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Record #1

1/12/20

To Whom It Concerns,

The biggest problem with false information comes from the comment sections that many media organisations operate, all of which are open to the public. Specifically [REDACTED]

These are usually very lightly regulated with just a requirement to login via a social media account as the only gateway to trolls, conspiracy propagators, and foreign influence.

The same social media accounts continually post false information and rarely are these accounts ever removed from these comment sections.

I propose that journalist groups should have much tighter regulation of false information in their comment forums.

Mandatory banning of regular blatant perpetrators of false information from making comments should be a requirement under law, so that media organisations are mandated to prevent their comment forums from becoming a [REDACTED] style platform for racists, extremists, conspiracies, and blatant lies.

At the very minimum online media organisations should be either properly policed to remove and ban these false information posters, or else be legally forced to shut down their comment sections completely.

There is a certain amount of freedom of speech that must be allowed under law, but there should also be a mandatory requirement that the organisations that profit from online comment forums to have to regulate what is acceptable, and what is detrimental to society.

Blatant lies, repeated conspiracies, extremism should not be allowed to propagate and take ownership of these online comment spaces.

[REDACTED] has been a major culprit of allowing false information to propagate in its comment section for some time now. [REDACTED] they do not regulate their own comment section properly, and many, many posts of blatant lies, conspiracies and racism exist in their comment section to this day.

Regards,

[REDACTED]



Record #3

No Name



My Submission is Straightforward and simple in principle.

Set up an independent group akin to The Peoples Forum to monitor reports of incidence of 'Fake News' and with the power to sanction repeat offenders.

The group would produce regular publicly available reports and outline and enact a resource bank aimed at continued education and information with links to verifiable sources.

The group should be politically independent, and, if possible, independently funded.

The soul purpose of the group should be the factual integrity of the news, with no interpretational bias.

Members of the group should represent a cross section of society and if possible be comprised of a number of rotating teams with a system of checks by each team on other teams conclusions to ensure opinion is not being generated by one team.

It would be of utmost importance that all systems, processes and decisions are fully transparent and publically accessible.

Regards

Ordinary.



The problem as I see it is that independent journalism has ceased to be a feature of the mainstream media and as a result, the main stream media outlets are the true source of fake news in the western world. One side of any story is presented and counter arguments are simply ignored. There is an absence of intelligent analysis in favour of the party line and political correctness. As a result, I seek my real daily news from well resourced and fair internet media outlets who offer both sides in any argument, who write professionally and have clearly done their homework.

The answer would be to break up the small number of media empires who provide our news, set minimum rates for journalists salaries and reward investigative journalism.

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Record #6

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### **Question 3: How should media be governed and regulated?**

Current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media are not adequate in two specific ways:

- 1) for content not classified as current affairs such as general science, there is no regulation or independent complaints mechanisms (for a topical example, basic science content regarding vaccines);
- 2) complaints mechanisms mainly deal with the good name of an individual and require the consent of the individual. However, this leaves a gap where content quoting an individual cannot be complained as the consent of the individual is required.

A number of concrete issues arise from these gaps, all related to factual content which is not current affairs:

- 1) there is no obligation or accountability for public service media regarding the accuracy of general science/information content which is not current affairs. Whereas accuracy is a key principle of current affairs broadcasting, no such standard applies to “expert” contributions to public service media, errors may go uncorrected and no independent complaints mechanism exists.
- 2) there is no obligation or accountability for public service media to clearly identify the area of expertise of contributors, where contributors are contributing as an “expert”. Contributors can often be introduced simply as “Professor” or “expert” with no title, area of expertise or, in some cases, any foundation for that expertise.
- 3) there is no obligation on public service media to distinguish between comment made in the area of expertise of the contributor and opinion outside the area of expertise of the contributor. This was very evident during the Covid-19 pandemic where Professors of Infectious Diseases, Tropical Medicine, Immunology, Biochemistry and many others commented routinely on public policy and public health matters which lies outside of their area of expertise which is not made clear.
- 4) where an “expert” is misrepresented (title or expertise inflation), there is no complaints mechanism without the consent of the individual. This leaves reporting of “expert” opinion unaccountable, as no complaint can be made about the expert.

In summary, general science and information content is a key part of public service media, and particularly evident during the Covid-19 pandemic, however, this type of broadcast is unregulated and unaccountable with no independent oversight.



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Journalists are so biased today. I wish they would just do their job. They have so much power that they can sway public opinion which is dangerous. With the emergence of the internet it has given the ordinary person a voice but now those people who own these organisations are trying to control it. How come all media outlets tell the same story even though it's fake. There's so much fake news and I doubt very much the government will do much about it. I think our only hope is the individual can see what is going on. I think the government should stay out of it altogether.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The government has no business in media because it becomes propaganda for those in power.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I wish regulators would make sure that there is no bias in the media but its plain to see that is not happening. The media controls the narrative along with their friends in government and big business. That's plain to see especially with what's going on in social media and now the big social media company's are trying to control that. I just want all sides of the story out there and let people make up their own minds. But the ruling class which includes the politicians, civil servants, media, big business and even the justice system when need be will always try to control the rest of us. But with the advent of social media that job has gotten harder.



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

By being more balanced and providing arguments from both sides of a discussion

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Should be financed by advertising generated revenue.

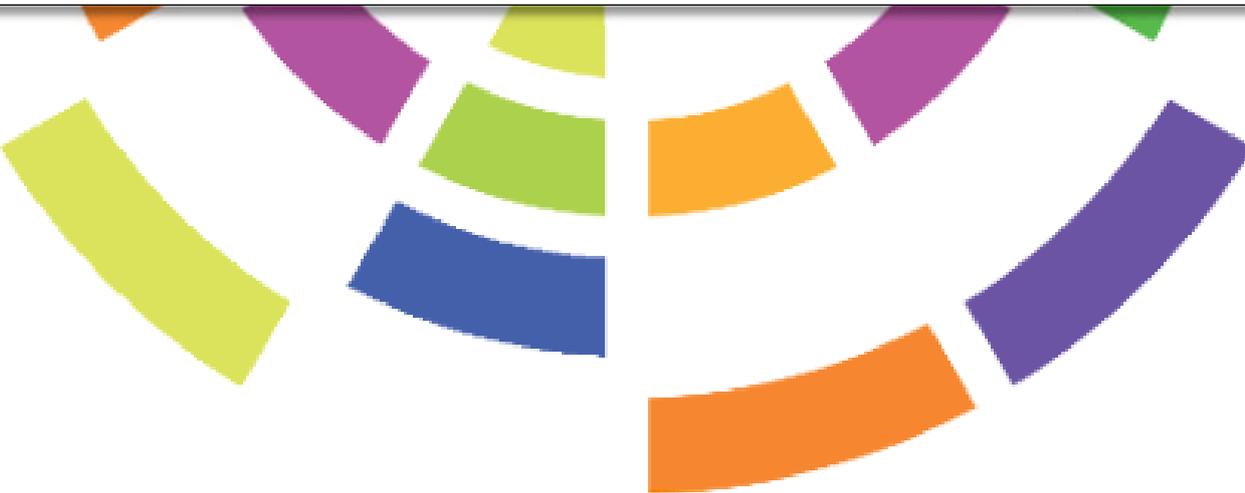
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Should be free of regulation.



Record #10

Ciaran Goggins

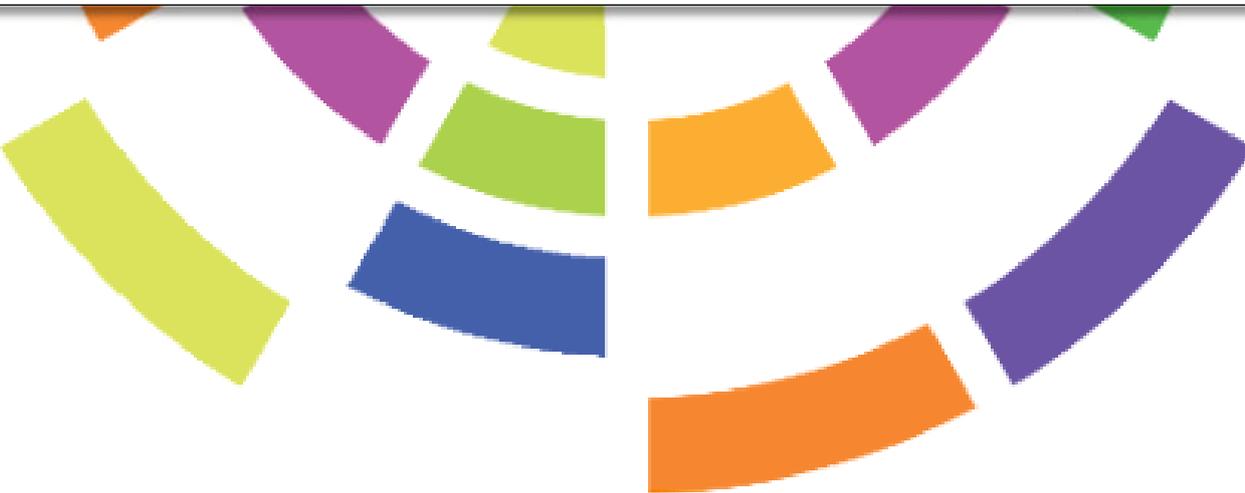


1. It is self evident that Irish media is quite nepotistic, few, if any, outsiders can break in.
2. Finance - perhaps advertising is the best method, as with the US and lesser extent UK and Europe/Anglophone space.
3. With a light touch. Oliver Wendell Holmes said that - Nobody has the right to shout "Fire!" in a crowded theatre. Therefore we accept limits on freedom of speech ( i.e no posting military movements in time of war). So far, so common sense. However, hate speech is free speech and once limits are placed upon commentators the slide towards censorship begins.



Record #11

Geraldine Comiskey



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

We need to separate journalism from vested interests (and perceived vested interests). The public perception of journalists is that we are corrupt. This is not helped by the tendency of journalists to double up as spokespersons for politicians / NGOs / others with vested interests (journalists do this out of necessity, due to the decline of the market, which in turn is caused by public perception of it as serving vested interests; it's a vicious circle). One way to deal with this problem is to establish a media charter & standards for journalism. On a practical level, this could take the form of every journalist's byline coming with a declaration of vested interests, and all media content to be produced by people who make most of their living from journalism (this used to be a cast-iron rule for membership of the NUJ). PR should not be regarded as journalism. Instead of allowing politicians, experts, lobbyists, etc, to write their own articles, editors should assign unbiased journalists to interview them and to do due diligence (one-voice interviews and Q&A pieces are not proper journalism). Opinion pieces should be relegated to the letters pages of newspapers.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

How should public service media be financed sustainably?) It should be financed by readers and advertisers, as it always has been. There should be no input from Government because the ethical repercussions are too great. Advertising sponsorship should of course continue to be marked as "advertisement" and articles favouring advertisers should be paid for and marked "sponsored". The plummeting circulation is due to the public perception of media as grossly biased, due to the fact that many journalists have links with politics and are constantly angling for lucrative Government positions; any attempt to forge even closer links with Government / the State institutions would only exacerbate the problem.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

How should media be governed and regulated?) By an independent body of journalists, who are free of conflict of interest - ie, not involved in Government, not taking part in political campaigns (as the NUJ did recently in the Together4Yes campaign) and openly declaring any potential conflicts of interest such as family links to politicians, side-hustles in commerce, membership of organisations, etc).

Irish newspapers need to drastically cut down the number of opinion columns and commentary in general, and eliminate the practice of allowing people with vested interests to write pieces (effectively interviewing themselves); we need to reinstate the ethical practice of employing journalists to objectively question people who look for space in a newspaper and to query the statements made in press releases instead of regurgitating them (verbatim or otherwise). There should be no columns written by former or current politicians, sports stars or celebrities; the latter might seem harmless enough but they are a turn-off for readers who are suffering from "opinion fatigue". Stick to telling the news, with the occasional well written, well researched news-feature or colour piece.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #13

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public media should represent all of the population. This is not the case at present. It should be more independent of the Government. There needs to be a radical review of the TV licence also.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I think there should be a monthly tax with exemptions for unemployed people. I think this should happen as so many are now using mobile devices for television purposes.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I would disband the BAI with immediate effect as it is not fit for purpose. It should be replaced with a new entity that will have a Board from a wide cross section of society that is much more pro active and meaningful than the BAI.



Record #15

Ronan F. Sands

Subject **Submission from a student journalist**  
From [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Ronan Sands  
Date 2020-12-28 11:52



Dear Sir/Madam,

As a student journalist I am hopeful that the commission will address and consider the following:

1. Develop a quality assurance mark (or brand) linked to professional journalism qualification and/or membership which indicates to readers that the writer or broadcaster is adhering to a higher code of practice than unresearched, opinion givers and subsidised influencers. There are quality and fairtrade marks on food, electronic items, cars etc.2. - why not on information and data? This could become a global brand and campaign.
2. The Council of Europe has a committee on Quality Journalism in the Digital Age who have already delivered recommendations and reports looking at a multitude of issues (journo-bots, fake news, sponsored news items, democracy disruptors, freedom of information, financial viability, sustainability). Those documents would serve as a good starting point for meaningful discussion as to what this commission should focus on and what it can realistically achieve.
3. The Freedom of Information Act which is a very important tool for journalists and is a staple of democracy needs to be constantly reviewed and strengthened and its scope widened. Certain organs of the state are now guiding legitimate enquiry to the FoI process and are obtuse in their responses rather than answering the questions in an upfront and transparent manner.
4. The Defamation Act also needs constant review. The current situation where wealthy individuals and corporations can employ the legal process (not the court, the process) in such a manner as to make the threat of a libel action sufficient deterrent from meaningful journalism being carried out.
5. A very important question for me is will I be able to make a decent living working as a journalist in Ireland or is it becoming so precarious that I will have to work in some other area that is journalist related (public relations, marketing, politics, media law)? If I want to do meaningful journalism will there be the financial resources and legal protection available to me to do so (by way of example I might wish to investigate the State's relationship with the Chinese WuXi corporation who have invested massively into Dundalk). If I am to be part of a sector (media) that protects democracy and the citizens of Ireland, will there be a strong financial value placed on that work or will my terms and conditions be constantly under threat and erosion?
6. Ireland is a relatively small country and has cliques and cronies (political, financial/business, judicial, permanent government, media). I think the longer a person has worked in the media the greater danger that they become part of the establishment and avoid pursuing certain topics. I think that every year working journalists should have to complete a one or two day ethics course which is provided by an academic or journalist from outside this jurisdiction.

I believe if the environment is right for unbiased, independent and professional journalism to take place, then the media and society will be best served in the future. I don't want the first reaction to be when I say I am a student journalist to be "do law instead, you'll never make a living in journalism".

I would like to receive regular updates from the Future of Media Commission and be given the opportunity to review draft recommendations or make further recommendations.

I think there should be a number of places for student journalists on the Commission.

If you would like to discuss my submission or receive further information or insight on any of the issues raised I would be pleased to do so.

Ronan F. Sands  
[REDACTED]

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Record #16

[Redacted]



Subject **Media**  
From [REDACTED]  
To <info@futureofmediacommission.ie>  
Date 2020-12-30 10:42



Hello, [REDACTED] my suggestions on how to improve the services of media are the following:

- Major media outlets like [REDACTED] seem extremely biased. There was no proper reporting done on the leak scandal of Mr. Varadkar. The scandal of the Carlow school seemed to be skewed even though it was found to be that articles written about it were false.
- Gaining public trust. Major media outlets are very quick to label unpopular opinions and small stories as fake news or false information which again seems skewed taking in the perspective that social media is used to find other major news outlets in different countries to see the scope of information. Therefore when every major news outlet seems to have no diverging information and rather have used a "copy & paste" way of important articles this appears to be as the same article in many major news outlets. This is not journalism.
- Being Biased. It is not the first time major media outlets have slandered a name of a politician on a personal basis. Whether calling them a quack or a conspiracy theorist. Such attitude is unprofessional at the least and extremely biased, making the public distrust a media that seems to have personal vendetta against certain individuals of the society.
- Injustice. When major scandals break out [REDACTED] like the leak of Mr. Varadkar or the flouting of the rules within RTE headquarters or the golf gate scandal, the major media outlets not only use the copy paste techniques to report these issues, but also seem to defend these perpetrators in a way without calling them out unlike the few individuals that they have slandered in other articles who have committed no crime or breach of the law. This is a big impact on the trust of the public.

I am not alone in thinking this and there are other issues regarding the major media outlets but these issues are unacceptable and unavoidable. The only way media can gain the trust of the public if it stops being biased by reporting in a slanderous way of certain individuals or groups of people and justly say as is on those who have broken the law, flouted the rules or even committed treason. Also labeling other news outlets which gained popularity as either fake news or conspiracy theorists is showing the bias the major news outlets have. If media reports the truth there is no fear. The people of this nation are treated as though they do not understand, which is fair to say that not everything is understood but people know bias when they see it and know how unprofessional as of late major media outlets have been. This is an opinion but a popular one which is gaining momentum and the major media outlets will suffer for the bias they have openly shown. People are not stupid and the way media have been reporting the news have insulted many people. The only way is if media becomes independent again, because the biggest problem right now is the distrust of the government by the public and media seem to have nothing critical to say about the many irresponsible actions the government have taken in the times of the pandemic.

On a personal note I was shocked to see that no major news articles said anything about the strangeness of the coalition of FF and FG which never happened before. And as a self thinking person this is astounding and suspicious as this happened when SF were taking a lead first time in a century, but the major media outlets didn't see it as strange in one bit which leads to the distrust. These may be advices but the only advice I may give is do not mistake people as unthinking because many do. That is why such a predicament has arisen now.

Tell the truth even if the government or the people disagree because that is trust, you cannot fake that.

Sincerely,  
[REDACTED]



Record #17





[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Date 2020-12-29 16:23

Dear Public Representatives,  
All these people who are happy to be referred to as "Talent" are completely compromised. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] When you are sponsored by a beef baron or Internet store, financial institution, or Manufacturer it is hard to be objective when faced with worker exploitation or tax evasion. If they want to operate as a commercial concern then let them ply their trade as Bloggers or Media Influencers [REDACTED].

A new bare bones broadcaster on a site somewhere like an IDA Office Park in Tullamore(just as an example) would be better. Those who want to plug their new book can take the train down to Tullamore or wherever. A single TV and radio station producing basic content and commissioning the rest would be more than adequate and the land bank which RTE is squatting on could realise hundreds of millions of Euro and could deliver thousands of housing units just a 10 minute cycle from St. Stephen's Green. Most live reports are recorded on the pavement outside whichever Government Department is being discussed. A small satellite office on the fourth floor of some building in Dublin1 will do perfectly fine.

Regards,  
[REDACTED].

On Monday, 28 December 2020, G [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Public Representatives,  
Noel Kelly Management decides what is force-fed to the viewing public each evening. Look at his stable of "Personalities" who are inflicted upon Ireland by RTE.  
RTE can't be reformed. Please cut it lose and let it sink or swim without the patronage of the Political classes.  
RTE doesn't deliver what the public demands, it delivers what Noel Kelly and people like him offer [REDACTED]

Yours Sincerely,  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #18

[REDACTED]



Subject **Future of Media Commission**  
 From [REDACTED] m>  
 To <info@futureofmediacommission.ie>  
 Date 2021-01-01 13:41



**Email** your submission to [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**2. Post** your submission to Future of Media Commission, Birmingham Tower West, Dublin Castle, Dublin 2, D02R866  
**3. Upload** your submission [here](#)  
**4. Input** via the online form [here](#)

Dear Commission,

The subject of 'misinformation', 'disinformation' or 'fake News' is probably THE most pressing issue right now due the problems facing the world in the shape of Covid19 & vaccinations.

You notice I put the terms like misinformation in apostrophes as these terms are subjective and are the subject of your commission.

It would seem that these terms relate to any information that is not the governmental official narrative.

In your website you say "The media are important for our democracy and society"

That is true.

Democracy is dependent on transparency, debate and decision making based on an informed opinion.

One issue I have with the news as being broadcast & printed is that there is little or no debate around issues that are of great concern.

People who have concerns about these issues mentioned are often called 'conspiracy theorists'.

That is a term I would like to see removed from the media as it is merely used as a pejorative term to silence debate with people who have genuine concerns.  
 It is divisive ! Deliberately so.

It would make one wonder about the veracity of information when it is not subject to debate.

For example, a few weeks ago there was information circulating about [REDACTED].

This was shot down by the so called experts on the media and yet it proved true.  
 If they don't even know the short term side effects it is reasonable to assume that they do not know the long term side effects .  
 There is information available about this but you will not hear on the MainStream Media.  
 The news is censored , in short

There is another term "MainStream Media."

Usually people who use this term are denigrated by the MainStream Media as 'conspiracy theorists' of course.

I was informed recently that the MainStream Media. are basically corrupt and all the major networks in the 'Western World' are owned by a relatively small number of people.

Not being one to take any information like this at face value I did my own research and sure enough it is broadly true.

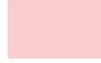
Again one may hear on the radio or television "not to believe what you hear in Social Media."  
 This is like saying 'do not believe anyone except us' ! Very sinister seeing as there is a huge variance of people on all platforms of social media. Again, if 'they ' are not to be believed then why not? Let's have a debate.  
 The reason there is no debate in my opinion is because the official narrative would not withstand a debate.  
 If it were not for social media, news like the ongoing 'Gilet Jaunes ' protests in Paris, the anti restriction protests in Leipzig or the recent [REDACTED] would not be known .

No doubt the purpose of this commission is to find a way to further stifle debate and is not what it purports to be.

Hopefully I will be proved wrong.

Yours Sincerely

[REDACTED]



Virus-free. [www.avg.com](http://www.avg.com)



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[Redacted]

Record #19

[Redacted]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday 2 January 2021 20:51  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of Public Service Broadcasting

Hello,

I would like to deal with public broadcasting under the broad umbrella of the 3 Questions from your website.

The choice of commission members will heavily influence this process as everyone sees the world through their own tinted sunglasses.

I am always quite sceptical of these public consultations.

They may have pre-determined outcomes from handpicked people and can be little short of window dressing with the taxpayer footing the big bill.

## Question 1

### Lessons

RTE has long had a left wing culture beginning with the "Stickies" of the 70's and 80's to present day public perception of a liberal left of centre middle class elite running the organisation.

This organisation needs a greater mix of Irish people from different social backgrounds with more regional accents being heard especially working class accents.

The biggest lesson from public service broadcasting over the last 20 years is the dreadful value for money it has been.

This has got to change.

To be fair to RTE, investigative journalism, coverage of the North and current affairs have been outstanding.

Sport coverage is excellent especially the GAA coverage.

All these areas should be left in place and supported as they have served the Nation well.

GAA and Irish sport must not be allowed to go behind a pay wall as this will ruin public service broadcasting and allow Sky to gobble up the entire market.

RTE's role in the last two social referenda has been biased.

There is a perception that RTE are anti-Catholicism.

RTE and public service broadcasting needs to reach out to the 1 million Northern Unionists.

This has been an abject failure of State Broadcasting and is never discussed.

Now is the time to do this with the current state of politics on these Islands and make National Public Broadcasting an all Island affair.

Increased funding of TG4 is an effective way to promote and save our heritage, culture and language as it has less political baggage, is less wasteful of money and Irish language based.

An outside the box approach would be to build up TG4 as a rival to RTE and allow both to compete for money rather like the mobile phone market.

An expanded TG4 could provide some content in English and would be non-Dublin based and help shift influence out of the Dublin.

## Question 2

### Funding

RTE must stop getting the lion's share of funding from the licence fee and Government subvention.

The current funding model for RTE makes them servants and mouthpieces of the Government.

This helped the Government overthrow the will of the people by using RTE to push the second Nice referendum and second Lisbon Treaty referendum.

They are bloated and inefficient in their use of taxpayers and advertising money especially in the areas of wages and expenses.

Quite a number of staff and management are earning over €100,000/year.

Compare this to Newstalk radio and Virgin Media, their closest competitors.

TG4 is good value for money.

A tender process under a set of criteria based on National Irish Public Broadcasting objectives should be set up.

RTE must tender on a level playing field with other Irish broadcasters for this money based on quality of content and objectives met.

The tendering process must not involve the setting up of another self-serving money gobbling quango.

Individuals making content appropriate to Irish culture, language and sport should be given tax breaks as it is such a risky poorly paying venture.

### Licence Fee and Funding.

A subscription based pay wall would destroy RTE and public sector broadcasting as no one would pay it.

As RTE stands right now, they would perish behind a pay wall as they are grossly inefficient.

A new more efficient licence fee system probably run by revenue or private tender is the only way to collect the fee if it is to be left in place.

Few people pay the licence fee but a more robust collection system will be very controversial, probably leading to street protests and civil disobedience similar to the water charge debacle.

It will invite protest and calls for RTE to be defunded as they are seen by all sides as wasteful of resources and among some they are seen as biased .

Rising VAT on new digital devices such as televisions, mobile phones and laptops would be a painless method of collection.

Introduction of a more “draconian” collection system must coincide with a complete overhaul of the wages and finances at RTE.

A large slice of this money should only be paid out through successful tendering processes for appropriate content.

This process will slim down the obscene wages and waste of money.

Public perception is as important as substance in this game!

### Question 3

#### Fairness and Bias

Section 39(1) of the Broadcasting Act deals with the issue of fairness and balance in broadcasting.

The spirit and intention of the Act is contravened regularly by RTE in their choice of guests on a given programme in that these guests all express the same views and ideology.

This was evident during the Abortion Referendum.

The choice of guests should be balanced based on a balance of views.

Current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media are inadequate as they allow public media to circumvent the concept of fairness by subtle spin, innuendo, choice of guests and questioning style.

The only way to have a truly balanced public service is by having as many diverse views and people within RTE and break down the current cosy left wing “Golden Circle” elite culture.

A lot of media people end up working as spin doctors for our politicians . This forms a cosy cartel between politics and journalism which is unhealthy.  
People like Denis O'Brien buying up the media is a dangerous path.  
Media ownership and control must not be concentrated in a few private hands equally the Government must not interfere with media public or private.  
Free speech must be maintained.

Regards

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[Redacted]

Record #20

[Redacted]



Subject **Future of Media**  
From [REDACTED]  
To <Info@futureofmediacommission.ie>  
Date 2021-01-03 11:46

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Hi,

I feel that the media for me has lost so much in this era of speed over truth and I feel like the conservative viewpoint is given so little airplay. It's not even fake news, it's omission. The media seems for the most part to look at stories and only show one point of view. For the vast majority of stories it is the left leaning viewpoint. Nothing wrong with that but we never really hear the other side.

In a free society I suppose news outlets can print what they please but it is very dangerous when the majority of our news outlets lean one way so predominantly.

I think to help this would be maybe a list of journalistic standards whereby each story is printed 3 times. One is purely the objective view of the story and the other 2 are the competing opinions on the story.

I think the government paying money to media outlets is a disaster waiting to happen. There is already a perception that our national broadcaster is extremely light handed when dealing with the government and the main parties but to start paying media could well lead to other outlets feeling pressurised not to report objectively in relation to the hand that feeds them. This would be unwise to say the least.

Thanks,  
[REDACTED]



Record #22



Firstly before you read any further I want you to know that I have a vested interest in print media – I am employed in a local newspaper group and I am proud to be part of a management team and in recent years, a management buy-out that enabled our titles to continue to be published and be a part of the fabric of our communities. Over 120 jobs were also saved with that change of ownership although sadly that number has dwindled in the past years.

Originally working in Dublin for national titles, I witnessed the demise of The Irish Press, The Sunday Tribune, Dublin Tribune and other great newspapers. I worked with great people, investigative journalism at its very best, whether uncovering wrongdoings in sport, mismanaged business affairs or holding our political leaders to account, each story was properly researched, verified, edited and written by trained journalists who respected the truth and informed their readers accordingly. How many times have I passed by a reporter's desk when they are talking to victim's families and admired how they spoke with empathy and reassurance and then carefully crafted their stories to properly represent the facts?

Many journalists have made great personal sacrifices to report the truth and some have paid the ultimate sacrifice. In the relatively recent past the editor's post had often to be examined by the bomb squad as terrorists and other criminal factions attempted to threaten and intimidate them – without success.

When I moved out of Dublin to work in local titles I witnessed a different type of journalism and reporting while staying true to the ethics and respect I had witnessed on the national stage. The basics are the same but now our people are writing about their own people, their celebrations, their sporting achievements and defeats, reporting on court cases, writing obituaries, attending and writing up notes from council meetings, supported also by those in towns and villages sending in their news on local games, on bingo nights, who got married, who sadly passed away – a record of every part of the county printed for all to read. Who won the Cross pen this week for getting the clues right in the Crossword – whose child graduated from college, photos of the children on their first day at school, which team lifted the trophy at last Saturday's cup final. Not shying away from the hard news but researching it well and with respect for all involved, we have reported on factory closures with job losses, fires that devastated local premises, horrific deaths on our roads, the list of tragedy and heartache is endless. But equally we give our front pages over to the celebrations – whether in sport, in business, in politics, in entertainment or in family life.

If we lose our local titles we lose that depth of local news on our community. No other medium can come close. We are the keepers of the memories of our people, our community, our county and of all Ireland. Existing titles that were first printed in the mid 1800's have survived so much, they're still publishing but are now in danger of being replaced by news that is not investigated, certainly not authenticated and very often untrue. While an American President accuses the established media of Fake news, this sadly is very often true of the news on our social media platforms – opinion pieces without facts, unresearched and unverified stories that are often untruths, false accusations levelled at individuals with no thought for the consequences of such lies. We await the accountability, currently being debated in the Dail.

I am not a wordsmith – I work on the commercial side of local press, an area that has been extremely hard hit over the past 9 months. We've witnessed so many of our clients struggling to find a future for their businesses. We know these people, they know us and we support them with Shop Local advertising campaigns, with photographs and editorial coverage of their events – all without charge, so when possible they will support their local media. Local newspapers are ideal as the

means to advertise product ranges, special offers, seasonal sales or perhaps take out an ad to wish their local team the best of luck.

Many local newspapers have embraced the digital era and have developed successful websites and social media platforms to reach new and younger audiences. The content for our digital editions is subject to the same high standard we apply to our print media. But against the giants such as Google, Facebook and their subsidiaries, we stand no chance of achieving commercial success. There needs to be a balance restored so local media have a reasonable competitive chance against these all-powerful international companies. As we have supported our agricultural industry in the past, we need to support our local media now to ensure their survival.

In the past 4 years on the world stage we have witnessed an attack on traditional media and many respected world leaders claim that this is an attack on democracy itself – if you believe that, as I do, then what would the demise of local media do to the fabric of our communities?

Thank you.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #24

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Baineann chuile dhuine úsáid as na meáin seirbhíse poiblí ar an teilifís, ar an raidió nó ar an bhfón. Níl aon chiall le an maoiniú a nascadh le húinéireacht teilifíse. Ba cheart é a thógáil as an mbuiséad ginearálta mar a dhéantar sa bhFionlainn.

Mar gheall ar thionchar an Bhéarla sa tír seo, tá ná meáin an-bheag i gcomparáid le tíortha eile ar nós na hIorua. Mar gheall air sin, tá na meáin seirbhíse poiblí ríthábhachtach. Murach iad, ní bheadh beag beann faoi Éirinn ar an teilifís nó aon áit eile. Feictear é seo sa Nua-Shéalainn áit nach bhfuil ach buiséad beag bídeach do na meáin agus mar sin ní bhíonn ach cláracha nuaíochta de chaighdeán íseal ann.

An Ghaeilge a chur i gcláracha ar bhealach nádúrtha. Má tá beirt Ghaeilgeoirí ag labhairt lena chéile, cén fáth nach feidir leo é a dhéanamh as Gaeilge agus fotheidil Bhéarla. Bíonn cláracha de chuid TG4 lán le Béarla, mar sin céard atá cearr le blaiseadh Gaeilge i gcláracha de chuid RTÉ? Chomh maith leis sin, ba cheart dóibh cláracha dátheangacha a dhéanamh agus athghuthú a dhéanamh ar gach uile chlár dírithe do pháistí agus clár faisnéise. Ní bheadh athghuthú oiriúnach do dhramaí agus araile mar nach bhfuil taithí ar mhuintir na hÉireann air. Ach níl aon chúis nach féidir leo é a dhéanamh i gcomhair na gcláracha nach bhfuil ach guthú ann.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Blocdheontas ón rialtas. €400 milliún do RTÉ agus €100 milliún do TG4. Bheadh TG4 ar comhchéim le S4C na Breataine Bige mar sin.

Ba cheart go mbeadh dualgaisí TG4 i leith na teanga an-soiléir. Tá an iomarca cláracha á ndéanamh acu le beag bídeach Gaeilge iontu. Cén fiú cainéal na Gaeilge, muna bhfuil an Ghaeilge lárnach ina gcuid cláracha?

Níl todhchaí dóchasach i ndán do na meáin má leanaimid ar aghaidh mar seo agus na comhlachtaí móra ag scriosadh an mhargaidh. Níl mé cinnte faoin réiteach, ach caithfí muid dul i ngleic leis.

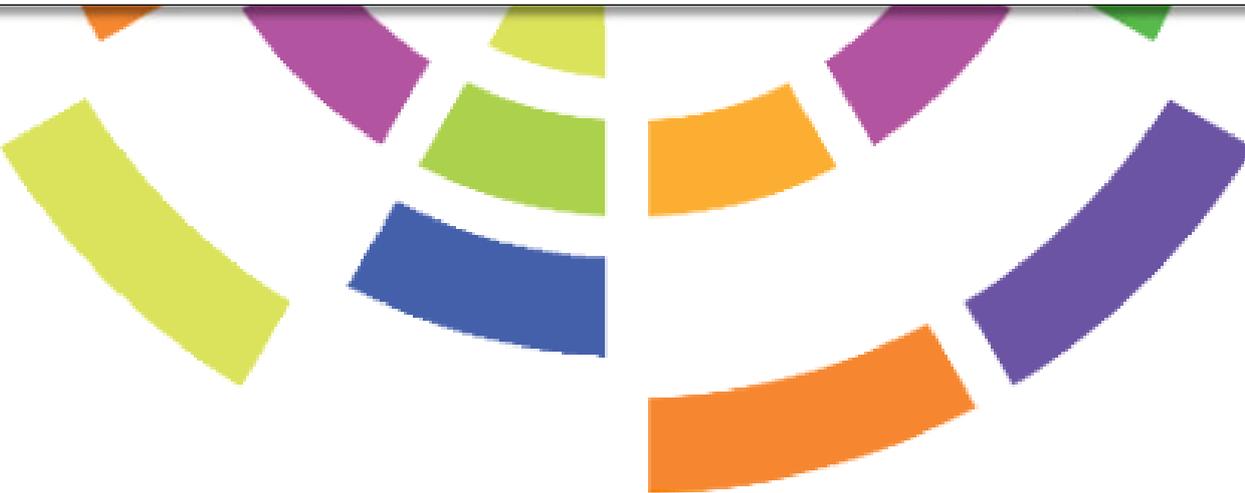
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Is é an dúshlán is mó do mheáin na hÉireann ná cumhacht na meán Béarla ó Shasana agus ó Mheiriceá. Ná ligimis dóibh an margadh ar fad a thógáil.



Record #25

Philip O'Connor



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

On behalf and for the good of the Irish people, public service media needs to be reclaimed from commercial interests and recommitted to its original purpose. Its major focus must be the dissemination of news and information of relevance and importance to its citizens, while providing a platform for the cultivation of drama, comedy, music, art, journalism and storytelling.

The evolution as a de facto commercial broadcaster has led to editorial decisions being made on a commercial, rather than a public interest, basis. Competing in the "market" for talent has led to inflated costs in order to satisfy the needs of advertisers, rather than the people it is supposed to serve, and this appears to extend to the newsrooms too.

As a result and despite some obvious exceptions, there is a painful lack of true diversity. Whereas much has been done to diversify on the basis of gender, in 2021 we have yet to see a Traveller, an Afro-Irish or Polish-Irish person read one of the main news bulletins. Trans people are not only not represented, they are increasingly discussed as an "issue", proving that we have not learned the lessons from recent decades around how we frame issues of inclusion and the effect this has on citizens.

