aim of this project is to research the situation in Poland country, where ethnic and national minorities make up just 3% of the population. The position of Poland in this research is not coincidental as in the shaping of a process of multi-culturalism the size of the national and ethnic groups is not the only factor. Multi-culturalism has a significant connection between the perception of history by Poles and the arrival of new ethnic groups. Slovenia, like Poland, is re-shaping its media policy also in terms of its

relationship with different cultural groups. What we have then, are difficulties arising from different treatment of ethnic groups and the lack of regulations concerning groups, with their roots in the former republics of Yugoslavia.

The project is also to provide an answer to whether certain models accepted in the United Kingdom can be used in countries like Poland or Slovenia. As no society is truly uniform public service broadcasting should respect the principle of cultural pluralism. The media should fulfill the role of a sort of 'go-between' linking the minorities and the majority in society.

The pluralistic model of media policy pre-supposes a full autonomy of the media, openness, democratic control and the possibility for ethnic and national groups to present their viewpoints. This, obviously, is an ideal solution. In reality media policy is shaped by rules and regulations as well as norms and principles in a given country. This project will present the players from the media stage (actors and institutions) and the tools at their disposal in the process of communication such as the legal framework and ethical codes. The aim of this project is to ascertain the extent to which these regulations are enshrined in law and how discussion on the subject of multi-culturalism is conducted in the media. That is why a study of how journalists function, along with their professional responsibility in the process of cultural pluralism, will become necessary. It is the knowledge and communicative ability, including a multi-cultural competence of journalists, publishers and editors that determines whether we will have access to pluralistic content. It is very important, therefore, that the journalists should acquire this multi-cultural competence.

This project concerns a subject seldom broached in Central Europe but one broached ever more often in other countries of the European Union. The aim of the author of this project is to draw attention to inevitable processes, which will impact on media policy in Poland and Slovenia, among other countries, although seldom noticed. Therefore the aim of the project is to compare the functioning of media institutions in the old and new members of the European Union. In the case of countries like Poland it is often asserted that the problem of multi-culturalism does not affect them. The aim of this project is to illustrate just how big is the role of the media in changing such opinions.

This project will entail the following research:

1. Interviews with journalists, publishers, editors who will prepare programmes for, among others, different ethnic, national and religious groups who will decide on their form and content,
2. An analysis of documents, legal statutes, expert opinions and regulations which constitute a media policy,
3. An analysis of selected programmes broadcast on media in Poland, Slovenia and the United Kingdom.