The adaptation and maintenance of the highest journalistic standards needs to be guaranteed - well-paid, secure roles with transparent editorial and recruitment processes that ensure a diverse pool of talent and the attendant diverse output.

In terms of promotion of culture, language and sport, our public service broadcasters must work hand in hand with other organisations, but it is worth examining the link with funding these organisations and how available they make their content to the Irish people - in short, those in receipt of considerable funding for sport, the arts or language should be compelled to make their output available to the public service broadcaster. If they wish to operate solely in the private market then so be it, but they should not be allowed to hold the Irish public to ransom by on the one hand accepting the largesse of the state to develop their purpose while on the other holding them to ransom by forcing the state-owned broadcaster into bidding wars with commercial outlets.

The removal of commercial constraints would enable journalists, editors and program-makers to create content that is not dependent on the bottom line - our culture needs to be preserved and cultivated regardless of its commercial appeal.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

As evidenced in the long history of public-service broadcasting in Scandinavia, a state-owned, ad-free public broadcaster is by far the best way forward. The board of this broadcaster must be answerable to the people through the relevant minister or the Dáil, but that is not to confuse such a situation as being controlled by them.

Politicians must learn that public service is not an extension of their PR operations; rather, it is there to represent the voters and to hold those they elect to account.

Fund the entire operation from taxation (what kind of tax is irrelevant, but the replacement of the old TV licence with some form of tax on broadband and/or mobile communications services and online advertising is desirable). By removing the public service broadcaster from the advertising market, there is potential for other actors, in particular local and hyper-local media organisations, to attract these customers, thus complementing the public service output and contributing towards ensuring a plurality of voices.

Any attempt to influence or otherwise interfere in the day-to-day running of the public service broadcaster or any editorial decisions made (such as has happened in the past when "difficult" shows were cancelled or journalists who ask hard questions were sidelined) by politicians must be treated with the utmost severity. Far too many are ignorant of the purpose and workings of public service broadcasting, and this must be made very clear to them. Public service broadcasting is almost entirely dependent on public trust in order to be credible - this must be sacrosanct.

In terms of structures - restructure employment in its entirety. Link the different jobs to a generous scale of pay and benefits developed in conjunction with the NUJ and reviewed regularly. These pay scales should then be used when calculating what freelance and independent creators are paid for their work - this needs to be both realistic and flexible. Every department should have a dedicated budget for the purchase of freelance material, again to encourage diversity and plurality.

It is in no way desirable to have private actors involved, but one way to encourage private enterprise to get onboard could be to offer tax relief for investment in specific projects. These are NOT advertising opportunities; rather, they are accounting devices whereby an investment of X yields a tax relief of Y. There

are no branding or advertising opportunities, other than the corporate social responsibility aspect of being able to say that one's firm supported a certain project and a thank-you in the credits. Ultimately, the fairest way to fund the system is through small taxes on individuals and larger taxes on profits; those who operate mobile networks and social media etc. are dependent on content to drive usage of their networks and devices. Taxes on the considerable profits of "tech giants" and telecoms operators would go a long way to funding a comprehensive public broadcasting service.

### **Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Irish libel laws must be reformed. We can longer have a situation where journalists and editors can be muzzled by a solicitor's letter, no matter how robust their reporting. A media complaints commission made up of representatives from the media, the legal profession and public life should be established to ensure that media coverage is fair. This commission must be capable of acting quickly and fairly, and the sanctions at its disposal must be in proportion to the effects of the matters being discussed when weighed against the public interest. A register of publishers should be established which offers recourse to this commission, which would offer independent producers such as bloggers and podcasters the protection of a regulatory body capable of adjudicating on matters (similar to the current Small Claims Court) without them risking financial ruin. In tandem with this, the commission or regulator should offer regular training/education to both producers and citizens on the subject of the media and publishing - education is key to understanding and appreciating the media, its responsibilities and its limitations.

The current situation whereby the national radio market is largely controlled by the public service broadcaster and one or two major stakeholders is not sustainable; the reasons for such ownership are commercial, not journalistic. With a non-commercial public broadcaster we can encourage smaller local actors to fill gaps in the market for local sports and news, for example, with the advertising and sponsorship revenues left for them alone.

Ultimately we need to understand that media and journalism are not commercial enterprises in themselves, least of all when it comes to public service journalism and broadcasting - often they are the very opposite of that.

A renewed focus on the mandate of serving the people and preserving and promoting our culture while keeping our citizens informed is the starting point - it always was, and we need to get back to it.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #26

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government should not have a role in funding public service media. We have learned from the past decade that RTE cannot operate within its budget and cannot compete effectively online where its competitors have moved to. I have stopped attempting to use the RTE player for any popular event. A glance at Twitter will tell you I am not alone.

Without the burden of the TV Licence fee, the Irish population would have an extra €221 million each year to fund a variety of content creators across every sector of media. €32 million of that total disappears before any programming is created by RTE (2018 figures).

With an additional €151 million in commercial revenues looking for a new home, new digital channels would emerge to compete in a fair media landscape. They would not be bound by conventional, wasteful broadcasting traditions. Currently, no organisation can attempt to compete against an RTE being funded by both the license fee and the government directly and without limit (which has been the case since earlier this year). State financing has been largely driven out of aviation and soccer in Europe, to the great benefit of the consumer. Now it needs to be driven out of Irish broadcasting

With several competing organisations, there will be a more competitive landscape for content producers to produce content cost-effectively. Streamers such as Netflix and Amazon Prime cannot be competed with, but they have, and will likely continue to have, a significant Irish content gap that can be exploited.

I pay approximately €240 a year on content, over half of which is for high-quality journalism from the UK. Our far smaller market cannot bear the distortion of the license fee like theirs can. Nevertheless, there is a growing movement to defund the BBC as more and more people stop watching it and consume content from sources which may not have existed ten years ago.

If a gap is not filled in an open market (e.g. Irish-language content), then a case can be made to fund it via the exchequer.

The future of print, online and broadcast media will be fragmented, lean operations targeting various niches. We are seeing this happen in the US and the UK, with a variety of new media outlets operating on their own terms (with limited content being watched both live and on catchup) taking viewers from legacy media which have to waste money filling time on a conventional broadcasting schedule. You can add the prominent journalists such as Matt Taibi and Andrew Sullivan who have moved from legacy outlets to substack. In a media landscape uncorrupted by government money, ambitious individual journalists such as Ewan MacKenna of the Black Eye podcast will be able to flourish.

Every euro spent propping up a failing legacy system is a euro spent to kill job opportunities in the sector.

A fair media landscape with the injection of up to €221 million of money from consumers making individual choices will create competition in every sector and will be the best defence against increasing consolidation/declining plurality of ownership in the Irish market. People are used to subscribing to their chosen content sources in 2020. This was not as true even five, ten years ago, and services such as Netflix and Spotify have helped to normalise it.

RTE is simply not used by most people under 40. It is of no value to them. No political party can survive an attempt to force people to pay a tax for a service they will never use. Look what happened with the water charges - and water is useful!. Nor can RTE funding from the exchequer be justified on an annual basis (and it would have to be justified in every budget as unpopular decisions get taken).

RTE's remit should be reduced to zero over a 3-year period to allow new creators a chance to plan how they will take advantage of the new opportunities.

Regional studio spaces could be set up in towns all across the country and rented to producers on a non-profit basis for the first few years in order to encourage content creators to take advantage of the opportunities ahead.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Answered in Q1

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Answered in Q1



Record #27

Jim Stack



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Continue with license fee at about the current level but enhance the mechanisms for critical feedback e.g. it should be possible, but currently is not, to register a formal complaint against RTE about their non-coverage of certain news items

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

See previous reply

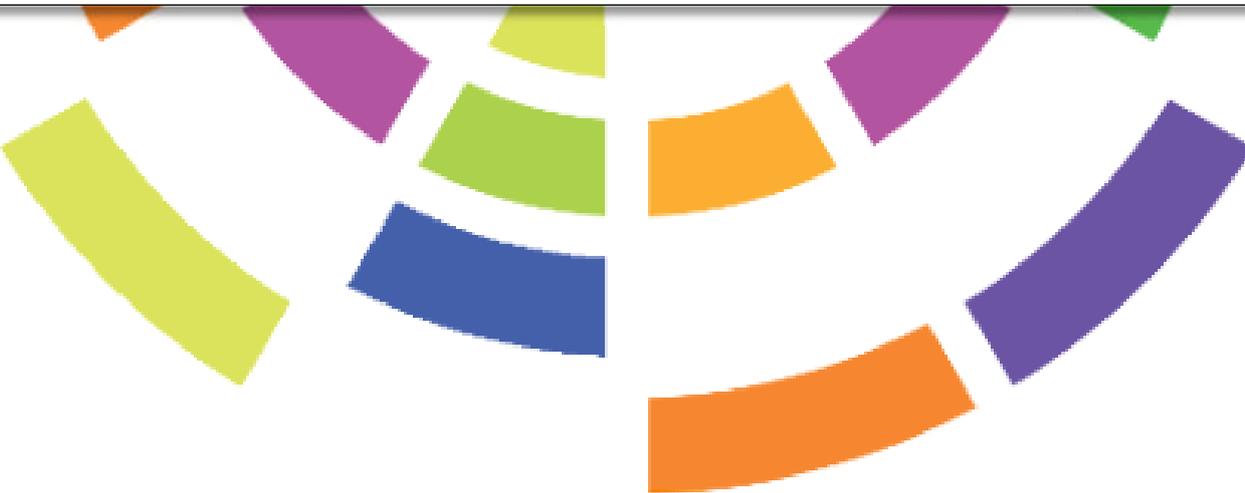
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Existing complaint procedures from citizens are inadequate when the issue is censorship. It is not acceptable that inaccurate reporting can be the subject of a formal complaint but that actual suppression of news is not subject to formal complaint. (Insofar as I can tell from the RTE website)



Record #28

Paul Gorry



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Government should provide funding for public service broadcasting.

Public service broadcasting should be a not for profit organization (s). This incorporate rte and TnaG or any other not for profit firm with remit:

To inform

To educate

To entertain.

Government should have no control of public service broadcasting.

However, the remit should be enforceable via courts

Public service broadcasting should not be use as mechism to fund irish film industry or private media like Virgin, SKY and Netflix

Rte - public service broadcaster must however use all broadcasting methods - ditigal, sky and Netflix.

Rte must ensure its contents is placed on biggest streaming firms

Government should levy Netflix etc on memberships fees were RTE content is not prorities on their platform.

Irish news entity are only funded by public service broadcasting fees

Radio broadcaster and TV broadcaster providing public service program can setup not for profit company to deliver this service (on their platform) and be funded by public broadcasting charge. This be self-contain company and not a trust. Money cannot support private brodcating profit. Correct balance will mean private firm profitability is not increased in this shift.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Rte etc should be funded by direct payment by state paid for by all citizen.

This charge should be collected by Telecom provider where they is provision of telephone, or boardband or tv service.

The charge should be should be broken into:

Radio €4 euro

Rte Player €6.00

Tv Ditigal €4.00

Public News €4.00

Total collected in one fee (bundled) 18.00

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Unsure

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #29  
[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

- its role should be paired back to strictly reporting of factual news and government announcements not replicating the private sector media or providing platforms for politicians relatives
- what should be learned from the last decade both here and overseas is that public sector media is woefully out of touch with a significant proportion of the population, for example it can be pointed to the attempt to exclude SF from the main party RTE debate in the previous election
- no systems should be put in place we are one of the most highly educated countries in the world people can source and pay for their own media content
- Irish culture needs to be defined before this question can be asked

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Tax relief should be brought in for media operators however public funding of media should be greatly reduced at the national scale, local media can be supported by local government initiatives, expanding the revenue collection systems to include those that do not consume Irish state media is a terrible idea and is something I deeply oppose.

The state should maintain radio infrastructure for the basics however this is only a very small proportion of spending

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Media regulation should be as light touch as possible, there is already very strong protection from libel and slander in Irish courts which protects the individual. If people want to consume media from a limited number of sources it is their choice we live at a time where media production has never been easier.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #30

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

RTÉ should be split into 100% commercial and 100% PSB arms. The PSB arm should be purely news and current affairs based and, since it is 100% PSB funded, can deliver more hardline investigative productions without concern of alienating advertising or sponsorship revenue. An example of this would be the BBC Watchdog format - it wouldn't be compatible with RTÉ's current 50:50 commercial/sponsorship basis. Even [REDACTED] can steer away from certain topics out of fear that the programme relies heavily on sponsorship which may be alienated. I'd like to see the RTE PSB arm encompassing RTÉ 1 television, RTÉjr and RTÉ Radio 1, all PSB funded and without any ads or sponsorship. Lyric FM and R na G should be a joint-venture between RTÉ and the Department of the Arts, Heritage & Gaeltacht funded through a mix of license fee, separate Dept of A/H/G funding and revenue from concert productions. Meanwhile, RTE 2FM, as is, should be made 100% commercially funded, as should RTE 2 television. In 2FM's case I'd like to see if it flipped to a "Radio RiRa" style format, playing pop music but presented entirely (or primarily) through Irish, perhaps then it could remain under some element of PSB funding but I see absolutely nothing coming from 2FM today that denotes the >50% of license fee funding that it has received for the past several years. It certainly offers nothing not already catered for through Beat, Spin 1038, Spin Southwest or iRadio. It consists mostly of pop music and largely automated or pre-recorded overnights with no news after 7PM. RTÉ2 television would carry sport and commercial productions such as Dancing with the Stars, Late Late, imported drama, etc funded 100% through commercial advertising and sponsorship. Finally, RTÉ online, including the RTÉ player, should have a domestic site that is PSB funded and ad free for similar reasons outlined above re commercial pressures, but for those accessing outside Ireland it is ad and sponsorship funded, with perhaps a subscription option available to those who wish to access an ad-free service abroad.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

As in my previous question I would like to see an "RTÉ PSB" and an "RTÉ Commercial". The two should have separate channels which do not cross over, RTE 1 TV & Radio, Kids and Online are 100% PSB funded for domestic consumption (online being ad funded abroad) while RTÉ2 TV and FM are 100% commercial. R na G and Lyric are joint-ventures with the Department of A/H/G. This will give the PSB arm funding that is not at risk from commercial influence while still providing general entertainment output funded through ads and sponsorship.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

PSB broadcasting that relies on commercial advertising is at risk of being most affected in terms of trust. I know commercial operations like [REDACTED], etc have a certain slant on things, driven primarily to sell you into their [REDACTED] platform. You have to read their output and accept that they may have an editorial decision driven by commercial realities and so will be careful as to what they produce. RTÉ should be the influence-free alternative to that but, because it also relies on ad and sponsorship revenue, I don't always feel it offers a truly independent, neutral, influence-free output. It gets to call itself a PSB, safe in the knowledge of being backed by the license fee, but also gets to pursue commercial opportunities which will inevitably cause it to tilt its output in the direction needed not to miss out on or offend commercial sponsors. This commercial source of revenue is often given as the reason many of their broadcasters are on six-figure sums. I don't feel the size of their wage packet reflects the quality of a lot of what they produce. We are told they pay high wages to obtain the highest quality talent, so will pursue commercial activity to obtain the required income, but at what expense to their PSB requirements? If they cut the wage bill, would they still need commercial funding to continue operating? If they were able to trim down (or rearrange) the organisation to have a 100% PSB funded arm, might we get a much more effective PSB output that we do now? What PSB remit does [REDACTED] fulfill to warrant their high wage bill, even if the RTÉ argue that their high wage bill is funded through commercial revenue? It's not good enough to say their high wage bill is justifiable because of the commercial revenue they obtain, if in so doing they neglect the PSB element.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #31

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Ireland should have one government funded PBS style channel. It should be minimally funded by the government. There should also be one national radio station. There is no need for the likes of 2fm.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

It should have a minimal set budget. If there is a second channel for trashy U.K. and US shows, charge people a subscription

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

There should be set standards. Facts should be reported, not opinions.



[Redacted]

Record #32

[Redacted]



**How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Employ fewer staff. Offer redundancy packages to get rid of all the dead weight. Hire younger talent from all corners of the country, not just Dublin. Give them the creative freedom to undertake projects without the red tape currently faced. Have creative centres in every province. Lose a few current affairs programmes and replace them with comedies.

Get rid of anyone connected to the incident in the foyer.

**How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Charge less for the licence fee, stop hammering on about it, make just loads and loads of programmes. If there is a huge variety of content and people feel anyone could contribute, they will pay the licence fee. Rte currently is an elitist quango that makes content that is a fraction as interesting as anything you'd find online. Why the hell would anyone in the country watch it out of anything besides habit, and those people don't have long left before they're gone. The shift towards inclusion and diversity and interesting programming for everyone on the whole island and not just the montrose crew needs to be immediate and drastic or there's a seriously depressing decade on the horizon for everyone involved in the horrible enterprise.

**How should media be governed and regulated?**

I don't know about legislation but I'm one of hundreds of people I know who could throw a TV show idea together in five seconds better than rte hacks have come up with in their lives. Stop trying to relate to anyone, it's such a fuddy duddy boring old boys club. It should be absolutely stripped of all resources

s.



Record #33

Ciarain Cumiskey



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Eliminate funding for "reality TV" (e.g. whatever [REDACTED] does) and redirect that funding to actual investigative journalism. Regurgitating celebrity gossip isn't "public service broadcasting". Blowing millions on following "socialites" isn't "public service broadcasting".

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

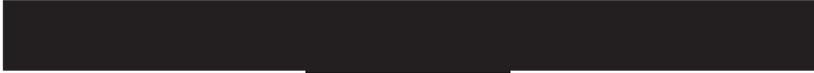
The TV licence is fine.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Don't let "robber barons" buy up media outlets like Rupert Murdoch.



Record #34



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Ba chóir meáin cumarsáide poiblí a fhorbairt de réir riachtanais ábhartha na cosmhuintire. Le leathscór bliain anuas ar an drochuair, is léir nach bhfreastalaíonn na meáin orainn mar phobal. Cuirigí an cheist seo ar ais oraibh féin: cé sa diabhal ón gcosmhuintir a deirfeadh gurb é 'increasingly competitive and consolidated markets' atá ag teastal ag an bpointe seo? Ag caint libh féin atá sibh, má thuigim i gceart, oiread is gnáthduine amháin i mo shaol a labhraíonn ar an gcaoi sin níl ann. Tá paidéim ann in ainm chroim. Comórtas idir leaganacha scéil atá taobh thiar den fhadhb a chothaigh na meáin le maireachtáil agus tá sé seacht n-oiread níos measa le gach duine gafa sa teach. Ná fágaigí don diabhal margadh é. Dhéanfadh eagraíocht neamhspleách náisiúnta don chosmhuintir cúis, ach ní mór dó gan bac le clicks, algorithms, ná tarraingt chuige ó mhargaíocht le maireachtáil.

Ó thaobh na Gaeilge de, tosaigí le TG4 a fhorbairt. Chuir mé an teilifís ar siúl do mhac aonteangach cúpla ó shoin agus bhí clár Shrek ar siúl i mBéarla, cé go bhfuil leagan iontach ann i nGaeilge cheana nach mbeadh tráthúil dúinne. Tuige? An mbaineann sé le spleáchas domhain ar tarraingt chuige ó mhargaíocht le maireachtáil, meas sibh? Is annamh a bhíonn fógra ann ar an gcainéal sin sa nGaeilge féin, teanga an staisiúin. Fiú má tá na margadóirí ag iarraidh ár gcuid airgid, mhealfaidís i bhfad níos fearr sinn inár dteanga féin. Ar ndóigh d'fhéadfainn argóint a dhéanamh gur measla atá ann é a dhéanamh trí Bhéarla. Ach ar a laghad smaoinigí air seo: an bhfuil sé ag freastal ar an gcosmhuintir?

Ach níl mé anseo chun caitheamh anuas amháin. Tá TG4 chun cinn ó thaobh cultúr, spóirt, srl sa gcaoi a bhfuil sé an lá inniú. Ba bhreá maoiniú TG4 a neartú, agus anuas air sin, infheistíocht a chur i gcraoltóireacht sheirbhísí breise ar líne sa nGaeilge. Tá an leithead de sheirbhísí ar éileamh 21ú aoise cosúil le Netflix, Amazon Prime, srl ag teastal ón bpobal le héagsúlacht leathan ábhar.

Níl mórán dea-shamplaí i láthair na huairé ó 'other districts' go bhfios dom. Ceap magaidh is ea iad thall i Meiriceá agus béal dorais i Sasana. Deis í seo le bealach nua a dhéanamh sa taobh seo den domhain.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Cé nach cóir braith ar clicks agus algorithms agus go háirid tarraingt chuige na margadóirí ó thaobh margáíochta de, beidh clisteacht na 21ú aoise ag teastal le caidreamh Public Service Content providers agus an gcosmhuintir féin a chothú, mar sin molaim infheistíocht in R&D i dtreo an chaidrimh sin, gan trácht ar na seirbhísí fein. Oibrímse mar innealltóir bógearra agus tuigim an teicneolaíocht taobh thiar de. Níl mé i m'aonair i measc na ngeal ar an gcaoi sin. Is daoine muid a bhfuil sibh in ann a fhostú.

Níl mé ag iarraidh maoiniú a phlé. Íocann muid cáin, íocann muid táille TV, tá an rialtas freagrach as seo. Do lucht an choimisiúin seo, bíodh an misneach agaibh gan a bheith ag plé na cúrsaí seo leo i dtéarmaí na gannchúise. Tá an rialtas seo i mbaol ón gcéad lá, tá comhghuaillíocht polaitiúil ag tarlú ar bhonn idirnáisiúnta, agus ní mór liamhaintí láidre a chur trasna fiú mura mbacann siad leo. Mura mbacann, beidh lá eile ag an bpaorach théis an chéad toghchán eile tá mé ag ceapadh.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Thosaigh mé ag rá nach bhfreastlaíonn na meáin ar an gcosmhuintir, agus an chuid eile de sin ná go bhfreastlaíonn ar mhórchéannas sainleasa. 'Ní neart go cur leis an ardaicme', d'fhéadfá a rá. Reachtaíocht frith-mhonaplachta atá de dhíth le cur ina choinne sin.

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[Redacted]

Record #35

[Redacted]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Q1. RTE is not public service media and, if it was, it would look far different to now. Unless "The Big Bang Theory" re-runs are public service broadcasting?

Q2. RTE needs to be massively defunded. It isn't viable in an internet age of online media. Top RTE earners need massive wage cuts. RTE departments need massive cuts. RTE management need massive wage cuts.

Q3. RTE do not provide independent journalism and simply parrot the line that global media organisations (eg BBC, American media) take. There has not been a truly independent view on any global story taken by RTE ever.

Q4. See TG4 for a reference point. A Late Late Show Country Music special does not fulfill the requirements. Responding to public concerns? Try listening to them.

Q5. BBC - no ads, revenue spent on making world class documentaries - Operation Transformation does not qualify. RTE presenters do not need to be paid huge salaries - they are not going to be poached because they are mostly terrible - €1million a year on Ryan Tubridy and Ray Darcy - where will they go if RTE do not pay them such exorbitant monies? Answer: nowhere.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Q1 - there is no value for money currently so any model that reduces huge salaries and spends less monies on average American TV shows that are 10 years old would be a decent start.

Q2 - that isn't a matter for a member of the public to comment on. Sort it out - RTE are not behaving like a commercial going concern. It isn't a mystery.

Q3 - RTE Player doesn't work. Even a tiny website can get its players working adequately. RTE Player is renowned for its lack of reliability.

Q4 - in accordance with realistic costings. Paying Ryan Tubridy €500,000 per year [REDACTED] is not realistic.

Q5 - it is in big trouble. But its lack of imagination and ability to present adult coverage of issues is a bigger issue than funding.

Q6 - none while presenters and management receive exorbitant salaries for doing nothing. It is an insult to think anyone would want to independently fund RTE in its current state of waste with resources.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Q1 - hopefully EU/Global level decrees that forcing people to pay for a service they do not consume is unconstitutional/invalid. I never use the RTE website but I have to pay RTE for using the internet in my home? A disgraceful position.

Q2 - there is no such thing as an "independent, vibrant" media in this country so this question is moot.

Q3 - no.

[REDACTED]

Record #36

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I don't have an answer for the first Q.

We need to learn that cheaping out on online media isn't enough. Options like RTE player are well below industry standards and not competitive with other competitors.

A public news broadcaster is important. And again ease of access online is key.

Quality programs in Irish could be beneficial but I feel nobody should watch them. Showing more Irish sports and Irish music and dancing would be great for promoting. Particularly we need some culturally relevant programs without a focus on diversity as it seems these days nothing RTE show can be Irish it has to be diverse.

The public don't need or want high paid faux celebrities. Staff at RTE including presenters should be paid in line with civil service pay scales and have to work 35-37 hour weeks to collect the full salary. The public would be better served by presenters who were willing to work for those salaries and if they can get better salaries elsewhere we can let them go, spreading Irish home grown talent further and encouraging competition from other quality broadcasters e.g. VM. When some RTE presenters do leave for better pay we can replace them with up and coming Irish talent who currently struggle to get roles in TV. RTE and TG4 should be used as a place to grow Irish media talent and send them out into the world rather than for the connected few to lead a lavish lifestyle on public money.

Many other jurisdictions with much larger audiences pay their staff much less. Also following other jurisdictions a focus on public service content and journalist and a move away from low quality time filler entertainment from faux celebs would be appreciated.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The public should fund the news and associated journalism. Investigative programs such as prime time. A maximum of one show where guests are interviewed. And no funding for entertainment badlr the grants for Irish artists and media already available. The rest of the content should be left to fund itself through advertisements alone or through an optional subscription. Crucially any payments should come from general taxation rather than a specific charge.

Many exist. RTE could offer subscription services for the non public service content it produces. Requiring public service broadcasters to pay in line with civil service pay scales to receive their funding would be a good change. RTE could be required to show some content from TG4 for example showing the news first in Irish before in English. With RTE being so jobs for the boys heavy and so poor value for money making non news shows could be left to private companies that RTE then show and split the advertising revenue with. Dropping RTE2 and replacing it with RTE kids, sport and culture only showing Irish sports or sportspeople and Irish culture focused shows and children's shows in before 6 on weekdays would be a great change. RTE2 shows too much filler content that we are wasting money on.

Content in RTE should be required to be made in Ireland or contain Irish people on screen. We should stop buying content for RTE that is available on many other stations and platforms, and often without ads. TG4 should continue to purchase content from abroad provided it continues to translate that content into Irish.

Public funding should be limited to non-entertainment programming. Public funding given should come from general taxation. Entertainment can be gotten anywhere so it should be able to pay for itself or be dropped. Access to non news programming should be given on a subscription basis. The disgraceful tax credits given to the concert orchestra should be dropped or extended to all equivalent musicians not just those in RTE. Tax relief, even possibly 100% tax relief should be given to those producing low profit content, or those in their first few years of producing content. E.g. students +5 years after graduating or to people under 26. And media companies less than 5 years old.

RTE needs to modernise to match the technology companies such as improving the quality of its streaming services. Content should remain on RTE player indefinitely, not just for a few days after showing. It should also

allow independent content producers who provide quality content to add their content to RTE player. RTE should then share advertising revenues with the content producers. TG4 content should also be available on RTE player with a revenue sharing model. It doesn't have to be RTE player this could be done on an independent state streaming service for Irish made content. Similarly with news RTE should allow some independent journalists to submit content and share revenue from that content with them. News aggregators like Google news are useful for aggregating and sharing content but hurt the content creators so a few should be placed on them for each view of content, many 1c or less per view of each article. If a 3rd party decided to profit off showing an RTE show we wouldn't let them, so why do it with news.

I think there is a huge role for alternative funding and it needs to be the future. The vast majority of people don't consume RTE's entertainment content so shouldn't have to fund it. Shows like dancing with the stars or more appropriately named dancing with whoever was in the canteen at RTE should have to be 100% alternatively funded. That should be the same with baking shows, fashion shows, the multiple talk shows, etc. Irish made content could be funded through tax relief, crowdfunding, voluntarily funding and self funding which could be repaid through advertising revenue sharing. A subscription model should be considered for non factual public service content

### **Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The considered EU regulation to end Geo-blocking on online content within the EU. RTE will need to have EU wide licencing for the content it shows. In preparation RTE should make its RTE player available outside of Ireland and only show content on it and the RTE channels that it can show EU or even worldwide.

Public service media needs to adapt to the times, cutting down wasteful entertainment content on TV and making more content available online. Many people don't use RTE player because of how poor it is. All the errors and bugs and issues like having to watch 6 more ads if you try to rewind by 10 seconds while in the second half of a show.the player needs to be fixed, modernised and made global. Irish people can access global content any time but the world can't access Irish content.

Yes, no more legislative controls are needed for the content. Legislation around funding and availability could be useful as discussed above and previously.

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[REDACTED]

Record #37

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

We don't need a public service media, the last 20 years of RTE have taught us that.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

It shouldn't be, cultural and news programming should be financed on a case by case basis

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

there is no plurality of ownership, the State media is owned by political party in government. Our media is not pluralistic in viewpoint it is uniform

1

[REDACTED]

Record #38

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday 4 January 2021 17:44  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Public Consultation Submission

I want to point out before offering my views on the prompts provided, that public service content providers, those that do not receive government funding and are not managed by the state, should never receive public funding or undergo direct state oversight. Action like this removes the independent status of these media outlets. If the state began to provide funding and other direct support to these media outlets I would personally see this as a step towards greater government control of media, greater potential for pro-government bias in the media, and as a general development towards the potential for censorship and even directly paving the way for 'authoritarian' behaviour by future governments or government-instated bodies.

For a non-state body to receive funds or support for the state's interpretation of 'impartial' or independent reporting, information, etc. is an obvious incentive, whether intentional or not, for that body to act in a way it sees to be directly beneficial or political helpful to the state.

Also, due to the nature of public service media, in particular, reporting on events, offering perspectives on those events, providing information in general, it is inherently open to bias and subjective interpretation. This is not something that can be changed, and attempts to do so, while well-intentioned, almost always lead to the state taking some particular narrative itself and censoring differing perspectives.

The following points deal in general with the prompts provided. Some points I make below follow on from points made at the start of my email:

In order to introduce protections for media plurality and independence that lasts across future governments, the state itself should be considered to be an inherently biased party with the potential for affecting media for its own interests. It should be treated as any other influence would be, when it comes to the media. The government is not an incorruptible institution with an objective view of the truth, nor are any self-proclaimed 'impartial' bodies that are set up by the state or any specific state department - political and other biases are always present when dealing with these issues, no matter who is being considered. Any organizations who claim to have these qualities should be met with skepticism.

Because of these points, I also believe that adding more state involvement into non-state organizations will ultimately lessen the general public's trust in these groups, not improve it. An openly partial news organization is easy to scrutinize and understand, but a self-identified impartial one, with direct funding links to the state draws suspicion simply because it claims to be impartial.

State media should offer a balancing force against private media bias, but not overrun it. Private media, acting to produce any content, including public service media, counters state bias, while state media producing the same content counters private bias. The fact that they

both produce public service media is not the important point here, it is that such a balance maintains the quality of the overall media accessible to the public. Biases occur, but are balanced, not due to a flimsy state mandate for impartiality, but by the very funding and ownership that allows the content to be produced. In short, non-state media, in its production of public service content, is valuable in its existence as an alternative to state media if, on some particular issues or event, the state media may not be trustworthy. The freedom of the press (with regard to public service media) is meant to be protected in case of government misconduct or government efforts to mislead, and I'm sure it's obvious that state funding or direct oversight of these non-state alternatives would effectively cease that function.

One particular sub-point in the prompts provided asked 'what can we learn from other jurisdictions?'. I believe the most important thing to consider about the implementation of media regulations in other countries is their failure to protect media plurality, independence and free expression. As just three examples; Russia, Philippines and China all have recently-passed legislation regulating 'fake news' and media ownership, and most, if not all of this legislation is simply used to silence dissenting views. I have looked at many examples of media regulation, particularly those that claim to offer an impartial solution to 'fake news', and it is my view that most of them have failed to the point of damaging freedom of the press. I would urge any Irish state body that is reviewing the effects of 'fake news' regulation to look at examples from other nations not just for inspiration in how they could work, but for warnings as to how they might not. It is my belief that no such laws or regulations should be implemented, as the risk to free expression is far too great.

On the question: 'What role is there for alternative funding models for Public Service Content providers – voluntary, cooperative, crowdsourcing, subscription?' I would say that that particular issue should be no concern of the state. The state should not have sway in how non-state media funds and organizes itself. I can't think of any reason why this question was asked. I do prefer some models to others, but that is the purpose of media plurality and independence, I can choose to consume media, or set up media producing organizations, that appeal to my own sense of the best method of funding.

A suitable method of protecting media plurality is implementing conventional anti-trust regulations. These kinds of regulations are still to be used lightly, nonetheless. I do recognise that overly-centralized ownership, no matter by whom, is a threat to the pluralism of media in the country.

I do not care that much about promoting the Irish language, sport and culture. I think current efforts are sufficient.

'How might content commissioning, including by RTÉ, TG4 and the BAI Sound and Vision scheme, be adjusted/improved/reformed to better achieve public service aims?': The state broadcasting institutions should aim to remain as impartial as possible. The content of RTE should be varied. I have read about a recent incident where there was a Waterford Whisper comedic sketch broadcast during New Years - and many complaints by the public were met by an apology. The idea that content on RTE should be limited to whichever is the least offensive to some people in the country should be done away with. I don't necessarily think it's the best idea, but I wouldn't regret seeing RTE move towards scaling back its variety of

programming towards only news and perhaps commentary - although allowing the state broadcast to host commentary leads to many issues with regards to partiality when commenting on events and such.

'How should public funding or tax reliefs be apportioned to Public Service Content providers?' - I wanted to add this question here, as it is directly relevant to a lot of what I mentioned above. No public funds should be allocated to non-state media outlets for any reason. The question here is posed in a way that makes me assume that the allocation of these funds is a given, and this itself concerns me, given how this type of funding model in other nations leads to direct or indirect collusion of the state and media producers. There should be a state broadcaster, and there should be non-state broadcasters. The funding or allocation of any aid to non-state organizations creates a conflict of interests.

'What does the shift in advertising revenues towards big tech firms mean for the future of print, online and broadcast media?': Despite some prevalent ideas in the political sphere today, I believe it means next to nothing. I feel it's important here to mention that simply because my answer here is simple doesn't make it inaccurate or wrong. Just because the idea of an issue has gained traction doesn't mean it merits action. One small issue I would see is the fact that small media companies depend on advertiser's will to advertise on their content for their own existence and independence, but there is no regulation that belongs in a free society that would force advertisers to advertise without concern for what content their ads appear alongside.

My general concern for Irish media is the freedom of outlets to provide a perspective of current events, or political opinions, that differ, even fundamentally, from the those of any state or regulatory body. I hold that the freedom of expression across and medium of citizens of the country should take priority over the concerns recently raised over 'fake news' and related issues.

Regulations dealing with Irish media should affect state broadcasting in its ownership structures and its funding. It should not affect the ability of people that have gained access to utilize public broadcast time or resources to speak or write freely about their views, and should not affect the functioning of non-state media outlets.

'Are current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media adequate?': Yes, they are. I would like to mention on this point that Irish on the press has been criticized by the Reporters Without Borders organization as having an overly-liberal implementation of libel/slander regulations and also for the justice system's history of very harsh fines against those it deems to have published libelous or slanderous material.

Beyond the questions/prompts provided, I want to mention a few tangential points - faults that I see with general media regulation in Ireland. One particular issue I have is that the state still, as of recently, bans/censors books and other media. This is a practice that is entirely contrary to the idea of a free society that values free expression, and also one's freedom to listen or to read what they want. The 'freedom to listen' is just as important as the freedom of expression. This is an idea that I think the commission should keep in mind when considering the current state of Irish public service media. Censorship of any kind should not be a duty of the state.





Record #39

Stephen Murphy

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

My primary concern regarding this initiative is the introduction of a household media charge, which is wholly unfair. Working people in Ireland are already taxed to the maximum and imposing another tax/charge on us would be reprehensible.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The funding should not be another tax on already stretched tax payers. The funding should be subscription-based. RTE has already squandered millions upon millions of license fees euros on salaries and very poor quality services. RTE live beyond their means and a further tax on us will not improve accountability of transparency at RTE. It is morally wrong to tax us for this type for service; irrespective if you call it a media/household charge. It is reprehensible.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The current oversight of RTE is untrustworthy and unreliable. RTE has shown time and again content and news that is biased and partial, without an alternative view. Their polls are skewed to suit their agenda by formulating questions to suit their narrative. There needs to be a complete overhaul of the entire relationship between RTE and the State.

Record #40

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I believe the government should step out of the narrative as they currently drive it .They should support unbiased , balanced discussions. Quite honestly I have stopped listening to RTÉ news as unfortunately I find that it tends to be a press release(s) read out, no interrogation and no contrary views . People are being conditioned to stop thinking for themselves. I think it's important for a well founded society that our public broadcaster encourages debate and independent view forming.

In developing this I believe there should be a form of moderation ensuring balanced views are represented , I think our broadcasters need to be more than just newsreaders and actually interrogate press releases

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I'm not sure what best practice is in this regard, I lived in Canada and the States and it seemed their Public Service broadcasting was a blend of voluntary , advertising and crowdsourcing. In the Middle East it was owned by the King/Sheik and subsidized by advertising revenues from large industries so the content could not be trusted.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

As our current media is hugely biased and investigation into opposing views on content is weak it would lead me to believe that our public service communication does not exist to deliver ALL facts but instead exists to deliver on an agenda. Governance clearly doesn't exist for balanced reporting and so will need to be created with regulations and law to support.



Record #41

Brian Moran



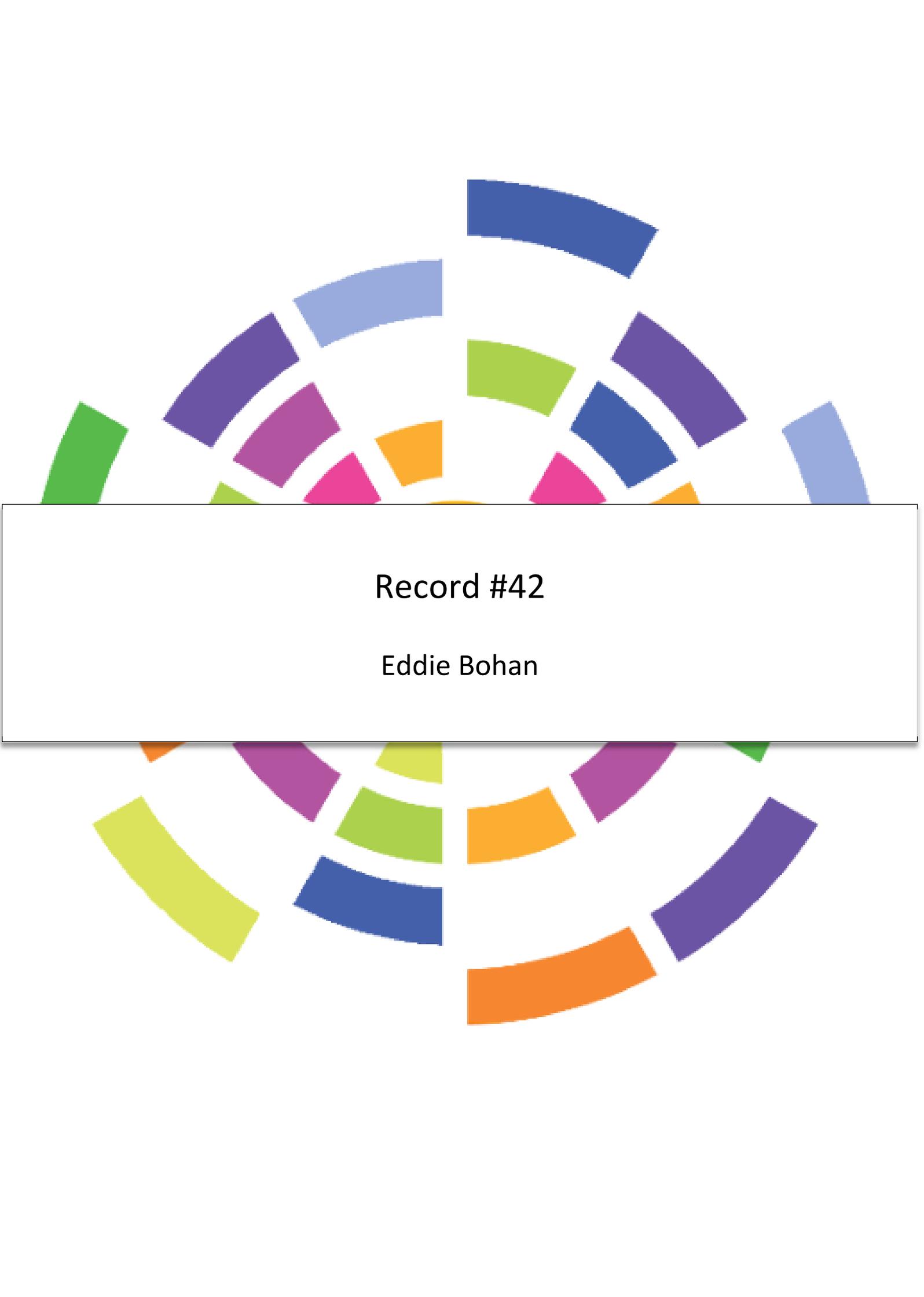
**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

RTÉ as sole agent of public service media is a model that doesn't work. The tv license represents bad value for money in the public eye. Any producer of local / Irish content should be rewarded with a media subsidy from government. For example, virgin media produce some excellent tv news but gets no subsidy. Likewise, newstalk offers an alternative news outlet on radio yet isn't even offered a mux on the DAB platform . RTÉ should divest itself from being the DAB operator and all content producers should be offered a position on the platform. RTÉ operates a defacto strangle hold on DAB. Govt should help with a complete overhaul of the license system, sharing the subsidy to other content producers and commercialise the operation of the TV and DAB system.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

There is too much emphasis on RTÉ and tg4 being the only public service content producers. It should be opened up to other operators such as virgin media. Tax reliefs to investors similar to the old film scheme should be opened up immediately. This would incentivise content financing and production.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #42

Eddie Bohan

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The organizations looking after Irish media need to be more relevant to the ever-changing technologies and the digital age that the younger generation inhabits. The last decade has seen a stagnation in linear analogue radio and television having been overtaken by digital and online media which the Irish state has little control over as much of the media consumed is transnational. A reinvention is required.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The Sound and Vision scheme should be simplified and more oversight on money spent. There are cases of waste with certain projects not living up to the application made with no public review process to ascertain if there was value for money for the BAI. A small levy could be imposed by the Government on content providers such as youtube, vimeo, Facebook who use Ireland as a hub.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The system as is while not perfect is as good as we require but there must be more oversight, more cohesion between the BAI and Comreg, there should be more transparency by the BAI and more emphasis put on educating the younger generation to identify fake news, how to counteract it and how to make Irish society balanced and responsible.

Be more engaging with the listening public

[REDACTED]  
Record #43  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

More niche topics, rather than the same old conservative topics being covered in the media.

Less vested interest from the media. RTE has an incredible political bias for some parties and ideals and against others.

The larger public service media are not innovative, not progressive, no new ideas. Younger, more creative blood needed to create new, innovative content.

Journalists are incredibly biased. Quality, independent, investigative journalism that has the greater public good at its core.

More coverage of local sports, especially the likes of the League of Ireland. Less tokenistic coverage.

More coverage of Ireland's creative music cultural scenes. But the likes of RTE is very out of touch

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Independent editorial oversight by a committee of the people, not some tired old political editor with their own agenda.

Commissioning too needs a vision, needs new younger creatives, not just friends of RTE insiders.

Public service media should be funded by government. Advertising makes it beholden.

Wages paid to high earners and 'stars' should be drastically reduced. They are not worth it. Give the next generation a chance.

Try out new models of funding, such as the ones mentioned. Be adventurous, be creative, be new, be exciting. Don't just go for the same old stuff, or rehashed versions of foreign shows.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Oversight by a committee representing the diversity of the Ireland of today and tomorrow. Young voices, immigrant voices, LGBT+ voices. To hell with conservatism.

A vibrant independent public service is needed now more than ever with the monolithic private ownership controlling the public agenda

[REDACTED]  
Record #44  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

1. All broadcasts on national networks should have the option of subtitles in both Irish and English. Currently, even TG4 only offers subtitles in English. This encourages the mentality that Gaeilge should be considered the second language of the nation and furthers its decline.

2. More resources should be devoted to the foundation of a vibrant and robust Irish film industry, supporting artists who produce films both in English and in the Irish language. We have a great deal of talent in this country that fades into the background due to the lack of a proper platform and sufficient support.

3. At present, when one wants to hear Irish-language music on the radio, it is necessary to seek out certain frequencies. I have lived in both Sweden and France where there are regulations governing what percentage of music broadcasted must be domestically produced and in the native languages. The result is that each country has a vibrant domestic music industry that both promotes their respective languages and also reduces competition for local artists from the globally dominant American music scene

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

We are undergoing a change in how media will be financed in the future. The switch to subscription-based broadcasting services is inevitable. Eventually, even public service content providers will come to rely on this model for funding.

The only way to sustain a service based on this model is to ensure that people want access to it. Irish shows such as Love/Hate and Ordinary People show that, as a nation, we are capable of making content that captures the hearts and minds of the public. If our networks get a headstart on this and actively seek out domestically made productions, as well as imported ones, it might not be long before all of our networks could rival Netflix or Amazon Prime in terms of domestic popularity.

The days of the TV licence are waning. This is the future

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I do not know enough on this subject to contribute a great deal to the discussion, but I certainly think more regulation needs to be implemented regarding the accuracy of headlines and the dissemination of so-called "Fake news" as this post-truth era phenomenon is a danger to democracy and public well-being and created fear and worry without need.



Record #45

Donall O Cnaimhsi



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public funds should be distributed evenly between all the relevant parties, RTÉ, TG4, BAI, etc.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

A 2% public service levy should be introduced on the retail price of all electronic equipment capable of accessing content. (Television's, tablets, Mobile Phones, etc.)

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Regulations and legislation must be continuously assessed and updated, to stay abreast of current circumstances. Freedom of speech legislation must not be used as an excuse to broadcast hate speech. Mionority languages must be protected and therefore broadcast space must be afforded to them on the prime networks.

[REDACTED]

Record #46

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I feel that there is not enough supports for people like myself who are trying to go from having a poor standard of Irish to higher standard. Services like TG4 and RnaG are great, however it is very difficult to use them if you're standard of Irish is poor. Due to the different accents it is hard to keep up and understand the pronunciations and phrases.

I feel the government should aim to provide more supports for people aiming to improve Irish after school learning. A dedicated website explaining grammar rules and providing help and exercises to practice them would be useful (if one exists I don't know it). Recently TG4 have begun putting both Irish and English subtitles on their YouTube channel which I believe is a huge improvement and would like to see an increase in this across a greater range of programming as it allows you to see phrases and grammar rules in use without having to dig through a dictionary.

In terms of promoting the language I believe more content such as Instagram should be utilised, currently it seems it mostly be individuals doing their own thing which is fine. However I feel content aimed at a younger audience could be good to help promote the language

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Unfortunately this is an area I know nothing about

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #47

Louis Cullan

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

In relation to the Irish language, I think there are many things we can be doing to encourage and enable young people to engage with it.

The most basic of those things is making more children's cartoons available in public service media, and it's important that these range both from shows aimed at young 3-4 year olds, all the way up through teenagers, giving them a way to engage with content they enjoy in the language.

For accessibility purposes, and language acquisition purposes, it is essential that these programmes have Irish subtitles available for those who need them.

Another important point is that the shows selected should be popular - kids don't want to watch a show they've never heard of.

Finally I think that more and more media consumption is shifting online and it's important that this change is recognised and adapted to. Shows in Irish need to be available on demand and online, through people's phones and computers

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

With regards to the sustainability of these types of projects, involving translation, dubbing, and captioning, I think an important way to fund it is by having ways for those with money to donate and support with recurring payments.

Subscription, I believe, limits accessibility to our country's native language, and so I think the model utilised by independent creators on websites such as Patreon could be extended and applied here, allowing people passionate for the Irish language to help children have a greater opportunity to learn and engage with it

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I don't believe I'm qualified to speak on this

Record #48

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

One of the biggest challenges faced by learners and those seeking to maintain and improve their Irish is the limited selection of media. It further contributes to the state of the language because why watch a show as Gaeilge when you can watch some popular American show? But then you look at productions like the German Netflix show Dark that gained massive international appeal and the majority of people chose to watch it with subtitles as opposed to dubbed. I enjoy a lot of the existing content on TG4, but I would love to see more media put out that transcends it's existence a means of using the language and draws in English and Irish speakers alike.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I really love the content that is currently available as a catalog online and I would love for it to remain so. With that said, I often feel like some of these big moments on TG4 specifically could be utilized in ways beyond Ireland. For example, it is my understanding that when Harry Potter is broadcast as an Irish Language film or any other limited broadcasts of in Irish, you have put in a significant amount of work and I'm sure finances as well. I understand the appeal and possibly legal reasons these broadcasts are limited, but it feels like such a shame to let all of that work only exist in a bubble. Is there a world where after those moments the Irish language dubs are sold to the films original distributors, profiting you and supporting future work, and we finally have the ability to watch traditionally 'main stream' media as gaeilge on other platforms?

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I do not feel I know enough on the intricacies of the subject to comment, but I think art and information should be accessible to all especially during these times.



Record #49

Siothrun Sardina



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

An rud is tábhachtaí faoi chur chun cinn na meán na insroichteacht. Faoi láthair na huair, is beag agur féidir leis an rialtas aon rud a dhéanamh trí Ghaeilge. Má tá rogha Gaeilge ann, is annamh go bhfuil sé litrithe i gceart, agus is annamh go bhfuil gach rud aistriú. Níos measa ná sin, is annamh go bhfuil aon rogha ar fáil do Ghaeilgeoirí caocha—fiú go bhfuil córas labhartha ag abair.ie, ní bhaineann aon suíomh rialtais úsáid as.

Agus an rialtas ag dul ar aghaidh, is gá go bhfuil an Ghaeilge mar phríomhábhar. Tá ceart againn gach rud a dhéanamh trí Ghaeilge, ach anois níl an ceart i bhfeidhm mar is ceart.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Ba cheart go bhfuil siad rialaithe ag grúpa daoine le Gaeilge líofa acu, go dtí gur féidir le Gaeilgeoirí labhairt leo ina dteanga féin, mar a deir bunrucht na tíre.

7

[REDACTED]

Record #51

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday 4 January 2021 21:50  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Public Consultation on the Future of Media in Ireland

"Hi,

*I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut from any means possible.  
Freedom of expressing any point of view have to be respected.  
If you don't agree with what other people say, it's ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling.*

*A free society is built strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP.*

*The people are smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them.*

*Freedom has to be the Centre of a society. Otherwise everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling.*

*Free speech, freedom, liberty.  
Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble.*

*And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not.  
So, start acting like a civil reasonable person and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view*

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

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[REDACTED]

Record #52

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public media should move to a subscription model instead of a coercive model.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Subscription.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Media should not be regulated whatsoever outside being governed by regular laws (i.e. those surrounding defamation).

[REDACTED]  
Record #53  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

No broadcasting charge

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

No broadcasting charge

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

No broadcasting charge

7

[REDACTED]

Record #54

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media is fast becoming an anachronism. The way in which we consume media is utterly changed. We need to shrink the role of public service media to a bare bones essential service and rely on independent production houses for quality Irish content. In tandem, the licence fee should be stopped.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

As per previous, public service media should become much smaller. Just catering to specialist minority programming. It should be funded directly from general taxation with limited support by advertising.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Regulation remains a crucial aspect of engagement. This should be bolstered and combined with deeper social media coverage.



Record #55

Chris Sligo

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Either abolish the TV licence, or increase it slightly and remove all advertising from license funded media outlets.

Scrap the plan to replace the current tv license fee with a digital device fee. Nobody should have to fund RTÉ just because they own a mobile phone, laptop or tablet.

Make RTÉ player a pay per View service, if it is not commercially viable, scrap it. Nobody should have to pay for a service they don't use just because they have the ability to access it.

Reduce salaries! Put a cap on what presenters can earn.

Address the gender pay gap.

Start producing quality content that people will be happy to pay a license to view. Ireland has enough creative talent. If public money is used to fund, or part fund the production of content, the government should see a return on investment if that content, or the rights to reproduce, are sold to streaming platforms, or foreign TV networks.

Overhaul the whole system. License fees and general taxation should rightly be used to provide essential public information services. Essential public broadcast and information services include news, weather, non-party political public information campaigns, health and emergency announcements and some sports coverage. All other content is either art or entertainment.

Art, of a certain standard and quality should be funded from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media's budget and from funds made available through the arts Council.

Entertainment content is either good enough to be commercially viable, or it's not. Nobody should have pay for sub-standard content.

Introduce a fair and transparent funding model that provides services and content that license fee payers want to see and are prepared to pay for. Or, abolish the licence fee altogether and let the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications go through the normal budget process as other Government Departments and be answerable to DPER, CA&G and the Public accounts Committee.

RTE is either a state owned agency or a commercial entity, it cannot be both. If they are state owned, all employees including the "talent" are public servants and should be subject to a standard pay scale. If they are a commercial entity, they should not receive any funding from the tax pool, or from a mandatory license fee.

If a commercial entity provides services to the state, such as essential information broadcasts, there should be a clear set of accounts and an audit trail to show how public money was used in providing these services and only these services.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

See q1

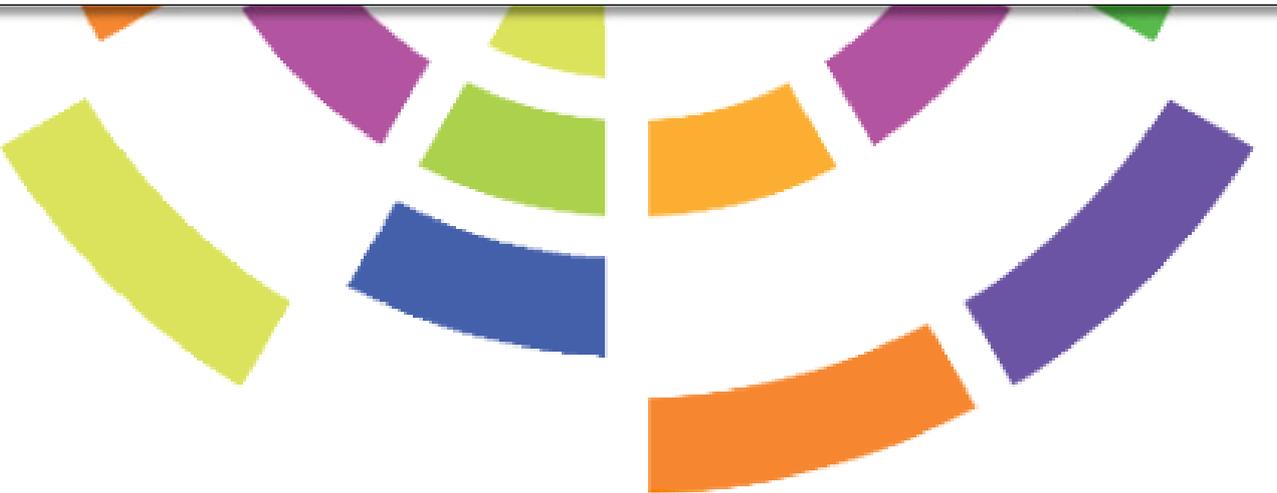
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

See q1



Record #56

No Name



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I want value of money and RTE is fake news since the 80's. I do not support fake news, defund rte

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

RTE should take the Netflix road

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

"Q: What regulatory changes at EU or global level" what sort of nonsense is this, Ireland should do it's own thing.



Record #57

Mark Hamill

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government's only mandate in reference to public service media should be the support of independent news media, one that offers impartial news reporting, weather forecasting, sports commentating and public information broadcasting.

In the year 2020, with the wide availability of entertainment television providers and broadband internet, the government has no business in supplying entertainment media and requiring everyone to pay for it, even those who do not partake in it. All such media should be removed from direct government funding via taxation and should be privately produced.

If the currently government provided entertainment media are themselves viable programming, then they will easily survive this process and be snapped up by the various private suppliers who no doubt recognise their talents.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Public service media should be funded via general taxation, like all public services.

If there is supplementary entertainment media produced, then this should be funded by direct subscription services - i.e. paid for only by those who watch those entertainment media.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Media requirements for "balance" should be re-assessed.

Balance is very important when reporting on controversial topics, but a false balance can easily be presented when two completely unequally supported sides of an argument are given equal screen-time/print-space to make their arguments, all in the name of "balance".

"Balance" should be based on the quality and scientific support of arguments, not merely on the number of differing sides. "Balance" does not mean that two opposing sides get equal airtime if one side has no scientific support at all, and if one side consists of a very small number of people who are the only number of people who can be found to actually support the argument.

There is a difference between treating two sides fairly (in relation to their merits and significance) and equally (which can give equal time to complete falsehoods simply because they exist in opposition to reality).

We should aim for the fairness in this, the same way as we ignore the supposed "balance" and "equality" in following a Met Eireann weather forecast with an interview with someone who believes the weather can be deduced by which way a cow faces in the evening.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #58

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

More oversight on spending - the constant overspend at RTÉ is nothing short of a disgrace. Less wasteful expenditure should be implemented.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I do not want to see the introduction of a broadcast charge. This will reward and enable the inefficiencies of RTÉ. It should be funded through general taxation with a strict cap to eliminate wastage.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Independence should be maintained as much as possible, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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[Redacted]

Record #59

[Redacted]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

There is no independent media in Ireland. Government should not be allowed to hire former journalists or people from media backgrounds as spin doctors. Media must start to provide balanced opinions from both sides of a debate. There is a biased left wing slant in both the Irish media and the Irish government. Media should not be a mouthpiece promoting government policy. The job of media is to inform the public of facts not to spin information in a manner that promotes their own personal political or social opinions on matters such as Asylum Seeking, Direct Provision and illegal migration.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

RTE has stopped providing a balanced public news service on radio and on television. An agenda is being pushed that Irish people are racist and that we should have open borders for anyone who wants to claim asylum. RTE should not be allowed to continue to show ads for gambling websites on advertising breaks on the main evening news or at any other time. Salaries need to be cut, land needs to be sold and RTE must be stopped from sending their employees on foreign holidays which are filmed and then passed off as having been shot for television audiences.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Both sides of every debate should be covered. No more presenting children and or illegal migrant families as victims when they are being deported, no more RTE trying to strong arm government immigration policies on their left wing open borders views. No more using the Press or the television or radio programmes to promote open borders or to prevent deportations of illegal migrants. No more allowing air time to NGO's or people with a vested financial interest in Critical Race theory to accuse the entire nation of racism.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #60

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The public fund should not be exclusive to rte only

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Tv license as is, broadcasting charge is reprehensible

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The amount spent on Irish production, not shows being bought in. Also, massively cut rte salaries

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #61

[REDACTED]



Who gets to decide what is fake news or not? Surely that is the job of the reader is it not? If we lived in a communist country our government would decide what news we should hear. But we do not. So it is up to the individual to decide what their opinion is on any given subject. It is certainly not for politicians to make our minds up for us... ever.



**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Monday 4 January 2021 19:39

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** Future media

Hi,

I am very concerned about the way the mainstream media in Ireland are conducting the business recently. I believe RTE to be a disgrace to the licence payers. Older people are being frightened and conditioned into a narrative that I don't believe is doing them any good as they are kept in their own homes. I believe there should be balanced debates on its current affairs programmes. It is very one-sided during a pandemic where I don't believe such a narrative is helpful or fair. Having a number of deaths from a particular disease over any other on every news bulletin isn't justified in a year where the national average mortality is below the 5-year average. It is constant and I believed derived to promote [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. I would also like to see some scientific debate about these issues and also challenges on climate change. I believe a national broadcaster and media outlets paid for by the taxpayer should deliver an unbiased schedule that caters for all sectors of the population.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #63

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday 4 January 2021 20:03  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission

To whom it concerns,

I would respectfully like to make the following submission:

For the past number of years I have become increasingly disillusioned with the Irish mainstream media which seems to adopt a uniform outlook on all social matters, particularly preceding a referendum on such matters.

I see no reason why media organisations need to take a public editorial stance on social issues at all; surely their remit is to present both sides of a debate equally, and let the public then decide.

I would submit that any available public funding should only be allocated to media organisations which can point to a track record of impartial and equal presentation of all points of view on social issues, particularly when a referendum on such issues is pending.

Thank you ,

[REDACTED].



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday 4 January 2021 20:54  
**To:** info  
**Subject:** I'm not happy about the press and speach being censure

Hi,

I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut from any means possible. Freedom of expressing any point of view have to be respected. If you don't agree with what other people say, it's ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling.

A free society is built strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP.

The people are smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them.

Freedom has to be the core of a society. Otherwise everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling.

Free speech, freedom, liberty.

Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble.

And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not.

So, start acting like a civil reasonable person and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view.

[REDACTED]

Sent from ProtonMail mobile

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #67

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

They should only support funding, and be separated from installing any person who is has allegiance to that party. Appointments to a state broadcaster must be truly independent in their reporting.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Government should fund it out of taxation for the purpose of reporting current affairs and sporting events. Entertainment programs should be set a paid prescription service like Nerflix. Those interested will pay for it.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

By an independent board consisting of all sections public and private.



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media should be fair and balanced. Unfortunately In Ireland, RTE fails miserably. Independent journalism is a joke ,while there are at least six daily newspapers all we get is the Irish Times version of the news on RTE. There should be a right of reply on RTE , plus reform of the libel laws. The BAI should be replaced and the replacement must be more balanced towards the public rather than the broadcasters

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

No compulsory tax or household charge on any devices. FOI must be applied to RTE and TG4, The BAI sound and vision scheme is biased towards certain production companies. RTE and TG4 and Virgin media are all focussed on the Dublin region/Gaeltacht we need more regional voices. Broadcasting should be funded by a levy on the big tech companies

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The legislation should be strengthened to give the public more of a voice , not the NGO's or lobby groups who dominate public media

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #69

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The Government should have no involvement in any Irish media organisations. These organisations should switch to subscription based service models and should operate on whatever profits they earn through this service. If they cannot operate on subscription based services then they should close down like any other business. The government should not be propping up RTE or other organisations in any form. This only serves the 'brown envelope culture' in Ireland and does not promote Irish language, sport, arts or culture. If people want to watch something they will pay a reasonable price for it. People who watch foreign TV pay for it when they want it and those services are thriving. Media services constantly operating in deficit and releasing little to no native quality productions should also allow those who want it to pay for it and those who dont wont. New household taxes are a pathetic attempt to extract more money from the people who are already at the end of their tether.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

It should be self financed through a subscription based service. If they cannot finance it based off of subscriptions then clearly no one wants it. There should absolutely not be any tax reliefs provided to Media organisations.

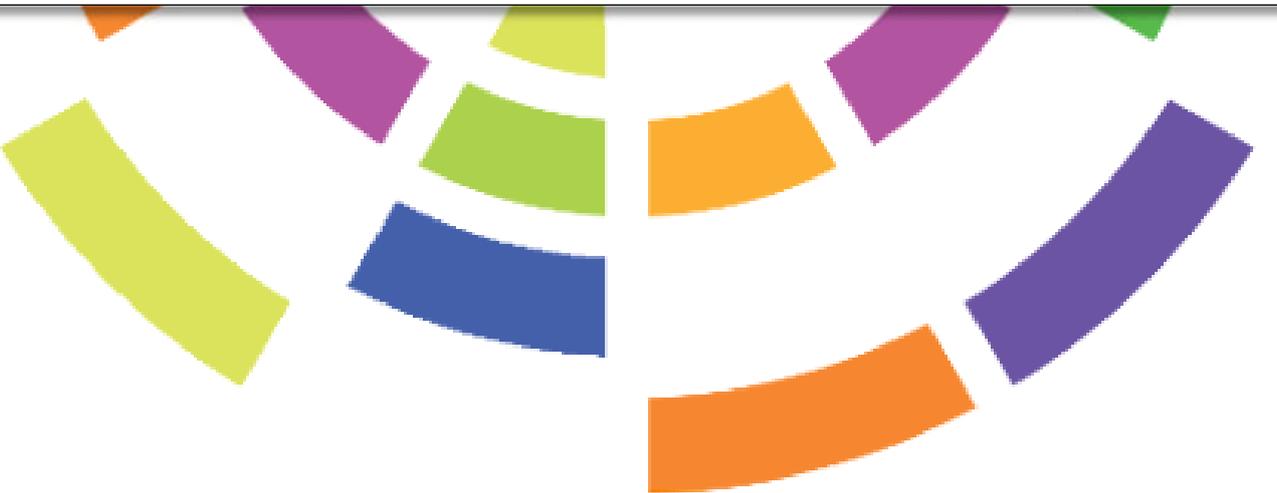
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Media should not be governed by any single entity. Each organisation (RTE, TG4, virgin) should self govern like any private company. Regulatory issues should be sorted by COMREG or some other entity that has a sole purpose of validating/regulating all stations via a specific set of guidelines.



Record #70

Mark Everton



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Any licence financed media must not take sides. It should always present both sides in any argument or disagreement.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Advertisement should be 66% of the income, not 50%. Shrink media outlays until this can be achieved.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

A media regulator should have staff that represents the population as a whole, with accurate percentages of minorities, genders, disabilities, and people from all political parties.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #71

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Government should not be in the business of expanding taxpayer revenue to fund ailing commercial entities. Adding a blanket charge that they can't opt out of for all households who may never wish to watch locally produced content is a disgrace that adds to the tax bill of the working people of this country.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

It should be through advertising on the platform and voluntary funding; subscription, crowdsourcing and the like. NOT by adding yet another tax. Irish citizens should have the right to choose not paying for a service they do not use.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The current set up is fine. If bodies like RTE are failing that's entirely on them not keeping up to date with a changing market. Such entities need to be downsized and streamlined to compete, or they will fail.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #72

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

RTE should be transferred to a subscription based model only. There should be no household charge for any smartphone or object that can access the internet , as the internet is now a necessity for modern day life especially in these lockdown times.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

TG4 deserves a larger slice of the current license fee for it's innovative programming and Irish language and cultural support. RTE is moribund and wasteful of the large amounts of taxpayers money that they get. One glaring example is the RTE should be moved to a subscription only model to encourage them to innovate and provide programming that people actually may want to watch rather than the rubbish they put out now.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

RTE is a shambles - one glaring example is the appalling RTE player. It is not fit for purpose, and whatever little functionality is there is aimed at loud adverts which play, then the player stops working and to try and watch any programme one has to sit through those same adverts on restarting the player. Such players are commercially available for not much money and they actually work. I was typing this on the previous page but accidentally hit the return button and couldn't go back one page. Very little attempt has been made to tackle any consolidation in the Irish market, look at Denis O'Brien and Communicorps grip on Irish media. But shovelling money into a moribund RTE is not the answer. Charging people who don't watch RTE or listen to RTE radio a charge for having smartphones or any device that can access the internet is not the answer.



Record #73

Aine Sweetnam



There's a disconnect between our own history of colonization and the uncritical legitimacy we grant the United States when covering American stories, including those of the diaspora. The Indigenous peoples of those lands are still actively resisting their colonizers' efforts to erase their languages and cultures, but bar the occasional commemoration of the Choctaw Nation's solidarity during the Famine, we consistently support the colonial narrative of the US. It's colluding in everything we condemn on Irish soil.

It should be standard practice for Irish journalists and broadcasters to name and seek comments from the relevant Indigenous nations when covering stories in the US. We reject the use of "the British Isles" by foreign journalists and we'd be outraged if they quoted only British voices while covering Ireland. We owe sovereign Indigenous nations that same respect, and we owe ourselves truthful coverage of a settler state.

I think there's a tendency to look the other way when it comes to US colonialism because of the diaspora. Emigration is central to my own family history, so I understand the impulse, but it doesn't serve us. Irish media have the power to invite the diaspora to renew a centuries-long tradition of questioning colonial narratives and resisting colonial violence. That tradition is a part of our culture, and part of what Ireland has to offer the world. It's worth more than any short-term gain that might come from adhering to the journalistic conventions of colonial powers and settler states.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #74

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The funding model needs to be revised to properly fund content production

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

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**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

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Record #75

Stephen

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media should be limited to news / current affairs only with little to no day to day government interference with a reduced licence fee that can be linked to inflation. Reduce to one tv channel and one radio station and the website. RTE.ie currently is a rubbish website and needs to be updated. Should copy any of the decent news websites (FT.com etc). Irish language and sports should sit within their government departments and not fall under public service media and maybe they can do their jobs rather than outsourcing all responsibility.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

limited brief to news, current affairs only. Better do one thing very well and be poor at everything that is the current case. Business model at the moment does not work as nothing to differentiate it from any private media company except they cost more. Reduce number of stations (no need for 2FM when you have 101 radio stations in the country playing the same music etc) and improve quality. Funding should be as part of our government tax collections but should be guaranteed (with increases linked to inflation) to avoid government interference. Board of directors should be made to report to the public every 3 months.

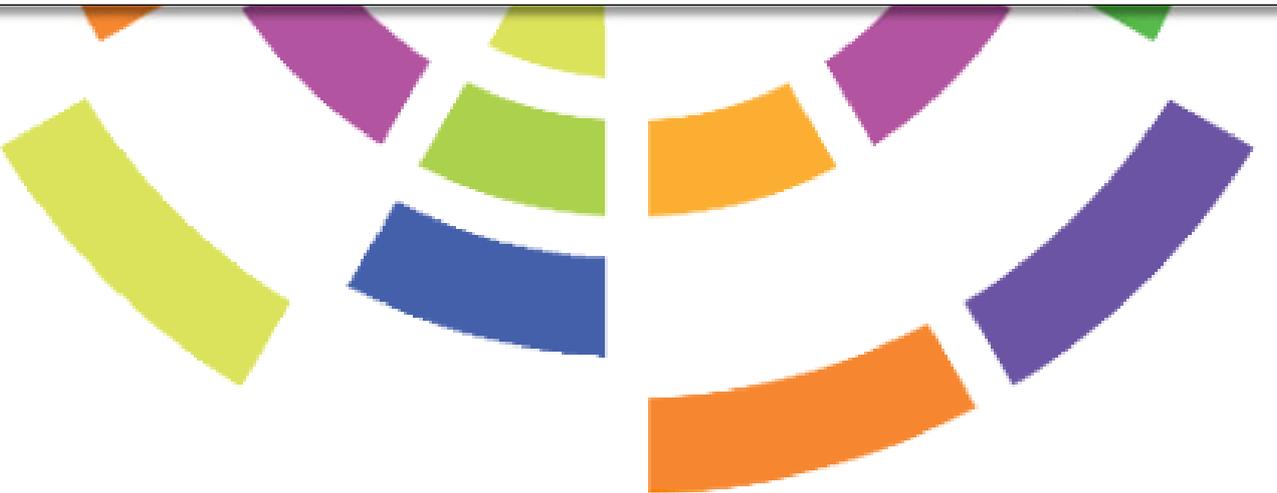
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

You have to think there will be a kick back by EU / US government against big media companies as they have gotten too powerful. There is no real difference in media in this country (too small). For example, Morning Ireland is basically a couple of overpaid presenters reading out today's Irish Times. What controls?



Record #76

Colin Leahy



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Nil, it should not allow RTE to continue in its bloated, nepotist form. Public service broadcasting should not take the form of family of ex RTE presenters hosting various shows.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Through advertising, if it is sustainable it should be self sufficient. If it is not, then, remaking poor quality shows with Irish presenters will not make it so.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

More than adequate. Legislation should not govern peoples willingness to pay for this outdated mode of communication.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #77

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Through the existing license fee, and Government itself should have no role except to appoint independent fact checkers to control fake news

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Through the existing license fee and a far more cost conscious RTE

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Media should be overseen by an independent body which exists to control the rise of fake news/conspiracy theory news sites. Recent events have shown this to be of greater danger than swear words before 9pm

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #78

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

By employing more staff from Minority Ethnic backgrounds and Black/Brown people at all levels

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Close unnecessary quangos and use funding that is wasted in these orgs.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Independently with panel that includes staff from Minority Ethnic backgrounds at all levels

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Record #79

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**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Get kids more involved in news! Encourage them to keep up and think critically — expand news2day?? Bring in a tax to directly support RTE news etc (more than TV license?)

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

News briefs for young people — “bite size” impartial info - rare to find! Finance with an additional tax (one that targets the 1% of earners because they’re the people most likely to corrupt the integrity of news by biasing coverage using their resources — make them pay for the future integrity of a critically minded and media savvy nation!)

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #80

Michael Bevan



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I regard public service media as critical to the State, the education system and for the presentation of unbiased content to the public. But, it must remain independent of Government, independent of the Oireachtas and itself subject to examination and scrutiny if it lets down the people by wasting money or telling lies. Like Caesar's wife, it must be above suspicion. Keep a clean sheet, hold the public's trust and be fair. It must never show bias. It also has a role in education, as it has to deliver educational content that private stations can't or won't deliver, such as nature/eco/historical/schools/children's content. It must also avoid duplication with entities like TG 4 or RTE 2. Quite why RTE still persists in sending reporters from RTE 1 and TG 4 to the same event is mindboggling. RTE insists that TG4 is a separate entity yet it funds it and supplies it with all of its facilities and supports it in a thousand ways. It also shows TG 4 content. What's the point of showing the same stuff twice? Stop duplication! It's incredibly wasteful.

As for Irish language content, there is more than enough already; a dedicated TV station, a dedicated radio station, compulsory content on all radio stations (tokenism at its worst), compulsory printing of absolutely everything in English and Irish etc etc. There's even Irish language content on BBC NI and UTV.

With regard to sports broadcasting, the country is already saturated with it, from all sources but perhaps more female sports and some of the niche sports. We tend to only find out that we have elite rowers/runners and cyclists when the big events are on.

The whole set up for the collection of the license fee is outdated, especially in this mass electronic media age. The collection/enforcement system is antiquated, essentially cost far too much for too little return and it is ludicrous to jail people for not paying their TV license, when jails are required for more serious crimes and it ties up a huge amount of police and judicial time. The notion that you can be fined or jailed for having an unused TV aerial in your house is laughable in this electronic era, yet it is still law. In France, the media charge is included in the property tax and they, cleverly, will make anyone who declines to pay it, jump through bureaucratic hoops, unless they can prove that they have no media devices that utilise State television services. If you attempt to avoid it, in France, you will come to the attention of the Revenue, so it is a strong deterrent to dodging it. The French properly regard it as a tax. By collecting it via the property tax, it reduces the cost of collection dramatically.

Public broadcasting also has a role in reducing the tidal wave of advertising that we, as media users, are subject to. There is a place for public service advertising, such as passing information about the current crisis.

With regard to the constant whine from the private stations that they do not have a level playing field with RTE, because they cannot dip into the current license fee, I regard that as bogus nonsense. They can go to the market for funds any time they like, unlike RTE and they should not be given a red cent of the license fee unless they are prepared to deliver public service content to at least RTE's standard. If they were given public funds, that would constitute a subsidy by any other name. As an aside, having seen TV content in America, Italy, France and other places, RTE is genuinely a world-class broadcaster but it does need to tidy up its act. To my mind, its duplication with TG 4, its excessive repeats and TG 4's obvious pro-Republican (the Northern Irish kind) bias takes away from the otherwise fine work RTE does. The constant pleading for more money is also grating. Perhaps if

they reduced the pay of the alleged "stars" by a few tens of thousands and genuinely cut waste and duplication, they have a bit more to play with.

I understand the BAI are being given more powers to compel the internet companies to delete harmful content such as revenge porn and this is a great initiative. Long may it continue!

To sum up; set a high bar for public service broadcasting and maintain it but always be willing to self examine, self criticise and always, speak truth to power.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



## Question 1.

How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?

The Government should adequately fund PSB – but should have

1. a system of safeguards in place to prevent wasteful practices (2 people presenting the news – awful waste)–
2. an evolving set of criteria for establishing best standards of public service media and
3. adherence to these standards will decide who gets the funding.

The further measures to support the concept and role of PBS are Education, Education and Education and parents are at the heart of this.

As important as government and public leadership undoubtedly are, domestic leadership within a family is equally if not more vital. Our world has morphed from being a “protected” place to the current open environment especially in the sphere of social media. This deregulated world means that each family must take responsibility to make best decisions for itself given that the bottom line of the technological giants is all important and to hell with people’s or young people’s well-being if they can make that sale.

For example, as the commentary and warnings about the negative effects of social media and the smart phone increase, parents have to be enabled take charge of the security and safety of their children. They cannot rely on “Do as I say, not as I do” Today’s children will not buy this double standard.

Do you know parents that stick their toddlers on scooters and



let them zoom off down the main road without a helmet? Do you know parents who close the car back door without checking that the occupants have fastened their seat belt? How many parents set off on a journey without checking that everyone in the car has "belted up" and without belting up themselves?

Contrast this with parents' behavior with regard to handing out smart phones to their 10, 11 12-year-old children. They buy the phones, put a few basic security measures in place, invite their children to speak to them if they have problems and then hope for the best? How do they know what their children are watching? How can they be sure that Johnny is not one of the frightening stats which tell us that most boys of 12 years have been exposed to pornography, and while all this is happening and feeble attempts are being made to control things, parents themselves are never off the phone.

If you starved your children or let them out to play on the M50 you would be prosecuted and brought to account – your children could be taken away from you. There is a serious lack of will and energy to tackle the internet and social media reality which is robbing so many of our young people of their innocence, their mental wellbeing and their will to live. With our comprehensive code of highway safety, vehicle excellence and the rigorous licensing of drivers we are gradually reducing the number of casualties on our roads.

A similar approach from parents, governments and the technological regulators is needed to prevent the soaring number of casualties on our digital highway.

- What can be learned from the evolution of public service media over the last decade?

It has worked reasonably well – RTE have done a good job overall and they are the first source I turn to when there is a



crisis. I think the media has in many ways replaced the church - politicians and public alike and their stories inspire us and energise us the way the church used to. Hence the uproar about transgressions regarding social distancing recently by RTE personnel - we expect much more of our broadcasters and their recruitment etc. should reflect this.

There are too many stations - both on television and radio - this is a country of 5 million - with a small Dail - there is not enough there to occupy so many outlets and there is much repetition. Licences should be curbed with a strong set of independently agreed criteria to merit funding. A balance is needed between freedom of speech and unending licenced practitioners to publish.

- What systems may be required to support and sustain public service content, e.g. high quality, independent journalism, in an increasingly competitive and consolidated market?

Serious measure need to be taken to rein in social media and describe it as it is. NEWS is no longer news by the time it gets from social media to newspapers and radio/TV. The message to be got across is that news is what's new - interpretation of news is an art skill and discipline informed by qualified journalists and other specialists as well as the citizenry which must be rewarded and protected in equal measure.

There are two parts to news consumption - the headlines and the thoughtful measured analysis which is crucial. Any future body on media needs to make that distinction. In fact the term **news**paper is totally out of date - something else is needed. Defining, comparing and contrasting the elements of social media and responsible public service broadcasting would be a good step- spell it out rather than hope it will work itself out. It won't.

- How might public service media be more effective in promoting the Irish language, sport and culture?

It does this very well regarding sport and culture and the occasional use of Irish between programmes is helpful. All



national sporting events should be free to view. At this stage in my life, I don't know what will bring the Irish Language back to where it belongs. I rest my hope on the young people to get that right.

- How might public service media better respond to the needs and expectations of the public?

BY finding out what those needs and expectations are - conducting surveys like this in a more focussed way including all age groups will clarify the way forward.

What can we learn from other jurisdictions?

I know very little of other jurisdictions but I thought a very good line from the Guardian was to ask those who valued their (The Guardian's) standard of journalism to contribute to it so that people who couldn't afford it could have access to it. It placed responsible journalism up there with necessities of life and I think responsible journalism is such a necessity. It frightened the sugar out of me when the newspapers in England attacked the judiciary so relentlessly and the resulting outcry was muted. I dread the prospect of the Murdochs of this world controlling the messages we consume.

## Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?

- What is the best model for future funding of public service media in Ireland? What approach best supports independent editorial oversight while achieving value for money and delivering on public service aims?

**I think charges should be made appropriate to income – largest fee for those earning a certain amount across to no fee for those who are struggling. However I think a VAT type charge should be attached in whatever way feasible to the use of SOCIAL MEDIA. The principle underpinning this kind of charging should be the vital**



## **importance of responsible public service broadcasting in the war against fake news.**

- What opportunities exist to develop and implement business model and organisational changes within the public service broadcasters (RTÉ and TG4)?

As referred to earlier – I think there should be a root and branch investigation and analysis of costs incurred in RTE. An obvious example to me is the unnecessary number of news presenters – but there could be other ways of cutting back without sacrificing editorial independence.

- How might content commissioning, including by RTÉ, TG4 and the BAI Sound and Vision scheme, be adjusted/improved/reformed to better achieve public service aims?
- How should public funding or tax reliefs be apportioned to Public Service Content providers?
- What does the shift in advertising revenues towards big tech firms mean for the future of print, online and broadcast media?

This is a universal problem with big tech firms. Their monstrosity will have to be rowed back with a series of legislative, legal, philosophical and corporate measures before they upend our world irreversibly. I would use the word war again here – thankfully there are no bombings but the forces are galvanised against freedom in our society and we need to have an eclectic independent well-resourced army to fight each battle.

- What role is there for alternative funding models for Public Service Content providers – voluntary, cooperative, crowdsourcing, subscription?

As far as I can see there is great potential for the use of crowd funding to finance particular projects.

## Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?



- What regulatory changes at EU or global level might impact on the governance of public service media in the period ahead?

The monstrosity of the providers of fake news will have to be rowed back with a series of European and global legislative, legal, philosophical and corporate measures to stop the rot.

What challenges are posed to a vibrant, independent public service media by increasing consolidation / declining plurality of ownership in the Irish market?

Huge challenges – one of which is to inform and convince people of the insidious threat of such consolidation. I think a programme similar to road safety programmes should be devised and rolled out to regulate all aspects of threats to a vibrant independent public service by the juggernauts taking over the all aspects of the information highway?

- Are current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media adequate?

Clearly not.



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[Redacted]

Record #82

[Redacted]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government should have no role other than to fund public media. Our public media should be independent of politics.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #83

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Disband RTE and create an unbiased approach to media coverage.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #84

Bernadette Boland



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I think that the Government has a role in protecting the veracity of what is delivered to the public, i.e. in the form of providing an independent service responsible for dealing with inaccurate or misleading information in all forms of media. Over the last decade, the Irish media has been of a relatively high standard and it needs to remain so. Some techniques, such as the proliferation of live interviewing are questionable. Interviewing people on live T.V. and radio and allowing them to express uninformed opinions on important and serious subjects can be irritating to audiences. It results in cheap sensational programming that progresses nothing. While everyone can have an opinion, please let it be backed up by experience, knowledge or fact. There is a fear that individuals or organisations are taking over some sectors of the media and promoting certain philosophies or policies that suit their own agenda. While a government would surely like to have the control of the media to promote its ideologies, that would be disastrous for democracy. Therefore, a public independent watchdog over the media and its independence of individuals, political parties and corporations is essential. As regard language, sport and culture, the advent of T na G was very welcome, however late. Much more can be done to promote the Irish language. More interviews could be conducted with people who are proficient in the language and with subtitles everyone could access the content. As regards sport, the presence of female participants in the media is derisory. Martina Navratilova begged the question as to who decides what is shown and reported on. Judging by sport on T.V and in the media in general, it would seem that sport is a male only pursuit. Therefore, if progress is to be made in making sport more engaging for half the population, more female editors might be a step forward. During lockdown, much was made of the plight of elderly people living alone, yet the television screens are filled with youth and pop culture. A definition of what culture means to people needs to be clarified. There is always an appetite for Irish drama, music and poetry. A focused approach to programming would be very useful in promoting the arts and culture. The government must have a role in providing funding for these initiatives. During lockdown, I think many of our elderly citizens would have enjoyed more programmes, ever repeats, of items traditional in nature. An opportunity was lost to give them more programmes reminiscent of the lives they had lived when they needed them most. WE can learn from our neighbours across the water and further west, that good and accurate reporting of news is essential and we must never let our media degenerate to the level witnessed this year where lies went unchallenged when those lies should never have gotten publicity in the first instance.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

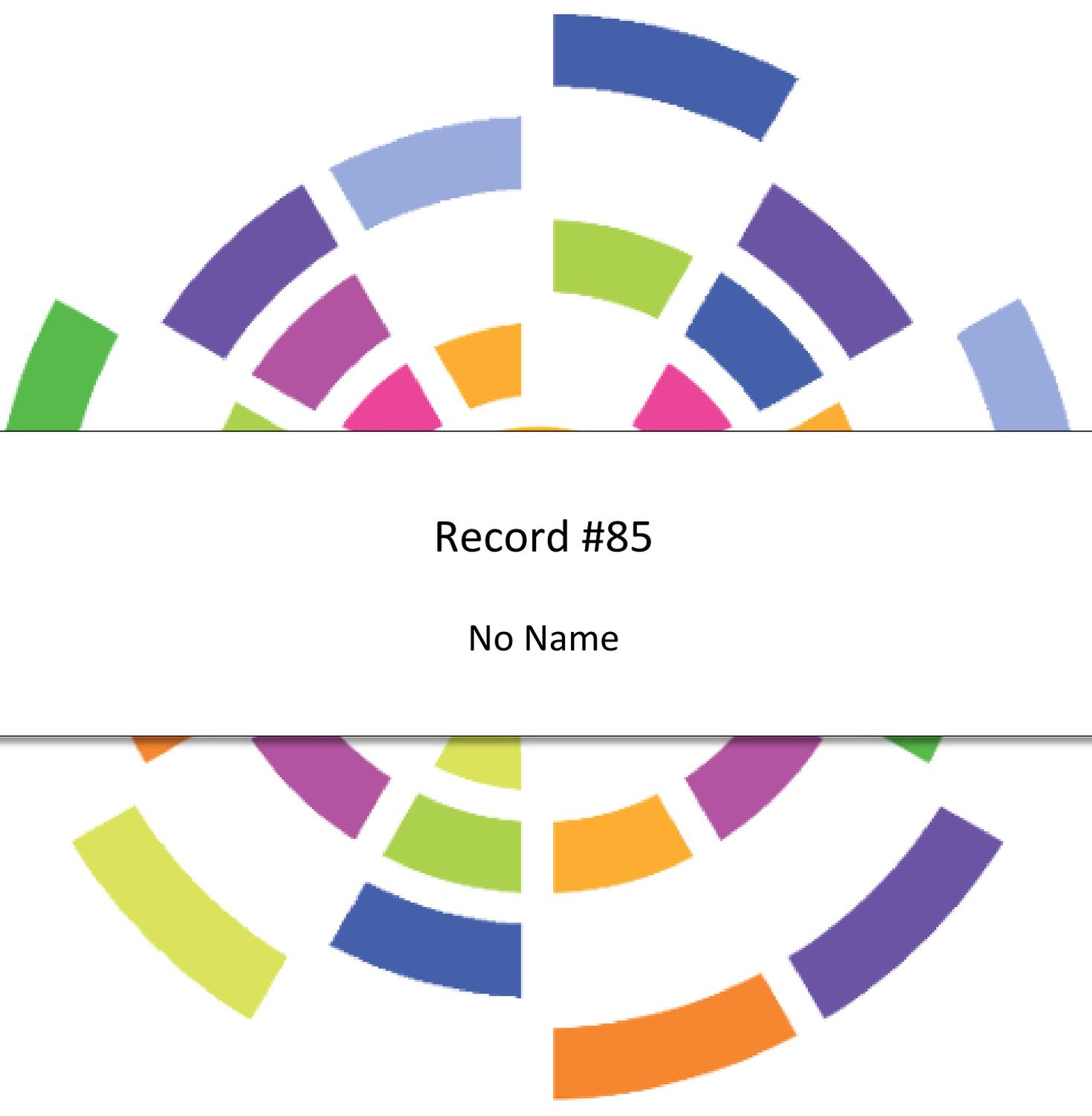
If we want an independent public broadcasting system, then we must be prepared to pay for it. Many people resent the licence fee but there is a good case for retaining it. Another options is to use monies from taxation to fund broadcasting. I support the licence fee and taxation as raising money through marketing can be counterproductive for the country as a whole. eg. drink advertising, fast food advertising etc etc. I support the licence fees and taxation as being a safer method of funding than allowing wealthy individuals or people with personal agendas influence content. I also suggest that salaries of media personalities be capped to appropriate levels. Fewer celebrities and more variety of voices might enhance the service. Please stop the practice of having presenters talk about their own shows.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

National media needs an independent body to verify the veracity of information that is presented to the public.. The government has a role in funding a watchdog type of committee with legislative powers to fine outlets which deliberately disseminate false or misleading information. I reiterate that public funded service providers need to curtail the use of live interviews in favour of more measured methods of relaying important information to the public. There are plenty of other avenues open to people to express opinions and enjoy the privilege of "free speech".

As an addendum, I wish to add the following points. The subject is public service media. This might not be the correct forum, but if the public are paying for the service, then we should get just that. and not more. There is a trend on the radio in particular, to try and dictate the news, for instance. The practice of interviewing somebody in the morning and then quoting them in the following news bulletin, to my mind, is a form of lazy journalism. Let the journalists report on the news but their job is not to create it. The practice of pre-empting what interviewees are saying is also unedifying. Aggressive interviewing is not necessary. Points can be made without resorting to heckling on the part of the journalists. In public service broadcasting, the broadcaster should not be perceived to be following an agenda on behalf of the broadcaster. For example, during recent events, people have been interviewed on particular topics and then hijacked and asked for opinions on

unrelated matters. That practice is not what one would expect from a public service broadcaster. The editorial decisions are critical and during the year many relevant issues were omitted to allow for unnecessary hounding and overkill of a small number of news items which seemed to have an agenda of destabilising the government. To revert to the issue of culture, the media, through the standards of advertising, could do great work in stemming the sexualisation of children in marketing. Also, with increasing emphasis on a greener agenda for all people, the promotion of energy saving habits should be to the fore. Needs must be given priority over wants. Thank you.



Record #85

No Name

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public Service media should be much more independent.

Very strongly biased towards the current government.

More independent journalism.

More diversity of programming, content, and people.

More coverage of local sports, especially the likes of the League of Ireland.

More coverage of local music scene, local culture.

More original content and ideas.

More niche programming.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #86



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Number 1 criteria is to be impartial and to include all sides in a debate or a topical issue. This has not been the case in recent times, so much so that I have had to disengage in disgust at the National Public Broadcasting service as I feel it is literally a mouthpiece for the government and the policies they choose. The Covid Pandemic is an excellent example of how Public Broadcasting has failed in so many ways. RTE gave a platform to too many scientists and medics who believed in one solution to the pandemic and not enough of the other side. I would also be very worried about the donations received by RTE which would compromise their integrity. I have no faith in RTE anymore.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #87



Media has developed somewhat horizontally, in that social and independent media are advising mainstream news. media needs to take back its power to lead, rather than to follow. Less Journos sitting at desks writing opinions and more journalists out there researching and engaging with the topics of the day. The op-ed is a lazy three-headed monster that is an attempt to counter new media forms. The issue with a quasi-citizen journalism is that it is precisely that: independent (unverified) and active (activist). That activist bullies are attempting to dominate narratives and repress journalism should be a cause for concern.

I think that it is a mistake to 'better respond to the needs and expectations of the public', the media is to provide information to the public in a manner that the public (as adults) can draw their own conclusions. The tendency to narrative seems to create emotive and weird online reactions. As a working example of online reactions: numerous women journalists and writers have been bullied over the last 12 months because they do not have the 'correct' opinion according to social media and online people. This tendency to bully, isolate, manipulate, and frighten people is unacceptable. The hounding of, among others, Roisin Ingle, Suzanne Moore, JK Rowling and those judged to be averse to trans lobbying has met its logical conclusion wherein [REDACTED] has signed a letter calling for media and legal disenfranchisement of anyone who does not accept the narrative propounded by certain lobbyists and influencers. The media, in doing its job, has to both rise above the bullying campaigns of a few activist individuals and ensure the safety and free speech of its writers.

Media, while not always escaping narrative direction, should strive to present us, the public with high-quality journalism. The tendency to function on op-eds, rather than research in some outlets lightens the function of presenting researched and knowledge-based media. Social-media campaigns and influencers is IMO a form of mob mass-influence and boring.



Record #89

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Government should not be involved in the running of the media

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #90

No Name



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Could the automatic English subtitles be removed from TG4 so you can add them as an option but enjoy the programmes without the annoying distraction otherwise?

Public service media staff must be supported and well paid. The TV licence fee may be unfair if many avoid paying it, if it doesn't apply to tablets, laptops, etc. people may increasingly rely on now for their media, and if there is significant expense involved in sending inspectors to check for licences. There has to be a fair system with nearly if not everyone makes a fair contribution to keep the costs per head low and raises enough funding to meet the needs of providing quality services. How best can this be done and communicated? Could people who currently pay their TV licence fee end up better off paying a lower sum under the new system because those who don't currently pay would find it harder to avoid paying, and there'd be less of a need to spend on ads and inspectors promoting payment? Could there be an automatic way where people make a fair contribution? This could make it an easier sell and people would be happy to pay if they knew everyone, not just the honest people, pay and they could even be rewarded with a lower fee than they currently pay if everyone pays because overall the funding received would be greater.

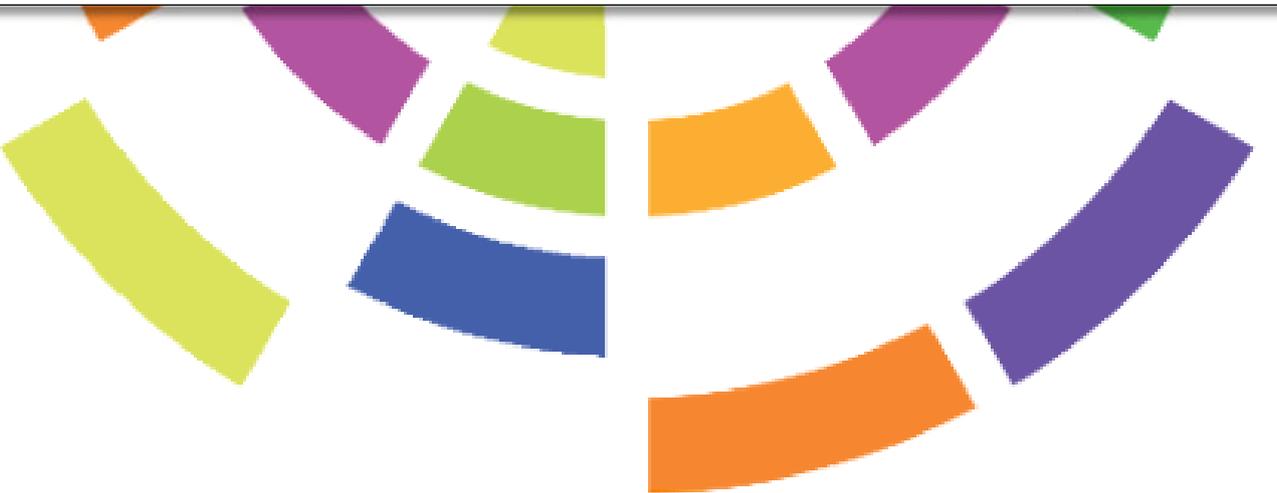
**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #91

No Name



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I think it's a great idea that RTÉ News, for example, ends with a display thanking the audience for their TV licence fee, which supports the programme.

Maybe a programme or series on public service media would be a good idea to raise awareness of its importance, including perhaps a film for Netflix, and cooperation with public service media in other countries.

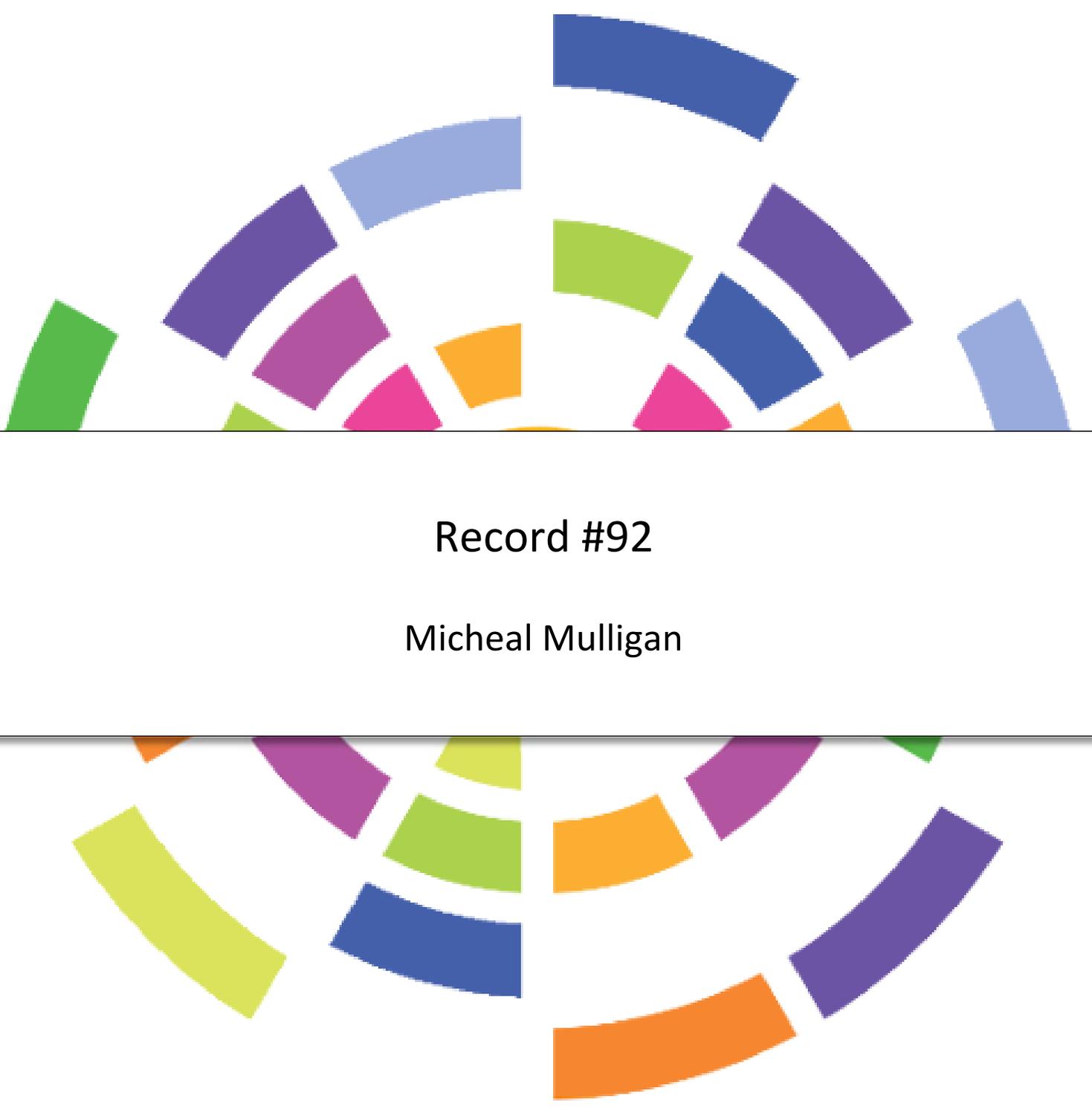
Public service media must be maintained and supported, particularly in light of competition and consolidation in the market.

Maybe there could be less of a dichotomy between RTÉ and TG4 in the use of the Irish language. The default and permanent English subtitles on TG4 are distracting and annoying. Also, TG4 loses its authenticity and purpose broadcasting old western films and content geared towards older people using the English language; it suggests it's a station for older people and Irish language enthusiasts who don't mind the subtitles. Hector and Daithí have been good ambassadors in fairness in introducing people to the Irish language in an engaging way. Could there be lessons and user-friendly ways of teaching would-be and interested people about learning the Irish language. The feeling of the station broadcasting old and repeated programmes is not enticing for an audience; you would like to see current material. Is it available on RTÉ Player?

Colleagues mentioned to me BBC or Channel 4 have a form of online player that allows you to watch back a full history of archived material. I would greatly enjoy having access to a wealth of material from the past on our own Player, and would appreciate promotion of what's available in case people might not find it or consider looking for it otherwise.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #92

Micheal Mulligan

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Media should be criminally liable for publication of “fake news”, disinformation and accepting external influence of stories.

Editorial and opinion pieces must be fact checked prior to publication.

Media posts and headlines must legally be held to account where they fail to actually address an article. Reduction of “click bait”.

The Government should reform the licence fee so that it is part of the monthly subscription fees (for example with Sky). How to collect from free to air would be an issue but it would substantially reduce the non compliance.

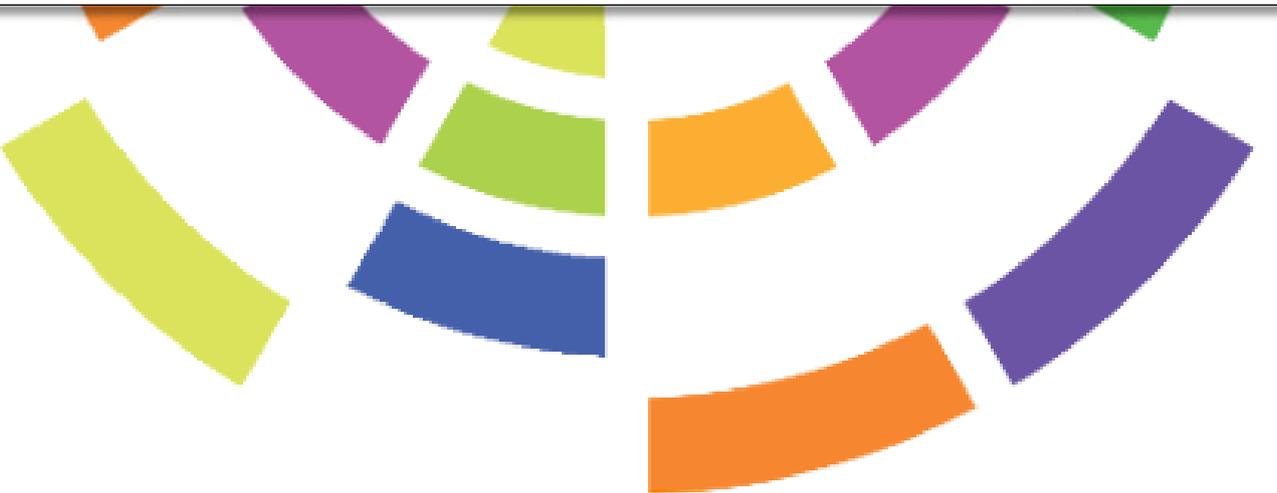
**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #93

Michael Reidy



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I do believe that public service media is important and should be supported by the government both materially and through regulation. I believe that good, open, independent regulation may be needed in order that "bad actors" may be identified and sanctioned. Similar to other professions the issue of the certification of journalists should be considered.

I would like to see a clearer distinction made between Opinion, News and Entertainment in the media. I would like to see real sanctions in place for journalists who habitually publish false or misleading information. I would like to see a lot more information available regarding ownership of the media and a much broader concentration of ownership. The power and potential of the media generally to involve themselves in political elections and issues is very worrying and only the naive would believe that this is to the benefit of our democracy. The role and power of the various Social Media Platforms need urgent review in an EU wide context. These platforms appear virtually unregulated and act without regard to any common good or indeed ethical standards. The BREXIT referendum and the US 2016 Election are clear examples of gross interference in normal democratic processes. These platforms must be held accountable and properly taxed. These pose far more danger to democracy than the Print Media.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The state media should aim to be not only independent, but political impartial at all times. Public service media (RTE) should allow more diverse ranges of viewpoints on current events and politics, and should have safeguards in place so that the public service media itself does not become politically partial.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #95

Colm McLoughlin



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The Gov, need openness and transparency within and by the media. One crucial step in this direction is the accountability of all revenue provided by the State to the media, especially with regard to State regulations and laws passed by the Oireachtas. It also must be very transparent with regard to media bias and subterfuge towards topics that are suppressed purposely by the the Oireachtas or political individuals within. The media must also be open and transparent with their reports and news. I would take the example of the deliberate bias towards Trump in the election of the USA. Its scandalous that they are attempting to pervert the course of the election with their bias and deliberately attempts to hide the truth from the general public. Nearer to home, it is very obvious concerning our own media that they are deliberately hiding the real truth concerning the state of our country. We read nothing about suicides, we read nothing about the attempted suicides, we read nothing about the homeless, the traumas they are dealing with on a daily basis, we read nothing about the banking crisis, the evictions, the repossessions, the family breakups, the individuals who through their own means provide support and mechanisms for people to survive. The bodies who are flown back weekly from countries such as Australia and America and others where our own people have gone to commit suicide, take their own lives because of loss, shame, family separations, divorces etc. Why, during this so-called pandemic do we not see anything but the narrative being spun out by the media and government press that there is millions who do not believe in this. Scientists, doctors, specialists, immunologists who have lost their jobs, lost their standing in the medical world just because they do not believe in this pandemic. Is that fair reporting ? is that a true reflection of the state of our nation, or, is it a reflection of who is suckering the medias bank balance. I used to purchase a daily paper up until 2008, and then I was woken up by the deliberate media bias in favour of the overrun by the banks of our country. Even when they got a tax free status for 25 years did not even ruffle a feather with the media. I have not bought a paper since and have no intention off until I find a newspaper that supports our democracy with the truth and not the hype they fill their pages with, its similar to finding a needle in a haystack ! they only page that people have faith in is the 'death notices' and even with that we tend to ask the neighbour if its true The systems we need in place for effective reporting and accountability is 'The Truth Will Out' inscribed on every door and the corporative table put where it belongs in the dustbin. Regarding our culture and language we need the media to become more involved with local issues and sport in particular for our children. We have lost faith in the media because we do not believe that the incentive for news is the truth but scaremongering, vilification, suppression of the truth, biased articles. Why do we now rely on social media for our news and article about the world we live in, real news that reflect our society no matter where we live. Today is the 3/12/20 and yet we have riots in the streets of America due to lawlessness, we have riots on the streets of France because their democracy is attacked by the state, we have riots in the streets of Ukraine because they have attacks by the state on their constitution. Why is the media deliberately suppressing this from the wider world ?? I don't believe I will be purchasing a paper anytime soon unless all the toilet-paper is bought up by the greatest scam put upon our country in this "pandemic" Sincerely, Colm McLoughlin

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

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[Redacted]

Record #96

[Redacted]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Ensure party political independence and equal access for all groups in society. Government should be an enabler not a controlling influence.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #97



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

They should be completely independent of each other. Unlike the incestuous relationship with the government and any agenda the government are pushing.

All information should be truthful, transparent and available to the public in its entirety, not tailored / selected information to match / suit a particular narrative as chosen by the government.

Open debate should be facilitated on general broadcasting stations where a variety of experts are allowed to engage / argue their side.

Fact checkers / debunkers should be made completely transparent as to who and how they are being funded.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #98

Kyle Mulholland



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

There is a worrying trend that sees a lot of broadsheet, legacy media pay-walling away their content while more reactionary outlets with less than stellar reputations for balance keep their's free and readily available. This is a disaster waiting to happen. There needs to be a source of NON-PARTISAN funding that helps outlets endure the shortfall in funding caused by the shortage of advertising revenue.

Public service media is by no means free from bias, nepotism and old-boy's clubs. There is no quick and easy fix for this, but some body that holds this sort of behavior accountable could be useful. Ultimately, having a broad range of voices in the media is the only short term solution that comes to mind right now.

Ultimately the market and the spirit of journalism are at odds with one another. One hold profit above all else, while the other presents itself as a service. Insulating outlets against the market is one solution, with a series of subsidies.

As I said above, the market and journalism are in conflict. Irish language journalism and media wont do as well in the market so it can easily be neglected. Subsidies can counter these incentives to an extent.

It's hard to think of any one jurisdiction that has journalism 'solved'. My opinion is that globally, journalism is in a bad place, subjected to the whims of profits, hegemony, and the myriad other factors that a for-profit system throws up. However, the consolidation of media into a handful of corporations is something we can look at. It's the worst case scenario, and the death of journalism as anything other than PR with a few more steps put in.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #99



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government needs to understand that audience no longer wants to hear the biased one sided views of the middle class elite who occupies positions of the establishment and the woke media. People no longer care to be lectured at or sneered down to by these same said group. The Public turns to alternatives to escape the narrow minded views being broadcasted. To escape the censorship that is being enforced in Irish media and in the public space on free speech and on the freedom of expression as certain people's feeling are deemed more important than the expression of the universal and scientific truth.

If anything can be learnt from the BBC in the UK is that the more an organisation embraces identity politics, false narratives and advocacy journalism the more it alienates itself from the Public at large.

The government needs to produce media content that is impartial, fair and free from ideology and something that people actually want to watch, not what some activist think they should watch.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

11



[Redacted]

Record #100

[Redacted]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

How can you be independent if you are set up by the government. More jobs for the boys and girls  
.Close down RTE it's not fit for purpose. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #102

David Breen

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The Irish media during Covid has proved itself to be a supine mouthpiece of government. The example of the media omerta regarding covid in schools is an example. Time and again newspapers refused to analyze data provided by government. They still refuse to run stories that covid can enter schools.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #102

David Breen

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

RTE news needs to be supported with greater around the clock resources so that they might be a better source of comprehensive and rapid access breaking news. Compared to UK news outlets RTE is frequently behind in the publication of updates or articles, so I often follow other countries news outlets in the event of breaking international news such as terrorist acts, breaking results of elections etc. The RTE website does not have a great live updating feed, for instance during the general election the live feed on results was both slow to be updated and very glitchy.

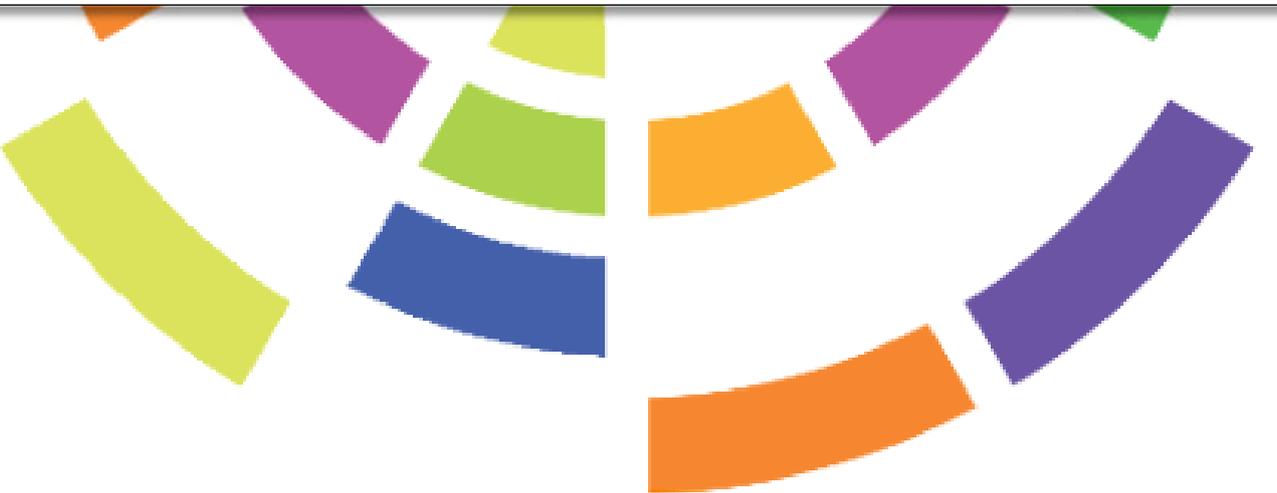
**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #103

Keith Finglas



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Irish government should develop an Irish tv player app such as the RTÉ player app to bring all the Irish public service tv channels's content under the one service

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #104  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The continued representation of rural Ireland is important, and is most often seen on RTE & TG4. Programming that showcases Irish heritage and culture should be awarded increased funding.

Virgin media tends to focus on Dublin when it does contain Irish content, but it's schedules are largely filled with trashy American and UK imports.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #105

[REDACTED]



----- Original Message -----

Subject: <mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie>

Date: 2021-01-04 22:15

From: [REDACTED]

To: [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

<mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie>

Sent from ProtonMail mobile

To whom it may concern;

I wish to make this submission re the future of media.

Firstly, I am very concerned re the possibility that the current laws and regulations may be tampered with by any governing body.

Any interference into free speech is tantamount to bullying.

I do not agree with any censorship in a free society. History has thought us that this is a dangerous road indeed.

No third party should have control over individual free speech. If it did, there would be increased fear and anxiety and an effect on mental health. As a trained Psychologist, the very idea alarms me!

It is paramount that we respect free speech as a fundamental pillar on which civil society is based.

The danger lies where only one narrative is permitted. That would not be acceptable! Irish citizens would be greatly enraged, and there is already an enormous amount of anger re restrictions !

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #107

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday 5 January 2021 19:31  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Media

"Hi,

*I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut by any means possible.  
Freedom of expressing any point of view have to be respected.  
If you don't agree with what other people say, it is ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label as fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling.  
A free society is build strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP.  
The people is smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real.  
Nobody has right to CENSOR free people !!! We will always find the way.  
The people do not need a third party to think for them.  
Freedom must be the Centre of a society. Otherwise, everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling.  
Free speech, freedom, liberty. Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble.  
And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not. So, start acting like civil reasonable persons and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view."*

Kind Regards, [REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Tuesday 5 January 2021 23:28

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** Future of Media

Dear Sir/Madam

I write to you as a private citizen who has no vested interest in or commercial links to any media organisation.

A vibrant media is a vital part of any functioning democracy and as such, we all have an interest in ensuring that journalists of all media, both print and electronic will give fair and impartial account and commentary in all cases. Fairness, impartiality and objectivity are particularly important when it comes to public service broadcasting. Journalists must be free to report the truth in a fair and objective manner and be able to do so without fear or favour.

Value for money is also important. People may decide what, if any, print media they buy or indeed what, if any, radio stations they watch. The same is not true of television. Possession of a television set renders a person liable for an annual licence fee of €160, most of which goes to RTE. This is regardless of whether they ever watch RTE channels. I am aware that technology now allows a person to watch unlimited RTE content without possession of a television set so this creates a major anomaly. This is clearly unfair.

I own a television set and must therefore pay the annual licence fee. I, like every other householder, have numerous bills and I think most of them are excessive as we in Ireland are made to pay through the proverbial nose for just about everything. However, it is the television licence which really annoys me as it represents very poor value for money. The RTE programmes are really terrible. The news and current affairs coverage are very one sided. No rule, regulation or directive from Brussels is questioned. The left wing propaganda and misinformation peddled by the EU and UN are fed to us as if they were absolute truth. Only left wing "woke" opinions are tolerated and no dissent is entertained. An example of this was the abortion debate. Only token coverage was given to people who favoured continuing the protection of the pre born. Needless to say RTE remained silent on the barbarity of the procedure itself. No opportunity to lambast Christianity, especially Catholicism is ever missed. The disgusting, blasphemous piece on the RTE new year programme represents a new low, even by RTE's low standards. I understand that even the soaps, which masquerade as light entertainment seek to normalize behaviour which is against the moral code which has served the Irish people well for generations. It is clear, therefore, that RTE is not fit for purpose as a public service broadcaster.

The whole issue of finance is important. RTE has got €50m of public funds as a bail out. I am aware there is a proposal to replace the television licence with a broadcasting tax which would be payable by all households, regardless of ownership of a television or not. The Revenue Commissioners, with all their draconian powers and the fear they instill in the people, would collect this under the plan. Much of the funds raised would then go to RTE. In my view, this is unfair as it would allow RTE to continue to pass on its inefficiencies to the general public. This is further compounded by the fact that some RTE personalities are paid more than An Taoiseach. In my view, many are grossly overpaid. To rub salt in the peoples'

wounds, they [REDACTED] are arrogant enough to think that it is good value for money.

There is also the issue of funding independent broadcast and print media and a State subsidy is mooted. These media are very important in any functioning democracy and they perform a huge societal duty. Like RTE, these media must compete with the internet for advertising revenue. This is a major issue.

The above creates a dilemma. The media should not be dependent on State funding as we already have too cosy an arrangement between Government and media. Poorly paid journalists are believed to curry favour with politicians in the hope of securing a position with a minister as a "special media advisor" aka a spin doctor. This means that the media is less likely to hold politicians to account. On the other hand, the media fulfills an important role and must be enabled to survive and prosper. Proper funding would lead to proper journalistic pay and end the unhealthy sychophantic relationship with politicians.

My suggestion for finance is broadly as follows. RTE cannot be allowed to remain as a monolith which is gorged on public funds. The issue of stratospheric levels of pay must be tackled. Any broadcasting charge must be a charge to benefit all electronic and print media.. I think State funding should be based on merit, content and be payable to all media. Deductions should be made if a media organisation produces a disgusting, blasphemous item like RTE did on new years eve. It is insulting that the public must be pay to have a skit made of its religious belief. I think that funding for the media should be based on such things as Irish produced material, material based on our history, heritage, culture etc. Coverage of Irish sporting events should also qualify for such funding. Media organisations should also be funded for maintenance of archive material as this is important for our heritage. The remaining funding should, I believe, come from sponsorship, advertising, subscription, cover price etc. It is also my belief that the funding be administered by an independent group/commission.

I think that these measures would address many of the problems faced by Irish media

Yours Sincerely

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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1

Record #109

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday 6 January 2021 01:20  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:**

To whom it may concern,

*I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut by any means possible. Freedom of expressing any point of view have to respected. If you don't agree with what other people say, it ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling. A free society is build strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP. The people is smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them. Freedom must be the Centre of a society. Otherwise, everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling. Free speech, freedom, liberty. Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble. And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not. So, start acting like civil reasonable persons and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view.  
A concerned irish citizen*

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #110  
[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday 6 January 2021 05:03  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Censorship

"Hi,

*I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut by any means possible. Freedom of expressing any point of view have to be respected. If you don't agree with what other people say, it's ok, but to censor that person and don't allow that person to say anything else, then put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling. A free society is build strength with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP. The people of Ireland are smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them. Freedom must be the Centre of a society. Otherwise, everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling. Free speech, freedom, liberty. Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble. And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not. So, start acting like civil reasonable persons and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view."*

Regards [REDACTED] Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #111  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Wednesday 6 January 2021 08:55

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** Freedom of speach

*I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut by any means possible. Freedom of expressing any point of view have to respected. If you don't agree with what other people say, it ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling. A free society is build strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP. The people is smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them. Freedom must be the Centre of a society. Otherwise, everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling. Free speech, freedom, liberty. Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble. And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not. So, start acting like civil reasonable persons and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view."*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #112  
[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday 6 January 2021 10:32  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Freedom of speech

*Dear Sir / Madam I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut by any means possible. Freedom of expressing any point of view have to respected. If you don't agree with what other people say, it ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling. A free society is build strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP. The people are smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them. Freedom must be the Centre of a society. Otherwise, everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling. Free speech, freedom, liberty. Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble. And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not. So, start acting like civil reasonable persons and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view."*

Yours Sincerely [REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #113  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday 6 January 2021 10:37  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:**

To whom it may concern,

*I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut by any means possible. Freedom of expressing any point of view have to respected. If you don't agree with what other people say, it ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling. A free society is build strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP. The people is smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them. Freedom must be the Centre of a society. Otherwise, everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling. Free speech, freedom, liberty. Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble. And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not. So, start acting like civil reasonable persons and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view."*

Kind regards,  
Concerned citizen

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #114  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday 6 January 2021 12:20  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Freedom of speech

*To Whom it Concerns,*

*I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut by any means possible. Freedom of expressing any point of view has to be respected. If you don't agree with what other people say, it's ok, but censoring that person, not allowing that person to speak and putting the label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling. A free society is built strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP. The people are smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them. Freedom must be the Centre of a society. Otherwise, everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling. Free speech, freedom, liberty. Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble. And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not. So, start acting like civil reasonable persons and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view."*

Sincerely [REDACTED]



Record #115

Tim Ryan



## **Consultation by the Future of the Media Commission**

The Commission is examining the challenges faced by public service broadcasters, commercial broadcasters, print and online media platforms including:

- Sustainable funding sources
- Changes in audience behaviour
- Changes in technology

### **Introduction**

Strong independent journalism has always been a hallmark of the Irish media, both print and broadcast. Unlike many other countries, Ireland has prided itself with the freedom of its media to offer totally independent commentary and opinion without any fear of retribution. This is not the case in many parts of the world, and increasingly so, in some European countries. And we are all only too familiar with the advent of Fake News. The recent advent of social media when everybody became a “journalist” and commentator has had devastating consequences for traditional independent news makers. A major priority for the future of the media should be to maintain and uphold this freedom and independence.

The national and regional print media and, to a lesser extent, local radio is in a very difficult space not least due to the huge drop in advertising caused by Covid-19. A report in *The Irish Times* on 2 April 2020 stated that there had been a plunge in advertising revenues estimated to be as deep as 70 per cent in some instances. Some regional newspapers have already folded and it is clear many more will not survive without assistance of some kind. (Full first-hand account details about the effects on local media can be obtained from the representatives of the regional media organisations such as Local Ireland).

### **Imbalance**

There seems a very clear imbalance between the State support given to RTE and the assistance given to the independent media. While a State broadcaster is a necessary part of a national media infrastructure, the way RTE manages its finances needs to be examined independently as it continues to lose money at an unsustainable rate. The very notion in today’s pandemic world that a number of broadcasters can still earn salaries vastly in excess of the Taoiseach is clearly unsustainable and, at worst, leaves a very bad taste in the popular mind. (Salaries are normally pinned on what other organisations might offer to attract these presenters but no media organisation in Ireland could match these salaries). While an independent news service is necessary, serious questions need to be asked as to how RTE manages its affairs given its relatively huge staffing levels compared to all other media.

Local media can of course avail of various government-led incentives to employ staff and can use the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) and other aides to survive and get through the current emergency. However, these are all short-term measures and a much longer-term strategy is needed to be adopted to ensure their survival.

How to support and guarantee sustainability to the independent print and broadcast media is a difficult issue. One idea worth considering is a think-tank of representatives of the various sectors led by the Future of Media Commission to consider all aspects BUT to report within a fairly tight deadline of three to six months at most. One thing we do not need is another

round of endless talk-shops. A clear time frame for the production of a report from which a sustainable strategy can be derived must be set down.

### **Synergy with Social Media**

Social media is with us and is likely to be dominant media for the foreseeable future. The problem is that the news from social media is generally not monitored and is often highly inaccurate and misleading. There are, of course, exceptions such as thejournal.ie but these are rare. We cannot prevent people accessing news from social media so, rather than attack them, the question is whether a way can be found to synchronise the energies of both. While printed newspapers are increasingly adapting to online publication, this will not be enough to ensure their survival as a huge percentage of the population, particularly the younger cohort, will not pay to access general news content, content which they can get for “free” elsewhere.

Seven years ago, in October 2013, the Graham family sold the *Washington Post* newspaper to Nash Holdings, a holding company established by Jeff Bezos, founder, CEO and President of Amazon for \$250 million. This secured the paper’s future and guaranteed its role as an independent source of news and commentary in the United States and beyond. The move was an ideal coming together of the synergies of a highly successful technology company and a traditional newspaper and as a result the *Washington Post* continues to be a leading source of independent news and commentary.

Ireland is very lucky in having the European headquarters of a number of the most successful IT companies, Facebook and LinkedIn being just two examples. Ways in which their technology and resources could be used to help support an independent media should be explored without delay. After all, they are all media of a kind. While the solutions might not be obvious, there is no doubt but with some imaginative thinking and a commitment from all sides, including a full buy-in by Government, progress could be made and fairly quickly. But time is of the essence if we are to continue to have a national and local independent media.

Tim Ryan

6 January 2021

[www.timryan.ie](http://www.timryan.ie)

*Tim Ryan is a journalist and public affairs consultant. A former news editor and political journalist with the Irish Press, he worked in local newspapers and community radio in Tipperary. In October 2013 he obtained an M.Comm (Government and Public Policy) in UCC for his thesis ‘Television and the Emergence of Spin-Doctors’. He is currently finalising a PhD thesis on housing policy in the Dept. of Social Work and Social Policy at Trinity College. He has written a number of political biographies and recently edited The Irish Times Nealon’s Guide to the 33<sup>rd</sup> Dáil and 26<sup>th</sup> Seanad.*



**From:** Jo [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday 6 January 2021 13:41  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Urgent

I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut by any means possible.

Freedom of expressing any point of view have to respected.

If you don't agree with what other people say, it ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling.

A free society is build strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP.

The people is smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them.

Freedom must be the Centre of a society. Otherwise, everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling.

Free speech, freedom, liberty.

Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble.

And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not.

So, start acting like civil reasonable persons and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view."

[REDACTED]

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Record #117

Subject **Futureofmediacommission submissions**  
 From [REDACTED]  
 To <Info@futureofmediacommission.ie>  
 Date 2021-01-06 13:59



I submit The following

As I am a private individual & citizen ..,Please do not release my name, address or other personal information as outlined in your invite for submissions. Also please excuse any typing or punctuation errors.

I am not sure what is meant by independent. Independent of f whom or what: Company , Agency Government & so forth.

My view is that it is not in general objective nor independent. Perhaps because of need to sell & make financial profit for Owner.

#### IMPACT ON OUR DEMOCRACY, SOCIETY & INFORMING PUBLIC

**DEMOCRACY & SOCIETY:** If we want a mature informed public it is necessary media should be inquisitorial more often rather than adversarial. (To me they appear to challenge rather than explore why a particular viewpoint is held.)Otherwise it may create an angry society. I fear sometimes it is used as a PROPAGANDA Tool.

**POLORISATION OF SOCIETY:**In my opinion media appears to be creating a polarised society & making people angry, helped by its approach as outlined above, which is very dangerous for our fragile democracy & indeed social harmony.

**DEMOCRACY ..SHARED. VALUES versus REVOLUTION:** People in media either do not know or intentionally ignore that DEMOCRACY & indeed SOCIETY depends on relative shared values which underpin it. If this is not maintained ( perhaps even promoted) the end result is revolution, perhaps not bloody (Although recent USA happenings should alert us) but ideologically, socially, culturally & economically etc.

**VICTIM & DEPENDANT Mentality:** Media appear to be fomenting a victim mentality & almost everything is a right. as human being we know that Utopia never will exist. BASic human rights are enshrined in our laws & internation documents. Creating a victim mentality leads to an adolescent type society. I have rarely if every come actress public media stating that that with every Right comes a Responsibility

**FAKE NEWS:** My view is that our media distort or over emphasis one element of a story over the whole to suit their employers. IN my experience they emphasise a minor glitch in'problem/ dispute/protest' over the greater. Eg 40 protesters against rally when perhaps 400 attended in support. Always in support f an ideology guy counter to intent of event or rally.

**REFLECT & PROMOTE IRISH LIFE:** our previous Colonisation by Britain has been v successful by creating an imbedded inferiority complex which in my view is evidenced in our media & public life in general. Colonisation successfully elimated our Irish language & subliminally linked ignorance with blind Catholicism. I note our Christian heritage is not mentioned as possible subjects to be explored. It will I suspect be broadly included under 'Culture' . evidence if needed of our current public & political Weakness broadcasting again their national inferiority complex. I am of the view this is intentional to airbrush our v rich heritage in our former land of Saints & Scholars. MEDIA could do soo many rich programmes on our past but I again feel that a specific ideological spin would be subliminally included. Recent RTE NYE Countdown programme which grossly tried to insult & ridicule GOD is evidence of the attitude of many in the media to certain sections of Irish society.

Our beautiful Country is in a downward slide. Something MUST be done to keep Society together & the media are in a privileged position to contribute to social harmony while respecting differing opinions.

PS: the cult of personality in RTE must be elimated as they have much power to influence (I ctribute to their gross salaries) Their salaries are enormous & not deserved in my view. In a broader population pool they would not get such a profile or salary

Submitted for your to consider & reflect

Thank you & I wish the Commission the most truthful outcome possible.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #118

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday 6 January 2021 13:05  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:**

To whom it may concern

I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut by any means possible. Freedom of expressing any point of view has to be respected. If you don't agree with what other people say, it is ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling.

A free society is built strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP.

The people are smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them.

Freedom must be the Centre of a society. Otherwise, everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling.

Free speech, freedom, liberty.  
Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble.

And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not.  
So, start acting like civil reasonable persons and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view.  
Kind Regards  
An Irish Citizen

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #119  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday 6 January 2021 14:13  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission

Dear Sir/Madam

My thoughts on the Irish media is that it is totally biased and unrepresentative. It fails to hold power to account and as a result I resent my license fee more than any other tax that I pay.

The fact that the national broadcaster, RTE, in particular is nothing more than the PR arm of the government is especially troubling.

There needs to be systemic change and the license fee scrapped.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

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Record #120

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday 6 January 2021 14:36  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** future of media commission

Hi,

I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut by any means possible. Freedom of expressing, any point of view has to be respected. If you don't agree with what other people say, it is ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling. A free society is built strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP. The people are smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them. Freedom must be the Centre of a society. Otherwise, everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling. Free speech, freedom, liberty. Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble. And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not. So, start acting like civil reasonable persons and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view.

I want to simply hear the truth coming from your TV box or watch politicians being truly challenge in the public debate,

I want to get value for your money and by value, I mean truth and honesty and various opinions and views that are out there. I want the media be it radio or TV to be funded by **voluntary subscriptions** so they always keep in mind that if they start being dishonest and clamp down on debates and censor important info they will lose their funding.

I do not want to see political correctness ruining any healthy debate and being a tool to shut people's mouth..

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[REDACTED]



Record #121

Dr. Rosemary Day



**Submission to Commission on Future of Media (in Ireland) from Dr Rosemary Day.**

Rosemary is the Head of the Department of Media and Communication Studies in Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick and a former member of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland. The opinions offered here are her own. She is willing to appear before the Commission if this might prove helpful.

This submission is structured in two parts as follows:

**Part One:** A general introduction suggesting four areas or tracks that the Commission should consider.

**Part two:** A response to the questions posed in the template.

## Part One: Introduction

No one can say for certain how the media will develop over the next few decades but we can be sure that communications will change dramatically and rapidly. The media landscape changes in response to technological innovations but the primary force for change comes from the private sector as business interests move to capitalise on new developments to maximise profits. As a result, we need to protect a space for content that is in the national interest and that enhances the lives of Irish people as citizens and as individuals.

We live in an open, liberal economy, in an increasingly interconnected world, so the numbers and types of content providers will continue to multiply. History shows that the 'free market' does not provide unprofitable material. The most 'successful' broadcasters in these types of markets are the best resourced and most aggressive, building national and international chains to provide formulaic, 'popular' programming. These do nothing to preserve democracy; to protect diversity; to promote tolerance and to celebrate difference much less to provide a voice for the marginalised or to challenge patriarchal capitalism with all the injustices that this twin ideology carries with it. If the provision of programming and other content is left to a totally free market, the core values, culture and identity of the Irish nation will be at risk. It is therefore crucial that strong, independent, trustworthy voices that celebrate, develop and question all areas of Irish life, culture and values are resourced and protected by the nation for the benefit of the nation.

This commission has the challenge of imagining how such voices can be established and supported and in outlining what their role may be. I believe that this commission should use "green field" thinking and outline what the principles of the provision of public service content should be. I believe that it is crucial for this commission to identify the key requirements of the people of Ireland, as individuals, as citizens and as a nation first. Once these are outlined and agreed upon, questions regarding the reform or restructuring of RTE will be more easily and usefully answered. These principles can guide the direction of public funds towards the provision of public service content and programming appropriately in the future where the only certainty will be that there will be challenges and changes. RTE recognised this back in 2017 when it published its strategy to work with content across multiple platforms and began to move away from the approach that treated radio, television, print media and on-line provision as separate structures.

So, general principles need to be established first and then proposals for a set of mechanisms to deliver on these principles can be devised. These will need to be flexible so that they can be adapted quickly and easily in response to and in anticipation of technological changes and to business capitalisation on those changes. It won't be possible or advisable to depend on any single approach.

There is a danger in trusting that legislation and regulation will protect democratic processes, objectivity in news provision and prevent the spread of ideologies that run counter to the core values of the state and that threaten its citizens. I believe that it is highly unlikely that regulation will be a major force in preventing such threats to democracy and to Irish identity and self-confidence in the future. Content is moving to platforms that do not

require licenses; content that people can access free of charge and content that probably originates outside of this state. Certainly, the Irish government needs to continue to collaborate with other governments for an international, collective response to such threats and to encourage self-regulation. Any attempt to protect citizens is welcome but we cannot trust to regulation to protect our citizens in the future.

Instead, we need a series of incentives and direct interventions to ensure that Irish and Irish public service content is produced for and accessed by Irish people.

I believe that legislation needs to promote a four track approach to:

1. Ensure the operation of a strong, public service content provider
2. Ensure the provision of public service content across all sectors and platforms
3. Ensure the provision of clear identification of and easy access to this public service content and to Irish content from all sectors
4. Ensure the provision of on-going media literacy education.

#### **1. A strong public service provider.**

There is a pressing need, in this new world of multi-platforms and channels, for the state to pay for a single public service communications provider. With so much choice and with so many commercial voices clamouring for attention and for power, it is essential that Irish identity, in its multiple forms and Irish democracy be protected and catered for and that people can access expressions of this identity easily and free of charge.

A multiplicity of broadcasters rarely delivers diversity without regulation. A scramble for audiences leads to either multiple copies of the same formats and ideological messages or to a fragmentation of the audience - niche broadcasting/narrow casting.

Unfortunately, only state funding (at one remove) will provide a clear channel that people can depend upon for news and for diverse opinions. We have this in RTE today, despite all its faults. Successive Reuters research in collaboration with DCU's FuJo has shown that Irish people trust RTE and trust their news. This should be protected and built upon, we cannot depend on the 'free market' to provide this.

Countries that do not pay for independent and 'unbiased' news and current affairs can find their populations more easily polarised or swung towards extremism. If we are to protect quality and some measure of objectivity in news and current affairs we need to pay for this. The market will not support it and recent consolidations of radio stations and changes in television ownership have resulted in the reduction of newsroom staff and of the minutes devoted to news and current affairs.

Independent journalism costs money but it does not make enough money to pay for quality so, profit seeking companies will not provide it by choice. In the past, regulation and the provision of licences forced commercial broadcasters to provide news. However, it is clear that new platforms cannot be easily regulated so, I believe that the only alternative is to

incentivise content providers to produce this type of costly, quality programming. If we want a fourth estate then we need to pay for it.

Such funding needs to come from the people and therefore needs to be channelled through state apparatuses. On the other hand, the state must remain at one remove from content provision in terms of ownership and supervision. The existing model of the RTE Authority and of the regulator, currently the BAI, is a good one as it ensures that politicians have less opportunity to control or to sway editorial. However, I believe that the hybrid model of financing RTE, where RTE has to deliver high audience numbers to attract advertising, should be abolished. It takes up too much of the energy that should be devoted to the public service broadcaster's primary remit and it risks the danger of big business having an influence on the broadcaster.

We need to ensure that all Irish people see themselves and their lives and aspirations, their hopes, attitudes and values reflected in the media. We also need to protect and develop the multiple identities of Irishness – this includes the Irish language, sports, music and arts and these should take centre stage and considerable funding. These are after all what makes us unique. This was recognised at the dawn of Irish broadcasting in 1926 when Ireland's future first president, Douglas Hyde, expressed the hope that the new radio station would mark

the beginning of a .....new era in which our nation will take its place amongst the other nations of the world. A nation which has never been made by Act of Parliament. **A nation is made from the inside, it is made, first of all by its language, if it has one; by its music, songs, games and customs.** So, while not forgetting what is best in what other countries have to offer us, we desire to especially emphasise what we have derived from our Gaelic ancestors .....(Emphasis in bold is my own)

The importance of embracing what is good that comes from outside is clearly recognised here, as is a pride in Ireland taking her rightful place in the world but the importance of protecting, preserving, developing and celebrating the cultural elements that make Ireland Irish is flagged as the priority. I believe that this holds true today and should be central to any policy or legislation for public service content provision.

To put it simply, any Irish person can access international content easily. We do not need to ensure that Irish taxes or fees of any nature pay for content produced elsewhere for example American films, international soccer, British comedy or pop music. These are all available on line for Irish audiences to engage with anyway. Irish content, in particular Irish public service content, is not available to Irish audiences without public funding. To spell it out, if we don't pay for it, we won't have it. Ensuring that Irish public service content is available to Irish people and that it can be easily located and accessed – these are responsibilities that we owe to future generations of Irish people.

The 2001 Act explains clearly what a public service provider should be and it is useful to reflect on these as this Commission attempts to map out a future for the provision of public service content in Ireland. It states that

“the character of a public service,..... to be a **free-to-air service** and be made available, in so far as it is reasonably practicable, to the whole community on the island of Ireland .....

..... the programme schedule of the broadcasting service shall

- a) provide a **comprehensive range of programmes** in the **Irish and English languages** that **reflect the cultural diversity** of the whole island of Ireland and include, both on television and programmes that **entertain, inform and educate**, provide coverage of **sporting and cultural activities** and **cater for the expectations of the community generally as well as members of the community with special or minority interests** and which, in every case, **respect human dignity**,
- b) provide programmes of **news and current affairs in the Irish and English languages**, including programmes that provide coverage of proceedings in the Houses of the Oireachtas and the European Parliament, and
- c) facilitate or assist **contemporary cultural expression**.

(Broadcasting Act, 2001. I have highlighted the key points for ease of reading in bold, there is no such emphasis in the Act)

So, the recognition of the importance of our unique heritage is recognised. Foregrounding, protecting, preserving but also recording, promoting and motivating engagement with and ownership of the things that make us Irish are the top priority. The crucial role played by independent, quality journalism in protecting democracy, fairness and truth comes next. The third point recognises the need to foster and develop contemporary cultural expression which is really important for any nation that chooses to neither stagnate in the past nor lose itself in the cultural hegemony of others.

### **1.a. Finance**

The current hybrid model of funding for our public service broadcaster needs to be changed. The dependence on advertising only wastes time and effort that would be better spent providing good quality programming. Advertising is increasingly divided by the multitude of platforms and will be harder to source going forward. Desperate attempts to reach mass audiences in the hopes of increasing advertising have often led to poor quality, generic programmes, frequently bought in from elsewhere. A new public service provider needs to be freed from this handicap and be resourced sufficiently so that it can concentrate on its core responsibilities and remit. It should not broadcast cheap programming with no public service content in the future however it needs to be properly resourced to be able to do this.

Irish people do not have a tradition of paying for content, they want free access to programming and they resent ‘stealth’ taxes in particular television licence fees. The whole notion of a broadcast licence or fee is toxic for politicians who never want to increase it and thereby lose votes. This has not served RTE and therefore its audiences well in the past.

The licence scheme is often defended as a way to avoid excessive or even direct control by the Department of Finance and Government as the use of central funds from general taxation could lead to interference – editorial and otherwise. This principle of ‘one remove’ is a good one and any new funding scheme needs to ensure the independence and

autonomy of the principal, public service content provider. However, it should be possible, with careful legislation, to devise a method of ringfencing a proportion of revenues raised by normal taxation for the public good i.e. public service content provision. A funding mechanism that would ensure the editorial and managerial autonomy of the provider of public service content could surely be established.

So, I believe that it is crucial to pay for a strong, single public service provider of content along the lines of public service broadcasters in Ireland and elsewhere. This is to ensure that there is a trustworthy source of relatively objective news, critical debate and current affairs coverage to protect democracy and to educate and inform citizens. This provider needs to concentrate on the elements of our culture and society that are uniquely Irish. This includes the Irish language, traditional music, Gaelic sports and heritage materials and it must also embrace the realities and experiences of modern or contemporary Irish life, art, culture and leisure.

This is a huge responsibility and it requires serious public investment on an ongoing basis to ensure not only content production and provision but also to ensure that that Irish people can find this material easily among the clamour of other voices and that they can access it for free on whatever devices people will use in the future.

## **2. Provision of public service content across all sectors and platforms**

Reliance on one institution to be the sole provider of public service content in Ireland would be foolish. There are many content providers competing for Irish eyes and ears at present and these will only multiply as time goes on. As outlined above, I believe we need a strong, well resourced public service provider that can stick to its remit but I also believe that we need to provide for public service content across all platforms accessed by Irish people. This may be difficult, for example where this content is coming from outside the jurisdiction but a creative and well funded set of government initiatives could really assist Irish producers of content to ensure that public service programming/content is provided at different points in their schedules/offerings. That way, people who browse, as we used to channel hop in former times, will still be exposed to the richness of Irish culture, will see themselves and their experiences reflected in the media they consume and the platforms that they engage with and they will have access to trustworthy, relatively objective, quality journalism.

I believe that we need to protect and promote Irish culture and our heritage – the Irish language, Irish sports, Irish music and the arts. I believe that we need to reflect cultural diversity, provide minorities with a voice and protect the vulnerable. I believe that democracy is a fragile system that needs the protection of autonomous, well resourced journalism. I further believe that Irish people want to learn, to grow and to prosper as an autonomous, confident people, comfortable in our own identity(ies).

So, it follows that we need to enshrine these principles in law, in regulation and in public funding. This comprehensive approach calls for both a single, strong, autonomous public service content provider and for public service programming across the other sectors i.e. commercial and community content providers. We need more public service

broadcasting/communications throughout the entire system rather than a ‘silozation’ or a ghettoization of communications providers.

Commercial content providers work for profit; public service content providers, such as our current public service broadcaster and community media, work for public good. The market will look after its own interests – the pursuit of profit - and will not provide unprofitable material. The other two sectors, traditionally RTE and the community media sector, work for the public good and not for profit. It seems to me that these two sectors need the largest proportion of public funds for public service content provision precisely because this is their remit. The provision of public good cannot be left in private hands but public services need to be paid for from public funds. Therefore, I propose funding public service content providers at national level along the lines of a streamlined RTE and at local level along the lines of licensed community radio stations. However, as privately owned content providers will attract audiences, it seems to me that the commercial sector needs to be incentivised to carry some public service programming and so a system of distributing funds for public service programming needs to be rolled out across all three sectors in addition to primary, core funding for a primary public service content provider, such as RTE and community media/content providers.

An example of the necessity to pay for such content on all platforms became really clear to me when my colleague in NUI, Galway, Dr John Walsh and I undertook a review of the amount of Irish language programming on all three sectors of licensed Irish radio stations in 2017 and 2018. We were disappointed, but not surprised, to find that the average weekly output of Irish or bilingual (in many cases just ‘cúpla focal’) across all stations was a mere 3.3 hours out of the 168 hours per week broadcast by most stations). This is despite the legislative requirements placed on RTE and the contractual obligations undertaken by independent (commercial and community) radio stations with the BAI to provide far more than these levels. If this is the case today, when we have regulation, licenses, monitoring etc. how much worse can we expect matters to be in the future when the market will decide what gets priority?

Successive census statistics show that the Irish language is important to the nation at a deeply symbolic level. Irish people use the existence of the language as a way of marking their difference from others, even when they do not speak it themselves. A significant proportion of people are actively trying to use the language in more than a symbolic way, as a part of their daily lives (See the rise of Gaelscoileanna etc.). However, unless the Irish language is heard on the airwaves, on social media and on digital/on-line content, the numbers speaking the language and therefore the language itself will die. Constitutionally, legislatively, sentimentally and symbolically the Irish nation declares a desire for the language to be preserved. Unless our media promotes it, it will continue to decline and this is one of the most important areas that this Commission needs to consider. A brief examination of the history of Irish broadcasting and of the failure of the Irish education system to revive the language reveals that economic arguments won out over cultural and national objectives every time. Ireland has left the dark days of dire poverty behind and it is time for public bodies, such as this Commission, to take a very strong stand in the recommendations that it makes to the Irish government to address these failures. A strong, clear policy for Irish language content on the single public service content provider and

across all platforms will require major investment, a creative strategy and positive enthusiasm and commitment rather than what we have experienced to date – a series of weak, unco-ordinated, poorly resourced mish mash of policies that merely pay lip service to the ideals of preserving and promoting the Irish language.

News and Current Affairs should become part of the remit of Sound and Vision or of a separate scheme. Commercial enterprises will not pay for costly news and current affairs as regulation becomes more difficult to enforce on new platforms. State funding must be ringfenced to protect newsrooms and independent journalism for an informed citizenry and for a healthy democracy.

### **2.a. Finance.**

Specific schemes along the lines of the current Sound and Vision scheme could be developed but the principle should be that any broadcaster could access funds through competition or on a merit basis.

The terms and conditions of the competition could be founded on some of the principles guiding the current Sound and Vision scheme, but these should be expanded. For example there should be an opportunity for content providers to win a contract to provide certain types of programming over a relatively long period e.g. 5 years to serve certain audiences. News and current affairs should be funded.

This would mean whatever comes in place of RTE would continue to receive the greatest portion of public funds, however these are generated. This would be followed by core funding for community media. Finally, all Irish content providers would be supported to ensure provision of good quality news, current affairs and other public service programming.

### **3. Clear identification of and easy access to this public service content and to Irish content from all sectors**

There is a huge and rapidly increasing amount of choice for audiences. The survival of the fittest means that global corporations, multi-million, international organisations are the ones that shout the loudest and win the most attention. Therefore it is crucial to ensure that Irish audiences can find Irish and public service content easily and that they can access it free of charge. We need to continue to ensure that Irish content comes up on top in any searches, digital and otherwise, just as RTE 1 and 2, Virgin and TG4 all come up on Saorview as channels 1,2, 3 and 4 respectively at the moment.

It will be difficult to ensure that Irish material doesn't get lost in the mire of digital platforms. We can't predict the number or type of platforms that will be bidding for our attention so this Commission needs to consider the principles of identification of content and of easy access to content as matters of priority.

### **3.a. Finance**

The principles of ensuring easy identification of Irish and Irish public service content and of enabling easy access to them free of charge should inform a funded set of mechanisms that will guide Irish citizens towards good Irish public service content in the future.

These will need to be flexible so that they can respond rapidly to changes in the mediascape and to threats from global communications corporations which may lead to Irish and Irish public service content being hidden or lost from view.

It may be advisable to set up a separate public body or a unit within any future regulator or commission to ensure that these mechanisms work effectively. This unit and the provision of means to guide Irish citizens to Irish and Irish public service content will need resourcing.

I believe that this should also come from central taxation. We already pay for a proportion of the public good in our health, education, roads, national defence and legal systems. I believe that it is equally important for a national sense of identity and confidence and for an informed and actively engaged citizenry to have clear road maps that they can use to negotiate the huge volume of content that they will be exposed to. They will need help and support so that they can find and engage with Irish and Irish public service content and easily and for free.

#### **4. Media literacy education**

The influence of the contemporary media is often said to be greater than that of traditional institutions in helping us form our opinions, attitudes, values and even our identity(ies). As the number and types of content provision increase, the clamour of voices can become deafening and difficult to negotiate. Individuals, as private persons and as citizens in a democracy, need to be educated to understand the provenance and influence of the messages they receive and of the content that they engage with.

Independent news and current affairs provision go part of the way in building an educated electorate but the ability to negotiate, interpret and use content is crucial in protecting and developing a free thinking, reflective and engaged citizenry.

This education needs to be formal, through the schools but it also needs to be provided in orchestrated campaigns and programmes across all media platforms accessed by Irish adults on an ongoing basis. The Department of Education needs to introduce Media Studies at primary and secondary level and the Department of Media/Communications needs to plan and resource media literacy campaigns on all platforms as a matter of priority.

Community media already engage in media literacy education on an accredited basis through QQ1 and through the training thousands of volunteers receive when they work in the stations. Media Literacy Ireland also do sterling work in this regard. Both have strong international links and conduct research to inform best practice and should be resourced under this strand.

##### **4.a. Finance**

Once again, funding for this needs to come from central funds/tax revenue. However, the financing of this really important education can be split in at least two parts. One part should come from the budget of the Department of Education so that the subject of Media Studies is put on the core curriculum of both primary and secondary schools. Another part could come directly through the Department of Media/Communications so that a public body or a unit of a larger regulator/commission (depending on its constitution) is established to work on providing media literacy education, training and programming across all platforms.

## **Part Two: Responses to questions posed in template.**

### **Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The Irish Government needs to take a four track approach (See Part 1 above) that ensures provision of:

1. A strong public service content provider
2. Provision of public service content across all sectors and platforms
3. Clear identification of and easy access to this public service content and to Irish content from all sectors
4. Media literacy education.

### **What can be learned from the evolution of public service media over the last decade?**

Lack of funding has driven RTE to crisis management e.g. the poor quality of some programming, the uncertainty about its future and the sale of land. RTE and public service broadcast programming on all other licensed stations need to be assured of a steady and viable funding source so that they can plan and develop effectively.

The hybrid model of funding for RTE has stymied its development over its lifetime. Having to compete with other broadcasters for advertising, especially now that so much of it is moving on-line, means that RTE is never secure enough to fulfil its key mission of public service broadcasting. It is always worried about competition 'stealing' its audiences so it takes 'safe', commercial decisions rather than decisions based on the ideals of public service broadcasting as outlined in the 2001 Act.

### **What systems may be required to support and sustain public service content, e.g. high quality, independent journalism, in an increasingly competitive and consolidated market?**

The Commission needs to decide who it wants to see operating unbiased, trustworthy, objective news services (in so far as any service can reach these ideals). If it decides not to fund one strong institution, it leaves the people exposed to receiving news paid for by vested interests, so this cannot happen.

The Commission should think expansively and innovatively and consider funding quality news and journalism across all three sectors of the broadcasting service. News teams in independent, commercial radio and television stations have been reduced radically in the last decade. Without funding, business oriented models of broadcasting will cut costs as much as they can so, we need two things here – a new type of regulation of the independent sector and funding for independent journalists and quality newsrooms across all three sectors of broadcasting/content provision – public service, commercial and community.

### **How might public service media be more effective in promoting the Irish language, sport and culture?**

The excellent work done by TG4 should be properly supported by increasing and guaranteeing adequate funding. Raidió na Life should be supported financially and otherwise to become a national, youth based, music driven Irish language radio service with paid staff and act as a hub for Irish language social media services. However, Irish should not be ghettoised to be heard only on single language channels such as these and RTE Raidió na Gaeltachta. The Irish language should be heard regularly as a normal part of schedules on all broadcasters. The programmes should not be about the Irish language, they should be broadcast in the Irish language as a normal language of communication and they could be about any topic (as they are on TG4 and Raidió na Life).

RTE Raidió na Gaeltachta needs a complete makeover. It needs to go back to first principles and serve its dwindling Gaeltacht communities. It shouldn't have to try to be all things to all listeners. It should be complemented by other national services such as a youth station along the lines of Raidió na Life with paid staff and a national Irish language general station along the lines of RTE Radio One or Newstalk.

Irish sport, at all levels, needs the oxygen of fan support and all stations, in each of three sectors, need funding to cover and promote this hugely important part of our culture and our nations' health – both physical and mental.

Irish culture is hard to define and it is not exclusive to the "De Valera" version of the first half of the last century. An extension or new version of the Sound and Vision would be most helpful here.

That said, there is a glaring need for a radio station that plays traditional Irish music, in all its many forms, to be available to all. We currently pay for material on RTE that is available elsewhere. Every country has a classical music station and these can be accessed on-line. Music of all genres, especially commercially successful music, is available on a number of platforms to Irish people and does not require any state aid or public funding. Our great legacy and unique contribution to the body of world musics is largely ignored on all broadcasters, even by RTE Raidió na Gaeltachta. I believe that the establishment of a broadcaster that showcases our rich musical heritage and current expressions of it is badly needed.

Although most independent radio stations are contractually bound to ensure that 20% of all music played is of Irish origin, unfortunately there is very little air time given to new acts and new work. We need a policy that supports and promotes Irish music and Irish musicians of all genres and all genders, from rock to traditional and from hip hop to classical.

### **How might public service media better respond to the needs and expectations of the public?**

Public service media need to remember who owns them and who pays for them. They need to undertake serious and real engagement with their audiences to find out what they need and expect from them. There is very little research done on what people might like. RTE have been particularly bad at asking this question and they continually borrow or copy formats and production styles from other broadcasters without considering what they might do themselves that may be new, innovative and relevant to Irish audiences. There is a Dublin 4 centric attitude in Montrose that goes far deeper than just geography and RTE is often far removed from the hearts and minds of Irish people. Back in the 1940s, Radio Eireann was appalled to discover that their most popular programme was traditional dance music and again in the last decade, RTE was shocked to find that the Late Late's Country Music show had the third highest viewership ever. The public service broadcaster/content provider needs to find out what Irish people are interested in and what Irish people need. They need funding to do this research regularly and then to experiment with formats, with ideas and with approaches to better serve their public(s).

### **What can we learn from other jurisdictions?**

We can avoid the mistake of the USA in not having a strong, public service broadcaster so that we do not replicate the polarisation of news services into right and left.

We could copy the BBC's single source funding model so that RTE is not trying to compete commercially with many others. Even though the BBC model is under constant attack, it supports a strong and much admired institution. It may not be a popular suggestion but it should be considered. However, this funding can no longer come from a separate or 'stealth' tax such as a licence fee. We need funding to come from central tax funds, to be increased automatically as costs increase and to be controlled and administered 'at one remove' by a public body along the lines of the current regulator perhaps.

We could learn from Australia's twin stations - the ABC for the general population and SBS for special communities in particular serving diverse cultures and language groups. Also from the provision of many public service channels across different parts of the country, as is also the case in the UK.

There is no need for publicly funded content providers to provide content that is readily available elsewhere.

### **Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Funding should come directly from the Exchequer/Department of Finance. This would put an end to the hated licence fee which is not functioning well. It would need to be ringfenced, as the arguments against centralised funding are obvious. Direct funding of a body that is independent of government, a type of BAI, could then ensure that distribution be made according to legislation and robust regulations. The regulatory body or another, separate body if required, would ensure that politicians and ministers had no control of the distribution of funds. There would no longer be a 'stealth' tax and it would remove the difficulty of tracking down evaders and TV sets and of administering the collection of fees.

RTE (or the main public service content provider) should no longer operate as a hybrid service funded by licence fee and advertising. It should be solely funded by the new fund so that it could concentrate on the quality of its broadcasting to deliver its public service remit.

Other stations could apply on a competition basis for blocks of funding to cover sustainable, independent journalism and specific programming needs.

Some version of the Sound and Vision scheme could also be funded from these central funds to provide interesting and appropriate public service programming on all three sectors.

### **What is the best model for future funding of public service media in Ireland?**

I believe that funding should come from the central exchequer, money that is raised by general taxation. It should be a proportion of those taxes so that it rises as the economy improves and costs rise but should be protected from falling too low in times of economic hardship as the public good provided by public service content must be protected. It should be administered by an independent public body to keep public service content provision separate from state influence.

### **What approach best supports independent editorial oversight while achieving value for money and delivering on public service aims?**

A healthy and renewable bank balance that is independent of government, civil servants, politicians and big business will go a long way towards ensuring editorial independence. Value for money and the delivery of public service aims can be assured by regularly renegotiated contracts for the provision of these funds and by monitoring to ensure these are achieved. "He who pays the piper calls the tune" rings true and that is why it is so important for the public service provider to be properly and independently resourced.

### **What opportunities exist to develop and implement business model and organisational changes within the public service broadcasters (RTÉ and TG4)?**

This is a very detailed question and presumes that people know how each of them is set up. This is not the case.

The most important priority for me is to give TG4 more staff and more money to develop. TG4 may be better off returning to a new version of RTE or it may be better off staying separate - who knows what the models are, let alone what they might become? It seems to

me that RTE and TG4 could best answer this question. However, this Commission needs to ask how a new business and organisation model for public service content provision should be developed, as if nothing previously existed so that it can actually introduce appropriate and efficient models rather than tinkering with existing, unsatisfactory ones. This Commission has the opportunity to do some “green field” thinking and to imagine an Irish media landscape as though RTE didn’t already exist. It should do this first – ask the question of what the Irish people want and need and then see how RTE and TG4 might be re-imagined, resourced and re-structured to provide this.

**How might content commissioning, including by RTÉ, TG4 and the BAI Sound and Vision scheme, be adjusted/improved/reformed to better achieve public service aims?**

Independent radio and television stations (Commercial and Community) should be able to apply to draw down some funding without having a specific programme or producer in mind. They could then develop and operate their own commissioning with more freedom. This should run in tandem with S&V, it shouldn’t replace the excellent work done by the many rounds of that scheme, but it could provide for more locally generated programming.

RTE and TG4 both need a lot more funding if they are to commission more work and ensure that it is work that is in line with their public service remits.

A scheme to resource independent, quality news and current affairs programming needs to be established.

The remit of Sound and Vision or a similar scheme could be expanded and the amount of funding allocated to such schemes needs to be hugely increased and changed (i.e. no longer be a percentage of television licence fee income. As stated above, the licence fee needs to go.)

**How should public funding or tax reliefs be apportioned to Public Service Content providers?**

In the two track approach outlined above, one institution – the main public service content provider, currently RTE - should get a generous proportion that allows it not just to sustain itself but to develop and improve. Community media, the not-for-profit sector that works for social benefit and is run by and for the audience themselves need core funding to continue this valuable work. This is particularly important as content is provided more and more by producers and corporations that are very far removed from local communities.

Commercial and community content providers should have access to different types of ongoing funding schemes on a competitive or merit basis e.g. funding for independent news and current affairs; funding for specific programming tied to public service aims, see 2001 Act and funding tied to broadcast programmes as currently under the Sound and Vision Scheme.

The future will not be in broadcast media only and any scheme or provision should work across all platforms from the oldest (print) to the newest (social and on-line media) and whatever comes after these in the future.

**What does the shift in advertising revenues towards big tech firms mean for the future of print, online and broadcast media?**

They have to adapt and change and they are doing so. Commercial broadcasters/content providers operate as any other business in a competitive market do – they compete commercially and they generate profits for their shareholders/owners. A single public service content provider such as RTE and not-for-profit community media need to be free of these pressures to concentrate on quality provision. Both of these sectors are owned by the public and should have access to the central funds outlined above. Both provide services to the public, one at national the other at local, community level, that commercial broadcasters have no interest, moral or financial, in providing. This means that the valuable work both public service and community media do needs to be sustained by central funding, independently administered and overseen by an independent regulator. Commercial operators will adjust their content provision to maximise audiences and therefore maximise advertising revenue. The cheapest production of content for the highest audience numbers is what shareholders require and this works against quality public service content provision. If we fund our public service content from direct taxation, we release those content providers who want to concentrate on quality, public service content from the exhausting and increasingly less productive search for advertising. A search that frequently drives quality down and results only in formats, mainstream and commercially driven content provision.

**What role is there for alternative funding models for Public Service Content providers – voluntary, cooperative, crowdsourcing, subscription?**

Forget them! This is passing the responsibility for a public service that is vital for our democracy into the world of wishful fantasy. Public Radio and Television in the USA is funded in this way and they make no impression on society as they are so strapped for cash. That's in a country with a tradition of people paying subscriptions for services. That tradition doesn't exist in Ireland, no more than paying for water, Irish people want their media for free and no less than water, the media play a vital role in sustaining healthy and vital life and should be paid for by public funds. Essential provision for services for the public good such as education and health have often been left to charitable organisations (religious and otherwise) in this country and the problems and complications that result are well known. The funding models suggested above are not only unreliable and unlikely to provide much money but they leave the door open to all of these same problems. The provision of a public good should be paid for from public funds.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

**What regulatory changes at EU or global level might impact on the governance of public service media in the period ahead?**

There is a need for international or at least EU regulation of content. How this will develop is only being discussed and imagined now and digital media change so quickly that it is hard to see its form in any detail.

However, all other EU regulators of industry etc. work from general, agreed principles and the regulation of the media/content provision will be no different. We will be able to adapt and implement EU regulations, indeed we are already to the fore in imagining the shape of digital regulation for Europe, so the only thing to fear is whether or not such regulation will work.

What we can do is manage our own portion and we need to extend the workforce of the current regulator, the BAI, to do this for the traditional broadcasters on radio and TV. A new regulatory authority that would cover content across all platforms from print to digital would be a sensible move even if it is not yet clear how some content that is disseminated on social media for example could be regulated. This should be governed by legislation and it should consist of a large executive and a rotating board for oversight and strategic planning.

Many content providers will operate outside of Ireland's jurisdiction and regulation. This is already happening with social media, video on demand etc and the AVMSD and other EU initiatives are trying to play catch up. The Irish government is trying to do likewise and this is advisable but legislation, licensing, even regulation are all becoming less and less relevant as technology and its use by big businesses gain more traction.

All the Irish government can do through legislation and timely, well informed interventions is protect Irish interests by ensuring that Irish audiences get access to Irish material on line and otherwise and by ensuring that Irish audiences can easily identify and find Irish material on line and elsewhere.

**What challenges are posed to a vibrant, independent public service media by increasing consolidation / declining plurality of ownership in the Irish market?**

A lack of diversity and plurality

A mainstreaming of perspective

The promotion of a capitalist and largely patriarchal ideologies

Less job opportunities as newsrooms and presenters are centralised

The loss of the local, even in local radio.

Community radio and television stations go a long way to mitigate against the damage such consolidation wreaks. Better funding for the third sector of Irish media – the community sector which is not-for-profit and voluntary – would help combat some of the disastrous consequences of consolidation and the formation of chains.

**Are current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media adequate?**

As outlined above, regulation and even legislation will prove less and less effective as content provision no longer requires licensing. However, we need to keep trying to combat threats to democracy, to Irish identity and self-confidence and to protect all of our citizens. The current form of regulation as exercised by the BAI is excellent. It is trusted by broadcasters and it has developed a good working relationship with them without compromising its regulatory responsibilities in any way.

The suggestion of having three commissioners or separate commissions for different types of providers is not advisable in my opinion. Clarity is needed in a crowded multi media space and a single, strong, well resourced regulator that looks after content rather than platforms will be able to operate more flexibly and swiftly than a number of commissions or regulators that would operate in more narrowly defined fields.

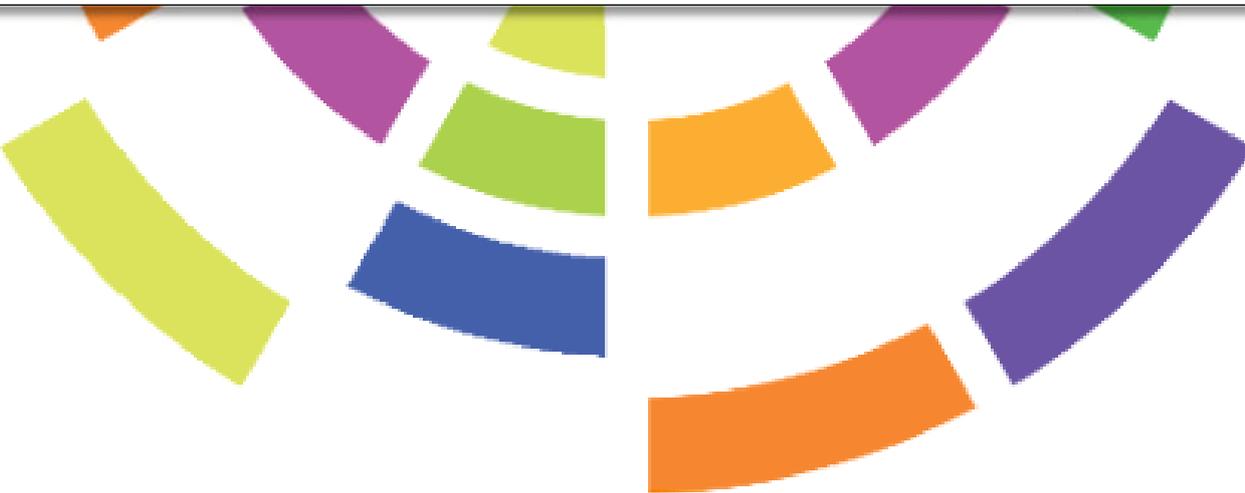
The idea of having full time paid commissioners is worth considering but an independent, rotating board for oversight and vision is required.

The current system of paying for the regulator through levies imposed on those regulated cannot be sustained.



Record #122

Larry Dunne



To: Future of Media Commission,  
Birmingham Tower West,  
Dublin Castle,  
Dublin 2,  
D02R866

## **Re: The Future of Media in Ireland. Invitation for submissions**

I refer to your invitation for submissions on the future of media in Ireland and I wish to make the following points.

From the very wording in the notice asking for submissions, I was taken by the assumptive – if not biased – assertions made.

- "The media are important in our democracy and society.
- They inform public debate through independent journalism.
- They reflect and promote the lives, language, art, sport, music, culture, traditions, and identities of Irish people at home and around the world."

And then I look at the membership of your Commission. Composed of media academics and practitioners. Not a single viewer, reader or "consumer" of online, broadcast and print media.

I am now going to make an assumption; this entire exercise is a smokescreen for what Pat Rabbitte promised us those many half-moons ago.

### **THE BROADCASTING CHARGE.**

Where each household will be levied to fund the public service and commercial media; both in RTÉ, the State Broadcaster, and whatever is left in the commercial broadcasting network. And the charge will doubtless fund INM The Irish Times Trust and whatever is left in the commercial print and online network.

This charge will fund an array of highly-paid journalists who self-appoint themselves to protect us from those whom we vote into political power.

Now! There's *my* starting point.

### **HOLDING POWER TO ACCOUNT**

"Holding power to account" is the oft-quoted mission of journalism.

I have never quite understood what this meant. I have never understood where this mandate came from. Is it based on statute law? Is it based on common law? By power, I presume is meant political power. Cabinet members and An Taoiseach agus an Tánaiste. But we elect members of Dáil Éireann by universal secret ballot. So whence the need to hold these parties to account on our behalf? Surely the role of journalism is to present reportage of facts to the reader and viewer? Accurate accounts of events that are witnessed by the journalist. No second or third hand rumour or assumption. No hiding behind sources. No claims of privilege which allow anything to be said about anyone without actual supporting evidence or proof.

### **THE PUBLIC INTEREST**

Journalism loves truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Well, no, not quite. Thankfully we have defamation legislation which goes some way to protect citizens from losing their good name to gutter journalism.

But there is the whole truth. And this unfortunately provides the media to select their targets for public opprobrium.

On the day that the late Dolores O'Riordan appeared in a District Court on a charge of disorder, there would have been a full court list for that particular day. This list, in fairness, would have been available on courts.ie for all to see. But of course, because Ms O'Riordan was a celebrity, it was considered to be in the public interest to highlight her court appearance and what ensued.

The other parties on that court list may well have been mentioned in The Clare Champion; but not on RTÉ, VM1, INM or The Irish Times.

This selectivity has been with us for centuries. But why?

## **MEDIA AND POLITICS**

Media pretend to hold politics to account. Pursuing them with perfect 20:20 hindsight vision.

The Prophets and Messiahs of Hindsight. Sham shouting matches in studios.

Of course, there is a reason for this. Media has now effectively evolved into a Power itself. And one that flits easily from the studio and page to Leinster House without ever having to trouble itself with the messy business of electoral politics; where one puts ones name and smiley face on a ballot paper and asks for a vote.

The Special Adviser is a role eminently suited to journalism. Seán Duignan did it decades ago; from RTÉ to government press secretary. Margaret Ward – also of the same parish – is another.

Susan Mitchell held the Department of Health and the HSE to account – on our behalf no doubt – for over a decade. Whoosh! And Susan is now a SPAD to Health Minister, Stephen Donnelly – in Fianna Fáil for the present –

Other recent emigrants from media to Leinster House include Chris Donoghue, Juno McEnroe, Paul Melia, Niall O'Connor and Collette Sexton. All SPADs are political appointees. Appointed by the very powers they tell us that they hold to account on our behalf.

## **FUNDING OF MEDIA**

The television licence funds the state broadcaster. Yet RTÉ manages to lose vast sums of public monies annually. The latest loss is in the order of €20 million.

RTÉ has been very vocal in calling for a “new funding model”. This means a broadcasting charge levied on each dwelling. The rationale being that the citizen who is being protected by RTÉ and other media not alone should be grateful; but should pay for this protection.

The commercial media interests have also called for a substantial slice of this newly-baked cake. The need for independent journalism has never been greater apparently. I cannot see how independence can be reconciled with public funding.

### **POLITICAL CORRESPONDENTS AND COMMENTATORS**

The pollcorrs inhabit the corridors of power picking up snippets and leaks; of which there are plenty. Politics is covered in a very one-dimensional manner. The reportage is all about the what happens in Oireachtas Éireann and at the Cabinet table. It is reductive coverage. How does Micheál get on with Leo? Are there tensions within Cabinet? Will the Government be damaged by this disclosure or exposé? Should An Cheann Chomhairle have involved himself with this matter?

Political Scientists are regularly used by media. They too treat politics in a most shallow manner. There is very little evidence of science in what they do. Apart perhaps from predicting election results in a constituency from early tallies.

But rarely, if ever, is the whole truth of how we are governed explored. The executive power of the civil service via the Ministers and Secretaries Acts. The Carltona Doctrine whereby Ministers are responsible for stuff that they may in their brief that they may not even be aware of. The powers of the Departmental Secretary Generals; particularly in the departments of An Taoiseach and Finance.

The utter dependence of Ministers on their civil servants is never discussed. The media and the commentariat go on about Policy coming from Cabinet and being implemented by the civil servants. The reality is that the civil servants do both.

The current BREXIT scenario is a case in point. At the time of writing, 13.12.2020, the media are dramatising the trade talks as going nowhere, failed, catastrophic. Yet, anyone with an iota of knowledge about how these things work knows that the officials – including the Irish ones – are hammering a deal together. The media of course are fully aware of this; but such mundane detail does not suit the narrative of brinkmanship by “dastardly” politicians like Boris.

Every response to a written or oral question in Dáil Éireann is drafted by a civil servant. Pollcorrs love when there is political upheaval; especially if they have caused it by some minor exposé. When we had a succession of Agricultural Ministers earlier this year, much was made of how the new man would cope. What would he bring to the table? And there he was, within 24 hours of his appointment, answering complex questions of policy. Again, utterly one-dimensional coverage.

## **MEDIA ACCOUNTABILITY**

### *QUIS CUSTODIET IPSOS CUSTODES?*

It is always interesting how the media applies its own standards to itself when it gets things wrong.

RTÉ has some form on this. The most shocking example of this was the *Mission To Prey* scandal. There is no need to rehash the sordid details here. But the way the affair was handled subsequently is informative.

The head of corporate affairs insisted that no heads should roll. Rolling heads learn nothing. An apology was aired on radio. I heard it. It consisted of a speeded-up jumble of words spoken in monotone. I could not believe it. Senior management refused to enter their own studios and answer questions on the affair. One person was sacked. No one else was even remotely held to account. Other media adopted a very benign attitude. There were no tabloid screamers looking for blood. A hasty settlement was made with the injured party and life went on as before.

But it was interesting to note that, like all other institutions under fire, RTÉ circled the wagons and erected the wall of silence; just as the Church and banks did. It was the usual dispiriting scenario; when institutions are caught out or make egregious mistakes, they compound them by cover-up.

In the latest saga where some staff broke COVID19 regulations at a retirement function, RTÉ management went to ground; yet again. The Director General blankly refused to enter her own studios and account for herself and her staff. When politicians and other public officials refuse to face the media, there is usually uproar amongst their ranks. A senior broadcaster with SKY has been removed from the air for 6 months following a similar breach of COVID19 regulations.

## **FUNDING OF MEDIA**

Pat Rabbitte was a supporter of the broadcast charge as a funding model for public service media. Despite the dual funding model that RTÉ currently enjoys, it still loses a lot of money. I accept and acknowledge that RTÉ does a very good job on radio in coverage of art, literature and music. Raidió Na Gaeltacha is an excellent service and well worthy of public funding. As is TnaG and other

interesting documentaries on RTÉ1 and 2. Sport is very well catered for given the competitive marketplace.

I am totally against any household-based broadcasting charge, however.

Funding should come from central exchequer sources. Expenditure should be tightly controlled and the pay of management and broadcasters capped to the current civil service pay scales.

No broadcaster should be paid more than An Taoiseach or the most senior Secretary General in the civil service.

Furthermore, no exchequer monies should be used to fund commercial media. If commercial media choose to reward certain broadcasters with large salaries, that is fine by me. Once the money is not coming from my shallow pocket.

### **PROTECTION OF SOURCES AND JOURNALISTIC PRIVILEGE**

There should be no place in journalism for protected sources or privilege. No other part of our democracy can allege without proof. No other part of our democracy can claim privilege to publish damaging material about any citizen that has not been proven in a court of law or admitted to. Oireachtas privilege is indeed in itself questionable. But it is a constitutional provision and used by those elected through franchise.

Legislation should be introduced to outlaw protection of sources and journalistic privilege. As should any destruction of documents in journalistic possession which would impede the administration of justice. Particularly, any information withheld which would seriously undermine an investigation into homicide or other grave criminal offences, should be firmly sanctioned under law.

The imparting of any confidential information or documentation to a journalist – whether for or without reward – by any person needs to be classed as an indictable offence with proportionate sanctions.

## **CONSTRUCTIVE RACISM AND EXCLUSION IN IRISH MEDIA**

Despite the very welcome number of people from other jurisdictions who have made their home here, they are very poorly represented in the media. No journalistic face of "colour" is to be seen in any of our national print media outlets. No face of "colour" is to be seen or heard on broadcast media, in RTÉ or the commercial sector.

This is strange; given the very sensitive nature of racism and exclusion and how any transgressions are treated – correctly – by media.

This is the text of a letter I sent to the letters editor of The Irish Times on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2020:

*"Dear Editor*

*Your contributors Fintan O'Toole and Daniel Geary make great play of what they see as the right-wing white Catholic Irish-American Nationalist electoral platform of US President Donald Trump.*

*Fintan O'Toole states that a whopping 64 per cent of "white Catholics" voted for Donald Trump in the last Presidential Election.*

*Daniel Geary claims similarly that "White Nationalism is Trump's consistent theme."*

*And doubtless, there is truth in what they claim. But both pieces are based on a clear distaste by both men for White Nationalism and Supremacism.*

*The Irish Times and Irish media in general decry racism in Irish society and the consequences this racism has for people of "colour" who live here.*

*Being curious, I decided to analyse the breakdown of your contributors by gender and race over all the sections of this hard copy edition of October 3<sup>rd</sup>.*

*The results were as follows:*

*Total number of Contributors: 91.*

*Male Contributors: 54*

*Female Contributors: 37.*

*"White" Contributors: 91*

*"Black"/"Non-White" Contributors: Zero.*

*This effective exclusion of people of "colour" from Irish media is regrettably not confined to The Irish Times. It is the same in the other print and broadcast outlets.*

*Holding other jurisdictions to account on these matters is fine. But perhaps it is now time for The Irish Times and others to have a hard look at a level of exclusion that is in itself effectively racist.*

*I am very conscious that this letter may well not be published; it does raise a difficult topic. Hopefully, exclusion will not be its fate.*

*Kind regards*

*Larry Dunne 19 Ros Mór Rosslare Harbour Co Wexford Y35RF72. 0862718461"*

This missive was not published.

As I do not agree with gender quotas in politics, I would also be against them in media. But the TOTAL absence of any journalist of colour is [REDACTED].

At the very least, a code should be drawn up which will ensure widespread access to media jobs.

## **CONCLUSION**

I feel that media should largely fend for itself; like most other commercial activities.

Social media has utterly changed how news is managed. We all have a public voice now. No more writing to dear sir or madam in the hope that your views might make it to the letters page. And I have written plenty over the years.

Mainstream media is clearly uncomfortable with these social platforms; their clothes have been stolen. And of course, calls for regulation of twitter and facebook come regularly from mainstream media. But this particular geni will not be going back into the bottle.

Let the future role of the Irish media be straightforward:

Report facts and figures.

Verify and cite all sources.

And leave judgement and commentary to the reader and the viewer.

Kind regards

Larry Dunne 19 Ros Mór Rosslare Harbour Co Wexford.

Y35 RF72. 0862718461 [larrydunne180@yahoo.ie](mailto:larrydunne180@yahoo.ie)

No redaction of my details, please.

A decorative background consisting of several concentric, semi-circular arcs made of various colored segments (blue, purple, green, orange, pink, light blue). The segments are arranged in a way that they appear to be part of a larger circular pattern, with some segments overlapping others.

Record #123

# FUTURE OF MEDIA COMMISSION

## SUBMISSION

I am a 65 year old Australian-born Irish citizen who has lived in Ireland since 1985.

My submission is only brief and is made in a personal capacity as an ordinary citizen.

My comments relate primarily to the public national broadcaster RTE. Unlike its British and Australian equivalents – the BBC and the ABC – RTE (both radio and TV) broadcasts commercials. I believe this has a negative dumbing down effect on the tone and content of programme presentation.

**Television:** I submit that there should be at least one TV channel dedicated solely to serious high quality programmes.

**Radio:** I submit that there should be a station equivalent to BBC Radio 4 dedicated solely to serious high quality programmes. Such a station could be funded by selling off Radio Two. I don't believe the public should be subsidising such a station.

Both RTE Radio One and TV One attempt to serve too many purposes which results only in a lowest common denominator effect.

Public service broadcasting should not surrender to consumerism, commercialism, trivialisation, introspection and the self-indulgences typical of a 'First World' nation. Rather it should be distinctively Irish (as opposed to Anglo-American) yet at the same time outward-looking and internationalist, reflecting the real concerns of the planet and its people, not at least with respect to the climate crisis.

My proposals would necessitate a new funding model for public service broadcasting. I submit however that a certain amount could be achieved by re-prioritising resources within the present structure.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Record #124

Máirín Ní Ghadhra



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday 6 January 2021 11:42  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Aighneacht

A chara,

Ba mhaith liom an deis a thapú mar chuid den chomhairliúchán poiblí atá ar siúl agaibh aird a tharraingt ar chás na craoltóireachta Gaeilge taobh istigh do RTE agus go háirithe an tseirbhís a chuireann muid ar fáil i Raidió na Gaeltachta.

Tugaim faoi deara go bhfuil an chraoltóireacht Ghaeilge luaite sna téarmaí tagartha atá agaibh ach is díol iontais dúinn nach bhfuil aon trácht ar Raidió na Gaeltachta, seirbhís atá dá cur ar fáil ó 1972 i leith. Tugann muid faoi deara, freisin, nach bhfuil ach tagairt bheag de chraoltóireacht na Gaeilge in aon aighneacht a chuireann RTE faoi bhráid comhairliúcháin poiblí. Cé go bhfuil muid ag feidhmiú faoi scáth RTE ón gcéad lá, creidim gur beag tuisceana go minic sa mháthair chomhlacht ar aidhm na seirbhíse.

Bunaíodh Raidió na Gaeltachta ar éileamh ón bpobal i 1972. Tá fás agus forbairt déanta ar an tseirbhís ó shin agus éileamh ní hamháin ó phobal na Gaeltachta ach pobal na Gaeilge ar fud na tíre, i dTuaisceart Éireann agus ar fud na cruinne. Ní shaothraíonn Raidió na Gaeltachta aon airgead ó fhógraíocht agus tagann ár gcuid maoinithe ó RTE.

Ó tharla muid a bheith lonnaithe san Iarthar agus ag feidhmiú trí mheán na Gaeilge, is minic a bhraitheann muid scoite amach agus dá réir sin, gur beag tuisceana atá ar an tseirbhís a chuireann muid ar fáil. Mar thoradh ar sin, braithim gur beag áirde a fhaigheann aon achainní uainn go dteastaíonn maoiniú, acmhainní agus foireann bhreise. Ba mhaith liom, dá bhrí sin, an deis seo a thapú leis an achainní sin a chur in bhur láthair.

Mar sheirbhís mhionteanga agus seirbhís gan aon fhógraíocht, tá Raidió na Gaeltachta lárnach do dhualgaisí seirbhíse poiblí an chraoltóra náisiúnta. Go deimhin, tá muid lárnach do chúramaí bunreachtúla an Stáit cúram a dhéanamh don chéad theanga oifigiúil. Gealltar sa Straitéis Fiche Bliain don Ghaeilge go leanfaidh RTE ag tacú le agus ag forbairt Raidió na Gaeltachta. Tá an gheallúint chéanna sa gclár rialtais ach gan aon chur síos cinnte faoi céard a chiallaíonn an tacaíocht sin.

Ba mhaith linn a chinntiú go gcuirtear na geallúintí sin i bhfeidhm tré chás a dhéanamh go mbeadh bonn seasta maoinithe faoi Raidió na Gaeltachta. Is maith a thuigeann muid dúshlán airgeadais RTE agus ní mian linn beag is fiú a dhéanamh dóibh ach creideann muid go bhfuil luach nach féidir a áireamh i dtéarmaí airgeadais ag baint leis an tseirbhís agus go bhfuil dualgas orainn ar fad í a chosaint.

Tá muid sásta aon eolas breise a bheadh uaibh a lorg agus a phlé libh. De réir ár dtuiscint nil sé i gceist aon aighneacht ar leith a sheoladh uaidh bhainistíocht Raidió na Gaeltachta. Tá said sásta muinín a chur i gcomhfhreagras ó RTE le cás na seirbhíse a dhéanamh.

Creidimse gur cheart go mbeadh cás ar leith dá déanamh do earnáil na Gaeilge taobh istigh do RTE mar a déantar go rialta do TG4.

Le meas,

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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Dear sir,

I would like to use this opportunity as part of the public advisory that you are engaged in to draw attention to the role of Irish language broadcasting within RTÉ and especially the service we provide in Raidió na Gaeltachta.

I notice that Irish language broadcasting is mentioned in the terms of reference that you have but it is a source of wonder to us that there is no reference to Raidió na Gaeltachta, a service that has been provided since 1972 in particular. We notice also, that there is only a small reference to the broadcasting of the Irish Language in one submission that RTÉ submits to the public advisory. Despite the fact that we are operating under the umbrella of RTÉ from the first day, I believe that often there is little understanding of the service within the mother company.

Raidió na Gaeltachta was established on demand from the public since 1972. It has witnessed growth and development in the service since then not only from the Gaeltacht community but from the Irish speaking community throughout the country, in the North of Ireland and all over the world. Raidió na Gaeltachta does not earn money through advertising and all our funding comes from RTÉ.

Since we have been situated in the West and operating through the medium of Irish, we often feel disconnected and because of that, that there is little understanding about the service we provide. As a result, we feel that our appeals indicating we need funding, resources and more staff get little attention. Because of this, I would like to use this opportunity to put this request to you.

As a minority language service and a service without advertising, Raidió na Gaeltachta is central to the public service duties of the national broadcaster. Indeed, we are central to the constitutional duties of the State to take care of the first official language. The 20 Year Strategy on the Irish Language states that RTÉ will continue supporting and developing Raidió na Gaeltachta. The same commitment is in the Programme for Government but without any definite description of what that support entails.

We would like to ensure that those commitments are put into operation by making a case which would have a permanent funding foundation under Raidió na Gaeltachta. We understand

well the financial responsibilities that RTÉ have and we would not like to belittle them but we believe that in financial terms the service is invaluable and that there is a responsibility on us all to protect it.

We are happy to seek out any further information that you would require and to discuss it with you. According to our understanding we are not sending a particular submission from the management of Raidió na Gaeltachta. They are satisfied to trust the correspondence received from RTÉ in order to put forward the case of the service.

I believe that it is right to make a particular case to the Irish language sector within RTÉ as done regularly with TG4.

Máirín Ní Ghadhra

RTE Raidió na Gaeltachta



7

[REDACTED]

Record #125

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Wednesday 6 January 2021 17:49

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** Public consultation on media????

The state should have no role in supporting or financing any form of media  
Technology is changing the way media is produced and consumed  
State financing or over regulation stunts development of media  
Open competition in a free market coupled with freedom of expression will serve the needs and expectations of the public.  
Public service broadcasting in Ireland has failed – evidence RTE.  
Yes the internet has had some serious impacts on the established media operators but  
it also has major implications for the local small stores in my town  
it has impacts on the postal service  
it has impacts on the banking service  
on the insurance industry  
even on manufacturing and logistics.

The free market in goods and services in the form of free exchange between willing service providers and willing purchasers of these goods and services has served very well in the past.

Government interference only serves to distort markets rob the taxpayer and create crony beneficiaries and fossilise redundant industries.

Manipulating the market by using Taxpayers money in a vain attempt to provide what is called 'public service' broadcasting is only a political power game.

Example One - RTE (with a dozen offshoots ) is supposed to be a public service broadcaster. But it consistently offers no rebuttal to mainstream political world view simply because it is beholden to legislators who continue to provide the coercive power of law to extract billions of € over the decades to fill their coffers. So why would they bite the hand that feeds them.

Example Two – Local radio was initially set up to provide local news supplied by local radio in local ownership governed by a renewable license (not guaranteed). Over the years we have seen local radio acquired by non local businesses such as Scottish Radio Holding and Denis O'Brien's etc and many were rolled over for profit this was facilitated by licence and ownership rule changes in the early 2000's.

Result Local Radio is not Local anymore and the revenues generated are siphoned off out of the local area.

Government organised citizen assemblies and citizen consultations are elaborate fake processes designed to lead the public by the nose to a prearranged conclusion - just another political Potemkin village.

This consultation is simply a TAXPAYER bailout of an industry afraid of change and unable to manage change. The result of the TAXPAYER BAILOUT means that the bailed out media will now be in the pay of the legislators. Pravda Nua



7

[REDACTED]  
Record #126  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Obviously over the last decade with the advent of social media and technology, the format and delivery has changed. This will continue to change for the foreseeable future. However information itself remains the same. I'm concerned that our public broadcaster RTE is too Dublin centric and also has an overly liberal agenda. Given that we may have a referendum on a united Ireland in the future, in which the views of those of a different culture and history must be listened to. I'm concerned that RTE is not up to that task as it seems to lean on what is politically correct rather than what needs to be said. As regards the government's role in this, there should be a balanced approach of government involvement and private involvement. For independent journalism to thrive, rural communities need to be listened to more and minority groups in Ireland need to be listened to as there appears to me to be a wariness and disinterest in how our government works in our Republic. As regards the promotion of the Irish language, sport and culture, I think this has to go back to how it's taught in our schools. The Irish I was taught does not seem to relate to the Irish I hear on Nuacht and from public commentators. Perhaps a Riverdance treatment needs to happen with the Irish language. I feel sport is well represented. Interesting that religious faith is not in this particular question, when it has been very much part of our culture in the past and will be in the future. During the penal times churches were closed and many Catholics stopped practicing but it was faith not religious rules that brought about renewal. Faith is the opposite of fear which appears to be in abundance at present.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Editorial oversight on opinion pieces at a basic level should be about decency. Is this respectful in its content? A common sense approach. There appears sometimes to be a view that we must be sophisticated and be like the rest of the world. We are better off just being ourselves. Big tech advertising revenues mean they get to control what we see and hear with very little oversight. This is also tied into the addiction we now all have to technology which needs to be addressed. I don't believe that anyone under 13 should have a smart phone.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Our media in Ireland should only be governed by the Irish government not by EU. Increased consolidation leads to monopolies and less regional input in media.

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[REDACTED]  
Record #127  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service content needs to be more representative of our growing diverse population. We see little diversity on our media platforms in terms of voice, experience, race and colour. A free programme offering Irish language classes could go a long way to increasing the capacity of people who speak the Irish language. Community Radio stations could teach the commercial sector a thing or two as they do it for the passion of the language and desire to have it as part of their every day life. The Government need to look at the HEART that is in communities and look away from the cold needs of corporates. Local communities are not faceless and are THE life savers in times of difficulty. What can be learned is how 'particular' agenda's have driven a one sided narrative that is not based on equality.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Community radio have to adhere to the stringent processes as the commercial stations do with less resources to do it. This one size fits all approach needs addressing.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

There needs to be more independent and impartial bodies involved that hold those bodies accountable and to ensure they adhere to doing what is right, fair and just for all.

1

[REDACTED]

Record #128

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public Service Media should be governed by representatives of all the main sectors of society, especially as we all

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I do not agree with RTE's big cut from the licensing fee. I feel disenfranchised and totally unrepresented by RTE and am forced, by law, to pay a licence fee to support a station/institution which I find frustrating. This station seldom represents truth on so called 'conservative issues'. It is a biased station controlled by liberal elites. This station will never represent conservative people unless these elite liberals are balanced by conservatives at managerial levels. At the very least any fee should be shared out between all stations and stop the power of the RTE elites.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The current regulatory controls are vastly inadequate. For instance, the recent shocking blasphemous skit on the NYE countdown program. Despite the thousands of complaints, I doubt any head at RTE will roll. The insincere apology says enough. They apologised for causing offence, yet the offensive clip is still available to view on the player. Nobody is worried because no one will be punished or held accountable. How can a huge section of our population, that is forced to pay RTE salaries, be so offended and yet none of these elites are held accountable. the BAI is toothless and certainly RTE is not afraid to incur whatever rap on the knuckles they will get because they will continue to receive their fat salaries that those offended are forced to pay them.

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #129  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

We should learn globally from the Levenson enquiry and take the tabloid element out of Irish daily life. It's not a media's job to clinicise and sensationalise the average Joe or his disturbed suffering in any way. Pro life choices should be immediately to the fore, (in 2021 and 2022). Netflix is too much the old formula of a shoot em up and grandpas lunch. there's too much of a monopoly of this type of media in Ireland and quite frankly it's noisy, sometimes disheartening and not what I need. It needs to be time of life appropriate. We need an flowering and relaxed approach. Maybe if we didn't have so much choice of channels but what is effectively less choice of genres or that the various genres are less penetrable. I encourage homegrown dramas and sage tales, don't import the US stuff which only really suits their way of life. Lastly let the Pro Life message in whatever forms it takes be to the forefront, when I was young we knew we didn't harm others because they were life , they were alive and that it's too impacting the loss of one life. So please can we endear moral tones to get back to that viewpoint.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

This is the pertinent question. There should be a Saorview only package with the media moguls Virgin media and Sky etc for say 12 euros and in this manner the Irish networks can get something for their efforts. So an option of Soarview purely channels and wifi? I think the advertisement should fade out and go into the background. Ads are irritating, I always avoid temptation to buy it and this means it rakes past, considering there is people like me or like this maybe a subscription for an ad free version of the TV. No matter how many times I see the car ad I'll never be able to buy a first hand car, so why make them tempting , it has the opposite effect of appealing to me- it's not the advertising industries job to pars out of me. Irish language and promote our Irish nationhood and our Irish heroes and heroines. Instead of ratings related tax reliefs perhaps if we had more educational variety and sustained learning program tax reliefs a bit like open university was in the 1980s GB. More research on the long term effects of TV watching and over watching and perhaps have a moderation scheme with VHI for the people to not watch too much tele a bit like their keep active scheme, remember quality not quantity, and a grant from VHI to RTE to reward cooperation in this scheme.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Hate crime legislation at EU level may result in laws here , but I don't think that's required here in Ireland. We may not be able to portray actors of colour in the way we do now, it might get really Politically correct. I strongly believe the TV content should not be blasphemous. Although it is legal to blaspheme I think there should be robust controls and restrictions in our TV providing services which prevent any blasphemy and indeed serious blasphemy from being transmitted on air. In the way that the British media don't allow swear words the Irish media shouldn't allow blasphemy. I also believe in debates of importance there shouldn't be cat fighting or populism. I think the whole of the debate should come into it for debates of importance and the peripheral debates should give the slack for that. Bring back the pro-Life debate also. For a sustained period= to reverse the draconian laws on abortion in the state.

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #130  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday 6 January 2021 21:17  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:**

Dear Sir,

It is good that you are looking for submissions on the future of the media here. It certainly needs to change to become factual and balanced. During the abortion campaign it was obvious that little regard was made to ensure that this occurred. Surely it is not too much to expect that both sides on any issue will be given equal time and that efforts will be made to check the arguments put forward by either side. This most certainly did not happen on the issue of abortion when much incorrect was allowed to go unchallenged.

People need to be properly informed on all aspects of any important issue and not allow one side to go unchallenged, as has happened so much in the past and, indeed is happening still. Information should be forthcoming on vested interests involved through thorough research so that no doubt remains regarding undue influence through misinformation.

Hopefully the commission's working will be transparent and that all voices will be listened to.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]



Record #131

Brian Greene/John Walsh



# Submission to the Future of Media Commission

**Brian Greene, Radio.ie**

**Dr John Walsh, NUI Galway**

## **A new community media model from the ground up**

In this submission, we argue that Irish media is stifled by a lack of innovation and that existing barriers to change threaten its future. Based on our practical experience of alternative, community, commercial, local and national media over the past 35 years, we are convinced that resilience in the sector is achieved through complexity and growth and that growth is brought about by innovation. We propose a new expanded grassroots model of community and alternative media based on more fluid access to spectrum by groups smaller and bigger and more diverse than those represented by existing community media. This is based on the principle of fostering meaningful diversity and participation across underserved groups and draws on a non-commercial philosophy of public media but does not focus on RTÉ as the main public broadcaster. This is not because we do not believe that RTÉ needs reform, but because we wish to prioritise a new community media model from the ground up.

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland and its predecessor organisations have been formally committed to fostering diversity in Irish media for 30 years. For instance, the *Broadcasting Services Strategy* of 2018 makes several references to the topic, stating that one of its objectives is to ‘foster and promote quality programming in the Irish language and to encourage the development of Irish language initiatives across the broadcasting sector’. The BAI adds that it ‘is open to exploring other service types, including niche and Irish language radio services’ and that its licensing plans will promote diversity and pluralism including in the Irish language (BAI, 2018). However, as currently constituted, the regulatory framework is incapable of fostering meaningful diversity due to excessive bureaucratic obstacles that stifle rather than foster access to media. The scarcity survival strategy of commercial radio – meaning that radio was the dominant source of music and information – is over. The scarcity model, dominant from 1989-2010, will no longer assist domestic commercial media in the way it did. It is time to retreat from it and open up media to truly diverse uses, offering access to all platforms to all stakeholders.

The post-1989 era was characterised by over-regulation of the sector and a lack of innovation, applying a ‘one size fits all’ approach to radio across Ireland. Commercial radio was prioritised for the first six years, undermining earlier successes by community broadcasters during the pirate era. The community sector was a late addition and has suffered from slow development, failing to grow beyond approximately 20 stations despite the elapse of 25 years. Ownership of commercial radio has become concentrated in conglomerates and there has been a lack of innovation in content, technology and philosophy.

### **Audience moving away from broadcast media**

Ireland has witnessed a dramatic shift in media consumption habits in the past decade. Evidenced by the JNLR book of 2019 and deepening a trend witnessed in recent years, youth are moving away from broadcast radio. In Dublin, with the greatest availability of fibre broadband, 4G & 5G, 15-24 year olds are abandoning broadcast radio at a rate of 10-12 percent each year or 3 percent per quarter (and accelerating up until COVID-19 lockdown 1). At the current rate of attrition, there will be no market for this age group in 4 years’ time (JNLR October 2019 compared to JNLR July 2018). But having a vibrant broadcast media is important to society where the information and entertainment received through it is linear, live and tailored to the entire audience (for example Covid-19 news, breaking news and referendum debates).

Reaching all the people with broadcast media still matters. The digital media to which audiences are turning are in silos where the curation is self-directed, and it is difficult to reach those audiences with public service media. This underscores the importance of broadcast media and its ecosystem, which nurtures future broadcasting personnel. If broadcast delivery is important, so is the supply of talented and interested people who have developed their skills in smaller broadcasting stations. Before 1989, the current cohort of broadcasters gained these skills on 1000+ pirate radio stations in every town in Ireland (Walsh & Greene, 2020).

### **Scenarios for change**

Urgent reform of the licencing policy of broadcast community media is required to make it appealing to young people and other groups marginalised or ignored by the current mass media model. All of the evidence calls for an expanded and more fluid model that prioritises niche and micro audiovisual services reaching underserved groups especially youth. Such groups could be larger or smaller than those already adequately represented in community

media. Such a scenario would require a partial deregulation making it easier for people to set up micro outlets on all available spectrum including AM, FM, DAB, DTT and online, based around the concept of community media hubs linked to existing broadcasters or initiatives. All broadcasters should be incentivised to utilise unused spectrum and the development of LPAM, LPFM and small-scale DAB for use by hyperlocal radio services. The broadcasting levy for community/institutional radio stations should be scrapped and the temporary licence process significantly simplified and extended from 100 to 365 days. The charge under Section 71 of the Broadcasting Act for a content provision licence in order to broadcast on DAB is another significant obstacle to access that needs to be removed. Sustainable core funding for community media is essential in order to secure its future and this and other funding models need urgently to be explored. Core funding could be achieved partially through the proposed levy on on-demand audiovisual services stipulated in the revised EU Audiovisual Media Services Directive, in order to fund the production of audiovisual content in Ireland. Training people in media skills and boosting media literacy would be a key part of any such new model.

If Irish media continues to rely on the post-1989 model, the sector will be starved of talent and ideas. The small number of community and institutional stations does not bode well for participation of young people in radio, depriving them of opportunities to become the broadcasters of the future. Opening up true access to all allows media to experiment and be innovative, train new voices to become the storytellers of the future and create a future digital planet of oral tradition. Innovative radio services in recent years include arts project X-PO Radio in Co. Clare, community network Together FM in west Dublin, specialist service Dublin Digital Radio, alternative music station 8Radio.com, islands station Oileáin FM in west Cork and pop-up mental health station Walk In My Shoes Radio. Successful community and niche initiatives are happening all over the country and are arguably stronger now than ever before in the post-Covid age. However, getting any of these stations or projects on air involves unnecessarily complex and cumbersome bureaucratic, technical and financial obstacles that act as major impediments to innovation and revitalisation of the radio sector.

Forced to close by Covid-19, churches have reverted in large numbers to broadcasting Mass on FM in the absence of accessible LPAM or LPFM options that could serve listeners over a small area. There is a small but strong scene of rap and grime music in Ireland but no media

outlets to serve this niche. It should be possible to broadcast on DTT or DAB to reach this demographic. Ground-breaking podcasts are being made all over the country but converting them into innovative, niche radio services available to wider audiences is complex and slow. Irish speakers are very poorly served on stations other than Raidió na Life and RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta but a new model could boost micro-local media production in Irish and allow new services to flourish (Walsh et al, 2018).

Community radio in the UK has witnessed impressive growth in recent years owing to the liberal licencing policies of OFCOM. Further growth is expected shortly with the roll-out of small-scale DAB. Radio is being kept alive in the UK by regulatory change because innovative beats stagnation but no such change is in sight in Ireland. Radio is often seen as a secondary medium, but remains ‘absolutely entwined in everyday living’, ‘has the ability to engage with people’s emotions’ and is ‘a deceptively powerful medium’ (Tacchi, 2000). However, Irish radio is being failed by the current model, which is characterised by commercial stations using outdated formats to chase shrinking audiences and a fragile community sector vulnerable to collapse. It is time to renew radio by opening up true access to all through a roll-out of niche, micro services across a range of platforms.

## **Conclusion**

We see the following action points as essential to a new grassroots public media model:

1. Foster and grow micro and niche services for underserved groups.
2. Deregulate spectrum to grow diversity of use.
3. Incentivise use of unused spectrum for hyper-local media.
4. Establish and fund a national network of community media hubs.
5. Develop core-funding model for such community media and hubs.
6. Abolish broadcasting levy for community and institutional stations.
7. Streamline licencing process to facilitate alternative media uses.
8. Scrap Section 71 fees for content licences.
9. Roll out media literacy training to deliver ready to use practical media skills.

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## Biographies

### Brian Greene

**Brian Greene** works as Technical and Production Coordinator with community radio station Phoenix FM in Dublin. He has 35 years of radio experience starting on pirate community radio in Dublin in 1985. He is an award-winning podcaster with a BA in Journalism from the University of Wolverhampton, UK and an MA in Social Media Communications from Dublin City University in Ireland. Brian has worked with radio archives, recording oral history and indexing historic recordings at the Irish pirate radio audio archive Pirate.ie.

**Dr John Walsh** is a Senior Lecturer in Irish at the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures where he teaches sociolinguistics and media studies. Dr Walsh's PhD on the Irish language and socio-economic development was awarded by Dublin City University (DCU). Before that, he completed an MA in International Relations also at DCU and he holds a BA in Irish and Welsh from University College Dublin. Dr Walsh previously worked as a lecturer in Irish at DCU, with the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages in Brussels and as a journalist with local and national commercial radio and national public broadcasters RTÉ and TG4. He first gained broadcast experience in pirate radio in Dublin from the 1980s and is now a volunteer with community station Flirt FM in Galway. Along with Brian Greene, he is a co-founder of Pirate.ie.

**7 January 2020**

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #132  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 10:13

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** Censorship in the media

*Hi,*

*I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut by any means possible. Freedom of expressing any point of view have to respected. If you don't agree with what other people say, it ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling. A free society is build strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP. The people are smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them. Freedom must be the Centre of a society. Otherwise, everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling. Free speech, freedom, liberty. Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble. And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not. So, start acting like civil reasonable persons and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view."*

Censorship will lead us to dark places. I urge to to legislate again censorship as a major priority.

Censorship is the hallmark of horrific countries with poor human rights records.

I trust you will do the right thing for our nation.

Le meas,

[REDACTED]

1

[REDACTED]

Record #133

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 11:48  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** funding of media in Ireland

A Chara

In light of RTE's New Year's Eve atrocious mockery of God and belittling of the vicious crime that is rape, I wish to propose that there should be no public funding whatsoever to keep the ever disintegrating raft afloat.

It's time to behave like grownups now.

If you wish to survive then produce a product that people want to avail of.

Media in all it's forms serves a purpose of informing readers ,listeners and viewers on endless themes and subject matter.

If the media outlet fulfills it's role successfully that will be reflected in the readership and audience numbers.

Of course the opposite is also the case.

Therefore if any organisation feels the pinch financially do what any business would do.

Scrutinize financial Outgoings in order to reduce running costs and make a business plan to increase profits.

As the national broadcaster you have failed miserably in the area of impartiality therefore fund yourselves and let Irish people vote with their feet rather than subjecting us to another tax !

Good luck to you I don't rejoice in any business failure rather I admire hard work ,dedication , honesty , talent and creativity.

Harness some of those attributes and be true public servants.

If I believe in a few years time that you no longer beat the anti Catholic drum and that you are truly inclusive I am willing to rethink my present stance which is no public monies should prop up any media outlet .

Is mise

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Record #134

Patrick Houlihan



## SUBMISSION TO FUTURE OF MEDIA COMMISSION

**(1) How should the Irish Government be overseeing, developing & supporting broadcasting, and in particular ensuring availability of quality public service broadcasting (PSB)?**



Citizens approved by way of referendum the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty and have a legal right & expectation that Government would ensure, in accordance with its obligations under Article 4 TEU, all broadcasters or platform services providers operating within or from its territory or offering services to its Citizens from other Member States (MSs.) would do so in compliance with those Treaty provisions and associated secondary EU laws (Directives & Regulations), the Treaty being the supreme law of EU/Ireland.



### LISBON TREATY

Two Treaties plus a Charter of Rights know together as the Lisbon Treaty form the Supreme Law or Constitution of the European Union (EU)



### Article 4 TEU

#### EU MEMBER STATES (MSs.) OBLIGATIONS

"Member States shall take any appropriate measure, general or particular, to ensure fulfilment of the obligations arising out of the Treaties or resulting from the acts of the institutions of the Union"

\*\*\*\*\*

".....facilitate the achievement of the Union's tasks and refrain from any measure which could jeopardize the attainment of the Union's objectives"

**Treaty on European Union (TEU):** sets out the broad principals & institutional framework

**Treaty on the functioning of EU (TFEU):** sets out the nuts & bolts of competence, lawmaking, rights & obligations

**Charter of Fundamental Rights:** sets out rights & principles of a judicial character

Article 114 TFEU empowers the European Parliament (EP) & European Council (EC) (previously Article 95 of TEC & empowering EC alone) to adopt laws "which have as their object the establishment and functioning of the internal market". EC/EP has used Article 114 to adopt a plethora of secondary EU laws in regard to broadcasting, including the Satellite & Cable Directive, Framework Directive, Universal Services Directive, and more recently the Portability Regulation, the intention of which is "to allow portability for all forms of temporary presence in other Member States, including situations in which the absence from the Member State of residence is longer than would typically be the case for routine business trips or travel".

Article 56 TFEU requires "abolition of all restrictions to provide services". ECJ has clarified that "freedom to provide services is for the benefit of both providers and recipients of services", the obligation is directly applicable & "not conditional on the harmonization or the coordination of the laws of the Member States", and "principles of legitimate expectation & assurance of legal certainty are part of the legal order of the Community".

Article 20 & 21 of TFEU guarantee the "right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States" and Article 101 TFEU specifies activities which are prohibited, such as "territorial exclusivity", which ECJ has confirmed as constituting "a restriction on competition prohibited by Article 101".

Protocol 29 attached to TEU provides that "the Treaties shall be without prejudice to the competence of Member States to provide for the funding of public service broadcasting", but makes clear that such funding must "not affect trading conditions and competition in

**the Union to an extent which would be contrary to the common interest**", and the principal common interest is of course a single market across the Union that delivers for both providers (intellectual property owners & broadcasters) and recipients (Citizens & Commercial entities such as hotels/pubs etc.) regardless of location.

Article 106 TFEU specifies where "Member States grant special or exclusive rights, Member States shall neither enact nor maintain in force any measure contrary to the rules contained in the Treaties", and "development of trade must not be affected to such an extent as would be contrary to the interests of the Union".

**(2) How might broadcasters, in particular proscribed public service broadcasters (PSBs), better respond to the needs and expectations of the public?**

Citizens' lifestyles are no longer in the dark old age where they never left their local village not to mind the country. Millions of Irish Citizens now live or spend extended periods abroad, many in another EU MS., and over half of the total EU population of over 450 million speak English. Cross-border broadcasting of television programmes contributes to advancing cultural, linguistic, social and economic interpenetration at intra-Community level, which are all important aims of the EU and its constituent MSs, including Ireland.

All Irish based Broadcasters should actively work and take full advantage of EU DIRECTIVE 93/83/EEC (Cable & Satellite Directive), which lays down the legal framework for provision of television services in the EU, with a view to **fostering the development of a single market (principles of the freedom to receive and retransmit programmes)** by determining the law applicable to broadcasting.

In particular those who are proscribed as PSBs have obligations under EU DIRECTIVE 2002/22/EC (Universal Services Directive), which requires **availability throughout EU of good quality publicly available services through effective competition and choice**, deals with circumstances in which the needs of end-users are not satisfactorily met by the market (Article 31 must make available/must carry), and establishes the rights of consumers (viewers) and the corresponding obligations on service providers (broadcasters/platform services such as SKY & satellite service provider SOS etc).

**(3) What opportunities exist to develop and implement organisational changes?**

During Pre-Legislative Scrutiny by the Joint Committee on Communications, Climate Action and Environment of the General Scheme of the Broadcasting (Amendment) Bill 2017, David Wheeldon, SKY Group Director for policy & public affairs, rightly advised that "Under European rules, if a broadcaster wants to broadcast on our platform, we have to provide it with the technical services that enable it to do that. Under EU law, we cannot throw a channel off our platform. We cannot prevent a channel from using Sky to access our customers".

**(4) Are current legislative and regulatory controls adequate?**

EU DIRECTIVE 2002/21/EC (Framework Directive), sets out the tasks of national policy and regulatory authorities & imposes procedures to ensure harmonised application throughout

the EU in compliance with Community law. Under the Directive, which was transposed into Irish law under Section 12 of the Communications Regulation Act 2002, the Commission for Communications Regulation (CCR) is obliged to contribute to the development of the internal market by inter alia removing remaining obstacles, promoting the interests of Citizens of the EU and ensuring all Citizens have access to channels proscribed as PSB channels in national legislation in accordance with Article 31 of the Directive. In transposing/activating the provisions of Directives or interpreting Regulations MSs. are legally obliged to do so in a manner consistent with the Lisbon Treaty (the Treaties/Charter of Rights), which is the supreme law or Constitution of the EU, and the outcome/impact must deliver a fair balance between the various fundamental rights protected by EU law/the Lisbon Treaty, and cannot render legitimate or negate the effectiveness of EU law relating to a fundamental freedom.

Accordingly it would seem appropriate, indeed required, that licences/contracts awarded to broadcasters, platform services providers such as SKY, & satellite service facilitators such as SOS who facilitate broadcast/reception of channels etc. should include a requirement, or at the very least should be interpreted as including a requirement, that day to day operational activities/functions contribute to advance these objectives/deliver on EU Broadcasting Policy and uphold all national/EU laws etc.?

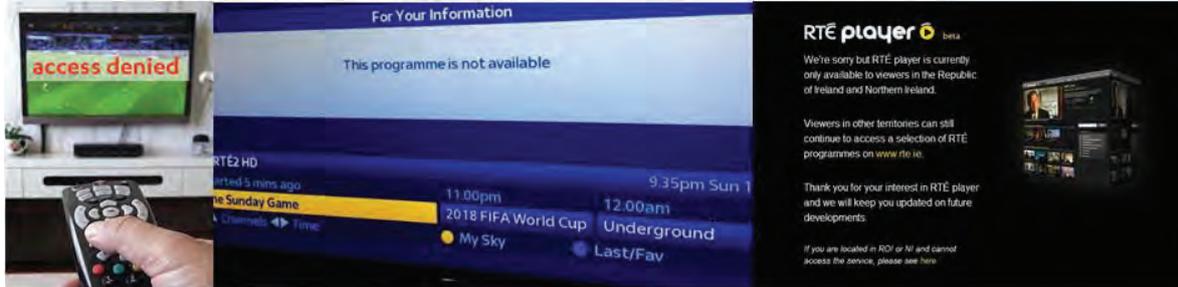
In February 2017, in a Submission to the Irish Joint Parliamentary Committee with responsibility for broadcasting services in Ireland, the platform service provider SKY referred to “the importance of territoriality”.....“creators/producers sell rights on a country by country basis” and warned that “if the principles of territoriality are undermined.....funding model could be severely damaged as distributors or broadcasters would no longer be buying exclusive rights for their country”.

No evidence was provided in the published submission to substantiate SKY’s claim that the funding model could be severely damaged and the submission implies that rights owners and broadcasters have in place “territorial exclusivity licence agreements”, which ECJ in 2011 concluded “constitute a restriction on competition prohibited by Article 101 TFEU”. And the submission made no mention of the benefits & opportunities arising for broadcasters/rights owners from the adoption of the “Country of Origin” principle. The following are the relevant extracts from the SKY Submission:

29. Sky would like to take this opportunity to raise two further issues that the Committee should consider in its deliberations – the importance of territoriality, and the increasing threat of digital piracy to the Irish broadcasting sector,
30. In the context of the Digital Single Market, it is worth noting that the principle of territoriality where creators/producers sell rights on a country by country basis is crucial to the funding models of the creative sectors in Europe. If the principles of territoriality are undermined (for instance by extending the country of origin principle to online transmissions), the reality would be that for digital content, the funding model could be severely damaged as distributors or broadcasters would no longer be buying exclusive rights for their country,
31. This could lead to a change in the way that content is licensed and is highly likely to result in reduced licence fees being payable to content owners, rights being licensed on a pan-EU basis or rights not being licensed in certain territories (with smaller countries such as Ireland likely to be hardest hit). This in turn would undermine the financing of content unless the Commission accepts that rights owners are entitled to require licensees to geoblock content and refuse requests for services originating outside of the licensed territory. As a report by Oxera and Oliver & Ohlbaum noted in May of last year, *‘in the event of the erosion of territorial exclusivity, all types of content – international, European and independent local productions – would be negatively affected, threatening cultural diversity’* [in the process].

**We regulate broadcasting and provide protection for intellectual property in the interests of society as a whole and not to be denied a service in the interests of maximising profits**

through "territorial exclusivity". What is the point in issuing licences/contracts if that is not the case? What is the point of those EU fundamental rights & obligations set out in the Treaty of Lisbon, which Citizens approved of in good faith, if they, including associated rights & obligations derived from subsequent directives & regulations, are being ignored over 11 years on from the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009?



Actively geo blocking access to services outside the State/in other MSs. unlawfully interferes with the rights of Irish Citizens and those of other MSs. ECJ Case Law in regard PSB proscribed channels and Articles 56 & 101 of TFEU is clear and is as follows:

- National legislation implementing or activating “must carry obligations” cannot discriminate against Citizens of other MSs or restrict the right of EU Citizens to access proscribed channels in another MS
- Freedom to provide services is for the benefit of both providers & recipients of services
- National laws must be interpreted in a manner consistent with TFEU & associated regulations/directives, must provide a fair balance between the various fundamental rights protected by EU law, and cannot render legitimate or negate the effectiveness of EU law relating to a fundamental freedom
- Territorial exclusivity licence agreements constitute a restriction on competition prohibited by Article 101 TFEU
- Article 56 TFEU is directly applicable and “not conditional on the harmonization or the coordination of the laws of the Member States”,
- Secondary EU laws (Directives & Regulations) must be interpreted as being consistent with & not conflict with EU Treaties (TEU & TFEU) or the EU Charter
- Account should be taken of the development of EU law, in particular EU Regulations & Directives under Article 114 TFEU “which have as their object the establishment and functioning of the internal market” such as the Cable & Satellite Directive, Framework Directive, Universal Services Directive, and Portability Regulation
- Confirms that “the principles of legitimate expectation & assurance of legal certainty are part of the legal order of the Community”.

In 2011 a major rights owner argued before the European Court (ECJ) that it “granted the exclusive right to broadcast in an area in order to realise the optimum commercial value” and broadcasters undertake in their licence agreement “to prevent the public from receiving their broadcasts outside the area for which they hold the licence”. However ECJ rejected those arguments making it clear that a territorial exclusivity licence agreement constituted “a restriction on competition prohibited by Article 101 TFEU”

 <p>The Court of Justice of the European Communities, Luxembourg</p>	<p><b>European Court of Justice (ECJ) tasks include:</b></p> <p><b>Enforcing EU law:</b> Commission or MS can take a case against a MS for failing to comply</p> <p><b>Annuling EU legal acts:</b> Private individuals can ask for an EU act that directly concerns them to be annulled and an EU government, the EU Council, Commission, &amp; Parliament, can seek annulment. If an EU act violates EU treaties or fundamental rights</p> <p><b>Ensuring the EU takes action:</b> Individuals, Companies &amp; EU governments can complain to the Court in respect of a failure to act by the Parliament, Council or Commission, as can other EU institutions</p> <p><b>Sanctioning EU institutions (actions for damages):</b> Any person or company who has had their interests harmed as a result of the action or inaction of the EU or its staff can take action against them through the Court.</p>	 <p><b>PREMIER LEAGUE</b></p>	<p><b>Advised European Court (ECJ) in 2011 that:</b></p> <p>it granted the exclusive right to broadcast in an area in order to realise the optimum commercial value</p> <p>*****</p> <p>Broadcasters are prepared to pay a premium to acquire exclusivity as it allows them to differentiate their services from those of their rivals and enhances their ability to generate revenue, and</p> <p>*****</p> <p>In order to protect the territorial exclusivity of all broadcasters, they each undertake, in their licence agreement with Premier League, to prevent the public from receiving their broadcasts outside the area for which they hold the licence</p>	 <p><b>COUR DE JUSTICE DE L'UNION EUROPÉENNE</b></p>	<p><b>European Court (ECJ) concluded:</b></p> <p>“Territorial exclusivity licence agreement constitute a restriction on competition prohibited by Article 101 TFEU”</p> <p>*****</p> <p>Agreements must “be reasonable in relation to parameters of the broadcasts concerned, such as their actual audience, their potential audience and the language version”</p> <p>*****</p> <p>“Intellectual property does not guarantee the right holders concerned the opportunity to demand the highest possible remuneration”</p> <p>*****</p> <p>“Freedom to provide services is for the benefit of both providers and recipients of services”</p>
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**ECJ in its Judgment in 2011 made it very clear that ownership of “intellectual property does not guarantee the right holders concerned the opportunity to demand the highest**

**possible remuneration**” and that remuneration must **“be reasonable in relation to parameters of the broadcasts concerned, such as their actual audience, their potential audience and the language version”** etc.

**The Judgement provided a fair balance between the rights of all Stakeholders, taking into accounts for example the interests of:**

- Owners Rights & their ability to obtain a fair but not unreasonable return
- Broadcaster ability to access intellectual property at a fair & reasonable price and grow their business across the whole of the Union in a fair way taking into account the rights of competitors to do the same & deliver choice for consumers,
- Citizens who in our modern age wish to access channels from their home State across the whole of the Union and who do not wish to be burdened with excessive costs arising from premiums being paid to rights holders for territorial exclusivity.

**The primary function of copyright privileges, including the “country of origin” principle, should be about promoting & making accessible across EU new works & developments in fields of science, technology, the arts, etc. in the interests of EU society as a whole, and should not result in beneficiaries abusing/enforcing those privileges against the interests of EU Citizens and the society they wish to live in.**

**(5) What can be learned from the evolution of public service media over the last decade?**

**28 years on from the advent of the Cable & Satellite Directive in 1993, and despite all of ECJ case law in the meantime, including its conclusions in 2011, Citizens continue to be denied services they are lawfully entitled to receive when in another Member State.**

**WHY?**

**Premier League in 2018, has been able to generate income of circa ST£3.5 billion from broadcasting rights outside UK, a large portion of which would appear to come from EU MSs., and which represents a more than substantial increase on / more than double the circa ST£1.4 billion income it received from its 2010 agreements on broadcasting rights outside UK – source The Club “How the Premier League became the richest, most disruptive business in Sport” by Joshua Robinson and Jonathan Clegg.**

**HOW and WHY?**

**(6) Consumer Interests, Rights and Obligations under Articles 12 & 169 TFEU**

**Where are the safeguards/restraints that should flow from Articles 12 & 169 TFEU with Citizens & broadcasters, in particular PSBs such as RTE & TG4, clearly struggling to meet costs/compete with other channels, in particular premium sports channels because of “territorial exclusivity agreements” that appear to exist between rights owners and broadcasters aimed at maximising profits, generating billions for powerful vested interests, and which ECJ signalled nine years ago are incompatible with TFEU.**

**The Universal Services Directive refers to “effective competition and choice” but the reality is “effective competition and choice” is stifled by the continued existence of unlawful “territorial exclusivity agreements” due to national regulators failing to actively oversee and enforce obligations/rights in accordance with TFEU & associated EU**

**Directives/Policy. Simple fact is powerful business/financial interests have the means & resources to influence/enforce their rights while ordinary Citizens lack those same resources, essentially have little or no ability to enforce their rights.**

**On 21 December 2017, 6 years on from ECJ clarifications/conclusions in 2011, and 24 years on from the advent of the Cable & Satellite Directive in 1993, the Irish Joint Parliamentary Committee on Communications forwarded me a letter dated 21 December 2017 it had received from the Irish Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment (DCCA) wrongly advising:**

- *“the SatCab Directive does not oblige either rightsholders to sell their rights or broadcasting platforms operating satellite transmission to purchase rights on a pan-EU basis”*
- *“If RTE were to attempt to clear the rights for a Champion’s League football on a pan-EU basis, the rightholders would expect payment on the basis that the RTE broadcast would be available to the entire population of the EU, over 500 million, rather than on the basis of the Irish population”.*

**When this is the view of our national policy authority for broadcasting is it any wonder you have RTE, our national publically owned broadcaster, complaining about TV license support for public service broadcasting being inadequate and its commercial advertising being eaten into by broadcasters from other MSs. availing of the EU “Country of Origin” principle to make their services available within the State. Should RTE in the first instance not stop limiting own resource income/actively geo blocking services and instead work the EU “Country of Origin” principle, make their services available to platform services providers throughout EU/not geo blocking or requiring services to be geo blocked?**

**DCCA Advice in their 2017 letter to the Joint Parliamentary Committee “if RTE were to attempt to clear the rights for a Champion’s League football on a pan-EU basis, the rightholders would expect payment on the basis that the RTE broadcast would be available to the entire population of the EU, over 500 million, rather than on the basis of the Irish population” appears to take no account of Recital 10 in the preamble to the Copyright Directive and recital 5 in the preamble to the Related Rights Directive which “envisage only appropriate remuneration for each use of the protected subject-matter”, the ECJ conclusion in 2011 that “intellectual property does not guarantee the right holders concerned the opportunity to demand the highest possible remuneration” or the obligation on MSs. to ensure “effective competition and choice” as required under the Universal Services Directive.**

**Article 12 TFEU imposes an obligation that “Consumer protection requirements shall be taken into account” in defining and implementing EU policy and activities and Article 169 stipulates that “In order to promote the interests of consumers and to ensure a high level of consumer protection, the Union shall contribute to protecting.... economic interests of consumers”. Cryptic to me, and I would expect many other Citizens/Consumers, is the extent to which obligations arising for policy makers & regulators from these Articles are & have been taken on board and incorporated into policy/decision making processes.**

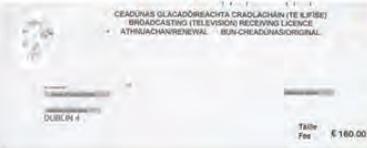
**Information is a key ingredient in ensuring sound decision-making, accountability and being sure that actions & decisions are both balanced & fair in the interests of society as a whole. It underpins democracy and assists in combating corruption, prejudice and inefficiency and Article 169 TFEU contains an obligation on the Union (Commission & MSs.) to promote the right of consumers “to information”.**

If an individual or legal entity, public or private & within or outside EU, wishes to make available/trade goods or services anywhere within EU they must do so in a manner that does not restrict the right of EU citizens/consumers to avail of those goods & services across the EU. EU Treaties and ECJ case law are very clear on that, no discrimination on the basis of nationality, residence or location, no maximising profits via territorial exclusivity, with costs/prices being reflective of the actual/potential market & language etc, at all levels, be it acquired or retail/consumer level.

**(7) Supply and Financing of New Content/Funding of Public Service Broadcasting**

While it is important that robust regulatory & support mechanisms (grant aid & copy right protection) for both supply & financing of both new & public service broadcasting content exist in Ireland & across EU, it is equally important that a fair balance exists in regard to consumer/end user rights and that regulatory & support mechanisms would not hinder/unlawfully interferes with the right of Citizens, be they Irish Citizens or those of other MSs., to access services from another MS.

How many licenses are required/EU Citizens expected to pay, to support public broadcasting type activities that are required in the public interest? I personally pay two, the Irish TV License & the “Contribuição Audiovisual” in Portugal. Others pay even more.

IRELAND		PORTUGAL							
		<b>CONTRIBUIÇÃO AUDIOVISUAL</b> FATIURA Nº 3921/828/17 DE 22 de novembro 2020 VALOR: 36,25 €							
		Descrição	Quantidade	Preço	Taxa	Abatimentos	Total IVA	IVA	
		Contribuição Audiovisual	12 meses	2,85 €	34,20 €		34,20 €	6%	
		IVA (34,20 €)		6%	2,05 €				
		<b>TOTAL</b>					36,25 €		

As an Irish/EU Citizen, paying Irish taxes, I believe the Irish TV License should cover me and give me a right not just to access Irish free-to-air services covered by the “must carry/must offer” obligation anywhere within EU but also similar free-to-air services covered by the “must carry/must offer” obligation originating in other MSs. What is the point in being in the EU/Single Market if that is not the case?

I am not at all convinced that the Irish TV Licence or the Portuguese Contribuição Audiovisual are the best or even appropriate mechanisms for funding national public service broadcasting requirements. Public service broadcasting is essentially educational in nature, with programmes aimed at informing/educating Citizens, young & old alike. We provide public support for mainstream education from the general exchequer fund via the education vote which is scrutinised & approved annually by Deputies and Senators.

And what of powerful rights owners, in particular those long established & generating huge sums annually from rights bestowed by society, should they not be at the very least making a contribution or funding public service broadcasting via a levy on royalties?

And is it appropriate or in the public interest that sporting organisations, in particular a body such as the GAA which has a voluntary community ethos with players not remunerated for their services or others such as the FAI which is dependant to a large extent on volunteers/players from local communities throughout the country, to be charging our national publically owned broadcasters RTE & TG4 for the right to broadcast

**events of national or wide public interest in Ireland when they are already in receipt of considerable funding from the general exchequer fund via the sports vote?**

**According to Shane Ross, the former Minister for Sport, in his book “In Bed with the Blueshirts” the current Chairman of FAI, Roy Barrett, at a meeting last year on 23 January 2020, sought a doubling of the annual sport grant it receives from the general exchequer fund via the sports vote, from €2.9 million annually to €5.9 million annually for at least the next three years, and also wanted between €7.5 million & €8 million over the three years to be linked to the Aviva Stadium fee. According to the former Minister’s account in his book the doubling of the annual sport grant to €5.9 million was acceded to and FAI were also provided with a loan of €7.6 million to be used exclusively for the Aviva Stadium fee.**

**Interesting and relevant are the views of ECJ in 2011 in the Premier League case that “sporting events cannot be regarded as intellectual creations classifiable as works within the meaning of the Copyright Directive” but could be transformed into “subject-matter that is worthy of protection” and in that way protected by an MSs. domestic (Irish) legislation. The following are the relevant extracts from the Court’s Judgement:**

**98. However, sporting events cannot be regarded as intellectual creations classifiable as works within the meaning of the Copyright Directive. That applies in particular to football matches, which are subject to rules of the game, leaving no room for creative freedom for the purposes of copyright.**

**99. Accordingly, those events cannot be protected under copyright. It is, moreover, undisputed that European Union law does not protect them on any other basis in the field of intellectual property.**

**100. None the less, sporting events, as such, have a unique and, to that extent, original character which can transform them into subject-matter that is worthy of protection comparable to the protection of works, and that protection can be granted, where appropriate, by the various domestic legal orders.**

**Hopefully the members of the Commission will find the information I have provided above informative and useful and I thank them for the opportunity to contribute. I have no difficulty in principle with the Commission publishing this submission on their website or including it as an appendix to their Report subject to any comments or observations they may receive in regard to its contents being forwarded to me for any comments, observations or responses I might wish to make.**

**PATRICK HOULIHAN**

**THURSDAY 7 JANUARY 2021.**



Record #135

Joe Doheny



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Regarding the evolution of public service media: There is a clear secular, liberal and leftist bias.

Representatives of parties such as S/PBP, social Democrats and left wing independents receive much more air time than parties such as Aontú or Rural TDs. Representatives from all parties in Dublin again are featured out of proportion to their mandate particularly on RTE. RTE presenters are as a rule uncritical while interviewing those who promote liberal views such as abortion and euthanasia while being quite hostile to conservative opinions. The same criticism holds true for most print journalists with a small few notable exceptions. There is a clear perception among people outside "The Pale" that RTE does not understand or represent their interests. Promotion of Irish Language could be helped by the occasional use of frásaí in their announcements or in RTE productions and documentaries etc. Regarding learning from other jurisdictions it is important that media do not allow a polarising of opinion to occur because of representing, or being perceived to represent a particular viewpoint only as has happened with media particularly in the USA

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Public broadcasting should be governed by a board which reflects the cultural, religious, non religious, political & geographical of the viewership. These should include those with professional skills which would be beneficial to RTE. Again this is needed to dispel the perceived pro Dublin, pro left / liberal bias.

7

[REDACTED]

Record #136

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

1I would respect the job of journalists to serve the public matter, not government agenda with real news and not fake news. The media is only a side to discussing different agenda without the government .

Promoting the freedom of speech and respect with the different options with doing the job with the tell the trust and to questions about everything.

2 I thought media by financial by own media only not only business conflict to promote.

3 self regulated and independent regulated to promote the media to broke regulation and has jobs has power to broke regulation if rules if independent to and governed by has without interest and without interest from different exports.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

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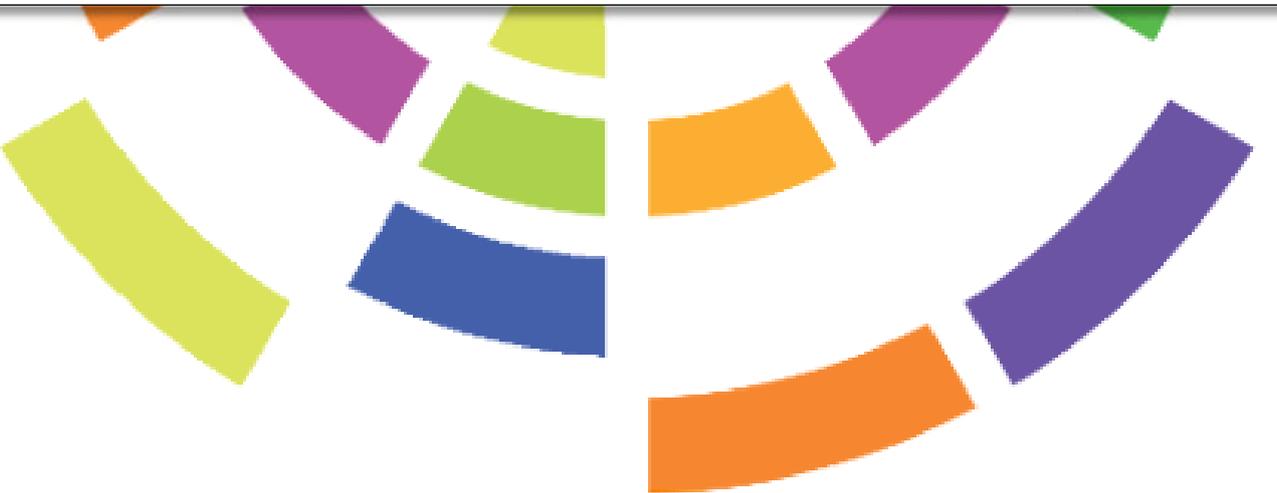
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

one individual has to much control of media and in i thinking individual in regulatory to control the all individual all powers and stop the biased in media.



Record #137

Niamh O'Kelly



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

More support needs to be given to the Community Radio sector. By this I mean both financial, training and logistic supports. Community Radio is a very valuable asset to many towns in Ireland but receives very little recognition for this from the government. To my mind, the only time politicians become seriously aware of this asset is when it comes to election time.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The monies garnered from the TV licence are not equitably divided, with Community Radio receiving only a pittance from the overall pot. This really does need to be changed. National TV/radio can garner advertising from all over the country, Community radio are limited to within the confines of their broadcasting area - this should also be changed.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

While some legislations need to be changed (as stated above), in general the BAI rules and regulations appear to be adequate.

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #138  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The concept of public service is too narrow and should include community radio broadcasters throughout Ireland. The government, and by extension this commission, need to recognise the important role Community Media play in public service media. Over the last 25 years community radio stations across the country have provided a real public service through access, training and programme production, to amplify the voices of a broad range of citizens. These citizens are students, older people, new communities, school children, LGBT+ communities, people with disabilities and many more. In a recent survey commissioned by Community Radio Ireland (Craol), over 300,000 Irish citizens said they listened to their local community station that day. In places such as Austria, community media is recognised and properly funded, meaning media producers, and journalists can build sustainable careers in this sector. Ireland needs to do the same.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The sound and vision scheme has only partially worked for community radios over the years. It has not lead to a sustainable model for the sector. CR's need core state funding, measured against high quality, public service training and programming, covering the margins, nooks and crannies where RTE will not or cannot go. Since 2008, and through BAI Sound & Vision scheme, community radios have accessed public funding through the license fee to produce award winning, high quality content. Look no further than Near FM based in one of Dublin`s lowest socio- economic areas, Dublin 17. This station has won international awards for programming from the New York Radio Awards, The Celtic Media Awards, and been short listed for the Prix Europa 2020. This is done with a tiny fraction of the resources afforded public service outlet RTE. Whatever form the next funding model takes, it must include core, sustainable funding for community media.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The BAI can continue, with proper oversight at state level with EU input where necessary. ownership is a problem in commercial media that needs to be addressed.

7

[REDACTED]

Record #139

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public media needs to include online and digital, so for example the BAI Sound & Vision Scheme should support digital/online public media project. A separate fund should be created to provide funding support for not for profit media ( including online/digital) which can be bid for competitively in addition to RTÉ. We need to ensure diversity of voices and outlets in media , particularly online, and we need also to create competition amongst public media providers. There is significant experience and example international on this now and Ireland should lead by creating a force, similar to the Arts Council, which can fund, based on competitive applications, quality public media output and content, including online/digital projects. The key must be they are not for profit. Public monies should not be channelled into commercial for profit organisations but we should create a wider window on opportunities for content creators and therefore for diverse audiences.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

We should move to an exchequer funded model with built in protections for independence similar to the Arts Council. The licence fee and its collection is now out of date and not a relevant or working model for the age we are in. Look at how Creative Ireland and the Arts Council have operated to create not for profit arts and culture organisations with a competitive and business model, and also encouraging those organisations to follow sustainable business models through other funding methods, both audience payments and sponsorship.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

An empowered media commission with two separate functions, regulation and funding.



Record #140

Karl Donnelly



I vehemently oppose this legislation of implementing an additional household charge by the government, which simply serves to only add to already existing charges such as the license fee. Being able to access the internet via an electronic device does not require nor permit for an additional charge to be enforced. Simply by owning a "device" capable of accessing the internet, this legislation serves to catch you in the net of this household charge. Any household, business, or otherwise that does not have a television should in no way be hit with an enforced charge.

In 2019, Fianna Fáil leader Micheál Martin pledged to bring in this new household charge to act as a stream of revenue for the bottomless money pit that is our national broadcaster, RTE. The government wants revenue to collect the proposed charge. There is also the possibility that this charge may also go out to a lucrative tender.

I have no desire to pay a bogus tax to prop up ailing entities like RTE, entities that have become less and less fit for purpose over time. They need to be massively downsized and restructured. If RTE were a state body that ran as a commission-only organization that tendered for commercially viable output then I'd have less of an objection. Better yet, if it was a subscription service that one could choose to opt-out of. Those who have streaming services, internet, and phone data providers pay VAT. Of course, the RTE crowd won't want that as it would highlight how much of their current output is unwatchable tripe. I would look at focusing on getting RTE staff and presenters onto the civil service pay scale. And encouraging RTE presenters to move on if they want more money. I would look at improving the RTE player, converting it into more of a streaming service, dropping public-funded entertainment content. Dropping the TV license as a result.

Im was suspicious of how the public consultation has been hidden and kept quiet and how the online consultation form has been purposely made to be more complicated than it needs to be. Some multi-selects and open text sections to elaborate would have been much better.



Record #141

Diarmaid Breathnach



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

- An géarghá atá ann le sainmhíniú cruinn ar cad é go díreach atá i gceist leis an téarma ‘meáin seirbhísí poiblí’.
- Níl sainmhíniú tugtha in Acht Craolacháin 2009, mar sin b’fhiú machnamh a dhéanamh ar seo in aon reachtaíocht nua sa chaoi’s go bhfuil sé soiléir cad é go díreach atá i gceist.
- B’ é an bhréagnuacht an bhagairt ba mhó a tháinig chun cinn le deich mbliain anuas. Caithfear córais a chuir i bhfeidhm, nach cinsireacht iad, chun teacht timpeall ar fhadhb seo na bréagnuachta.
- Cúrsaí oiliúna den scoth san iriseoireacht le idirdhealú cruinn idir na hardáin éagsula ar a dháiltear ábhar iriseoireachta.
- Pobalbhreitheanna rialta a eagrú chun eolas a fháil ó thomhaltóirí meáin seirbhísí poiblí ar a riachtanais siúd.
- Dáileadh níos cothromasáí d’ábhar Ghaeilge, spórt agus cultúr thar na craoltóirí seirbhísí poiblí.
- Seirbhísí spóirt dúchasacha ach go háirithe a chraoladh saor-chun-aer an méad agus is féidir.
- Maoiniú Stáit a chuir ar fáil chun eolas a bhailiú ar cad é go díreach atá an pobal ag súil leis. Ní leor líon lucht féachana/éisteachta/léitheoireachta amháin.
- Ní féidir aon rud a fhoghlaim ó dhlínsí eile gan eolas cruinn a bhailiú ar cad atá ag titim amach sna dlínsí sin. B’fhiú maoiniú a chuir ar fáil chun taighde a dhéanamh ar cad é go díreach atá ag titim amach i ndlínsí eile de cuid an AE, réigiúin dhá/iolteanganacha ach go háirithe.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

- Maidir le seirbhísí craolacháin poiblí b’fhiú maoiniú de 100% a chuir ar fáil d’ábhar craolacháin seirbhísí poiblí sa chaoi ‘s nach bhfuil maoiniú ábhair seo ag braith ar ioncaim tráchála
- Bíodh cainéil 100% seirbhísí craolacháin poiblí ann le 100% maoiniú ón Státchiste/ceadúnas teilifíse/household charge etc.
- Agus an earnáil ag druidim níos faide i dtreo an nuatheicneolaíocht, ní bheifear ag braith mar a bhíodh ar chrua infrastructúir (tarchuradóirí taobh sléibhe 7rl); d’fhéadfaí aon shábháil airgead anseo a chuir i dtreo maoiniú seirbhísí poiblí craolacháin.
- Maoiniú 100% a thabhairt do chlár raidió Gaeilge faoi €10k ó scéim Sound and Vision
- I mbabhta 36 de S&V b’ é 1.4% agus 5.6% a dháileadh ar chlár Ghaeilge/dátheangach faoi seach. Caithfear aghaidh a thabhairt ar an neamhréiteach seo idir an dá theanga. - Maidir le seirbhísí craolacháin poiblí b’fhiú maoiniú de 100% a chuir ar fáil d’ábhar craolacháin seirbhísí poiblí sa chaoi ‘s nach bhfuil maoiniú ábhair seo ag braith ar ioncaim tráchála
- Bíodh cainéil 100% seirbhísí craolacháin poiblí ann le 100% maoiniú ón Státchiste/ceadúnas teilifíse/household charge etc.
- Agus an earnáil ag druidim níos faide i dtreo an nuatheicneolaíocht, ní bheifear ag braith mar a bhíodh ar chrua infrastructúir (tarchuradóirí taobh sléibhe 7rl); d’fhéadfaí aon shábháil airgead anseo a chuir i dtreo maoiniú seirbhísí poiblí craolacháin.
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**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

- Go n-aithneofaí ‘Craoltóireacht na Gaeilge’ mar phríomhdhualgais in aon sainmhíniú nua de ‘craoltóireacht sheirbhísí poiblí’ agus in aon reachtaíocht chumarsáide leasaithe nó nuadhréachtaithe.
- Míreanna faoin nGaeilge in aon nua-reachtaíocht a bheith láidir agus soiléir. Córais nua monatóireachta na rialtóirí nua a thógáil chun seo a chuir i bhfeidhm.
- Téarmaí trádála bunaithe ar chód cleachtais cóirtrádála idir TG4 agus an earnáil neamhspleách Gaeilge a aontú gan mhoill.
- Aghaidh ar leith a thabhairt do riachtanais trasteorannacha chraoltóireachta na Gaeilge mar atá leagtha amach i gComhaontú Aoine an Chéasta.

[REDACTED]  
Record #142  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media should contain and address the issues of its public. At the moment the media is biased, one sided and corrupt to a point that it no longer serves the public. Instead it can be seen as a propaganda machine for whoever is controlling it. It's an absolute disgrace. The journalists are none existent as the staff are clearly all speaking from the same biased script. In any subject one would expect to hear at least two differing opinions but the media at present is censored so heavily that it is blatant. This needs to stop and proper investigative journalism should be allowed once again. As for the tech companies, their censorship has also gotten out of control and this should not be allowed. Stop treating the public like imbeciles and allow them to make up their minds as to what is fake news or not.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The only thing I will say on this is that RTÉ should have their license removed. They are a disgrace. There should not be a media tax. Until such time as journalists are actually allowed to report on all news, I and everyone I know do not support any of it.

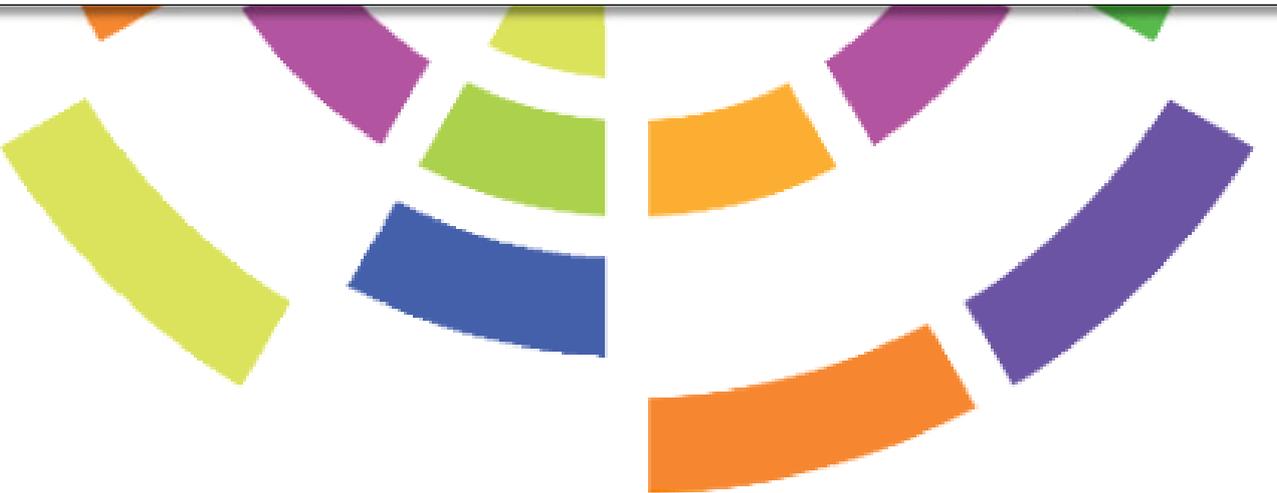
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Inadequate, biased, controlled media. Not good enough.



Record #143

Joe Galvin



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Nothing but propaganda from rte ..no license fee will be payed this year.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

By big pharma

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

By the people

[REDACTED]  
Record #144  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Climate change and biodiversity loss are huge issues. Coverage of both is extremely disappointing in the Irish media. 99 per cent of scientists have the proof it is happening. Our very existence is under threat. Irish media has to inform the public of the truth. No time left to shelter the public from this. The more we know, the more we can act.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Mandatory tax adjusted by income level.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Not sure.



Record #145

Catherine Holmes



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

During the coverage of covid, RTE and other media outlets did nothing only cheer on the Government. It was as though they were handed a Government press release and just read it out. Followed by the the vaccine press releases.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I would get rid of RTE. It breached its own charter of impartiality during covid. It was incapable of investigative journalism. It instilled fear, it was the propaganda arm of the Government. It smeared anyone who criticised Government policy. That isn't a public media service. It is the media arm of the Government

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Again, during covid, whatever controls were in place were ignored. It is pitting itself against social media and has ended up being worse than the worst elements of social media. Whereas the best elements of the social media should put the so-called journalists in RTE to shame. The ownership doesn't matter. In the end, it did the Government's bidding as it was owned by them

[REDACTED]  
Record #146  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Government should scale back the amount of public money going towards media. Items that are of public service imo are news broadcasts, Irish sports like GAA or coverage of our athletes in international competitions, irish related documentaries. Public money shouldn't be going towards commercial music stations, talk shows like Late Late Show or exorbitant salaries for presenters

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

It should come out of general taxation and maybe a small levy on purchase of new tvs/devices. Should not be a public broadcasting annual fee or tv license. Large cutbacks should be made in our state media organisations to deliver better value of money.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Government to provide regulations to ensure any organisation receiving state funds to provide fully unbiased coverage on anything. No discrimination against any group should take place on any platform receiving even if that discrimination falls under satire of a majority group (like the god sketch) and if a group does that, should be heavily fined.

[REDACTED]  
Record #147  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government should support public service media that provides cultural value and supports indigenous services. That is, it should be limited to news, current affairs, Irish sport, supporting the Irish language and regional services and developing content with a distinctly Irish theme and cultural value - Historical documentaries, Irish youth-oriented programming etc. What can be learned - RTE is not fit for purpose, is bloated and full of wastage. How might it be more effective - cut out 90% of what is currently on RTE TV and Radio.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

PS media should receive funding from the government, but needs to be purely ring-fenced for supporting and promoting Irish culture, language and sport only. RTE as it is should be vastly reduced and focus on only News, Current Affairs, Irish language, Culture & Sport. Organisational changes should be based on cutting out all non-essential staff and programming based on the above. RTE television as it stands does not meet the criteria as above, if it wants to continue as it is it should move to a subscription-only basis.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Media spending should have greater oversight and frequent appraisals to see if value for money is being obtained.

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #148  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The RTÉ orchestras must be given a higher level of priority. As the only two full-time orchestras in the Republic, they deserve to be supported, cared for and cherished.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

1

[REDACTED]

Record #149

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media should be focused on providing suitable media, not dictating what one party considers appropriate for public consumption. Currently the public service media is heavily censored, biased and not fit for purpose.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The tv licence system is not fit for purpose. Asking the public to pay fees to fund the extortionate salaries of a small group of overpaid underworked talking heads in Montrose is an unsustainable model. Rte should be refunded entirely. It does not serve the public

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The level of censorship across all types of media is stifling free speech. The public deserve to be presented with information on all sides of any subject, and their intellect respected enough to come to their own conclusions and make informed decisions. Regulations should be centred around the protection of free speech and the restriction of censorship across all types of media.



Record #150

Paula Healy



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Firstly I believe that Community Radio, Community of Interest Radio and Community TV are crucial pillars of public service media, so the majority of my thoughts would be in regard to these.

Public service broadcasting operates as an ad-hoc and disjointed eco-system in Ireland. I feel that there should be more collaboration, between Community and State (and to a smaller degree Commercial) Media. Excuse the visual metaphor, but it would help the government to think of Public Service Broadcasting like the jar full to the top with stones (State), but actually filled out by smaller stones, pebbles and sand (Community and in some cases Commercial). Once you start realising that all sectors are required to fill the remit, it gets easier to think of it in a joined up way.

For state broadcasting, it's a matter of funding and regulation; commercial the same. Community media are the ones filling all the gaps and niches, but are the most precarious due to the resources and financial knife-edge that most operate on. Annual operational & development funding needs to continue (S&V 4 has been a step in the right direction, but needs some revision).

The development of international on-demand, non-linear services has created a more crowded playing field. Traditional media in Ireland should not shy away from adapting and developing, but there comes a point where all sectors are being held to standards that overseas service providers are not. This needs to be assessed.

Looking at the AV Media Services Directive - a lot of it is positive, and something the govt should study and look to other member states for best practice. I do think we should be looking at either a levy, or a requirement to make programming in Ireland, like Germany etc.

The Journalism Bursary is a solid idea. There should also be a drive to increase access for people from minority groups, lower socio-economic brackets and areas not served directly by media. There is potential for collaboration across Govt departments for this (be it DEASP, TCAGS&Media, Rural, Education or others).

Other jurisdictions: I think Ireland operates quite effectively in some areas (eg Community Radio is particularly recognised internationally, as is Film and some TV, and RTÉ features). We need to change how the PSB Charge is collected (Revenue) and overseas content providers operating here need to contribute to Irish content (creating or helping fund) and funding needs to move away from one-off output to overall funding [https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/unesco\\_cmedia\\_sustainability\\_policy\\_5\\_public\\_funding.pdf](https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/unesco_cmedia_sustainability_policy_5_public_funding.pdf)

In a personally held belief, there needs to be more flexibility in licencing - it shouldn't take community groups the best part of a decade to progress to full licence; events and arts groups should be able to have pop-up broadcasts; more experimental and ephemeral broadcasting and content creation needs to be allowed for. Dublin Digital Radio said they'd never go for an FM licence as they would have too many restrictions and would have to change what they do. I'm sure dozens of other groups are in the same boat. By having broadcasting restricted as it is (for many good reasons, of course) it means we're missing out on thousands of voices and hundreds of communities - often the ones that most need to be heard and seen.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I know the water charges went down like a lead balloon, but there needs to be a media levy/fee to ensure the future of PSB. It should be collected by Revenue and be proportionate to income.

There needs to be more education on Media Literacy, or otherwise a percentage of the population will miss out on the importance of PSB in the age of digital giants. It's crucial to support trained & citizen journalists in as many settings as possible - there is also scope for accreditation or professional development using recognition of prior learning and CPD for journalists without third-level journalism qualifications.

The BAI are \*currently\* in the best position to allocate broadcast scheme funding, knowing the media landscape, but also being impartial. This may change with different sources of funding coming online - those will have to be judged on a source and criteria basis.

In general, I oppose the subscription model for PSB - it should be freely available to all citizens, with as few barriers as possible. I do recognise the need for paywalls in publications, but would like to see how universal micro-transactions might work in future. I'm wary of traditional crowdfunding so far. In Ireland there's a culture of Media fundraising for other causes, rather than their own, unlike say, public radio in the US.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The most helpful development may turn out to be the AVMSD bringing EU member states more into harmony - this will make it easier to see what works in other member states and what could be improved or implemented here.

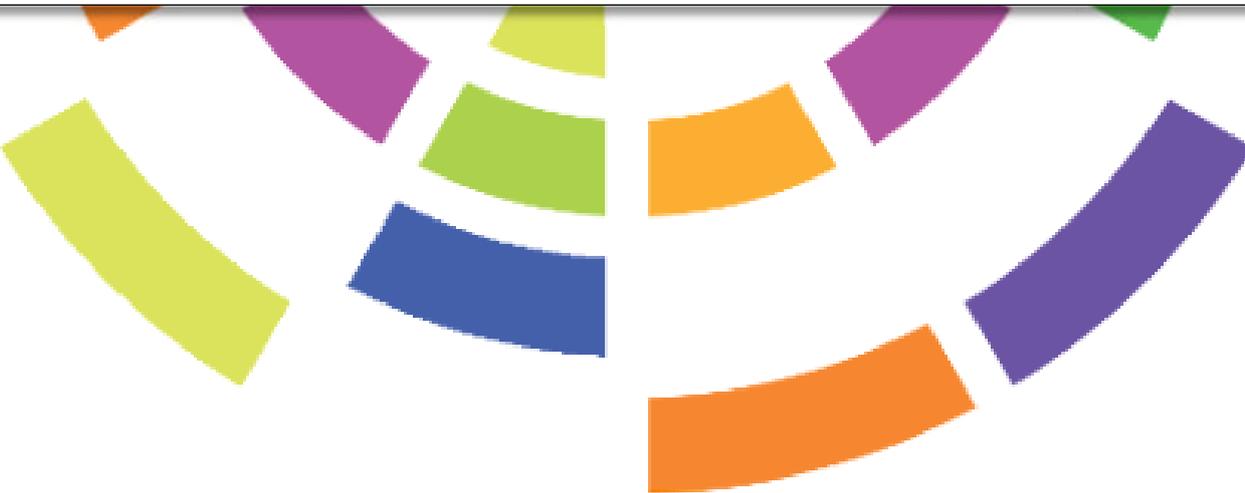
I'd be very concerned about the likes of iHeart Media buying up licences globally, and other groups locally. For Irish audiences and participants it might mean Communicorp here, but more concerningly, a lot of global offerings making inroads here are from huge conglomerates. This makes it even more important to ensure plurality of ownership and public access and transparency.

Again, without Media Literacy education from an early age (concepts around media analysis can be introduced quite early in primary school, I teach 8-12 year olds Media Lit, and they need it earlier), it's easy for busy people to just not think critically about their Media sources. Without an informed public, regulation can only do so much.



Record #151

Suzie Buckley



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

An onus on free speech is fundamental to human adaptation and growth. Currently we have little or no investigative journalism that challenges or debates government choices. Those that do challenge are either blanked, ignored or humiliated in current media circles. Removing the religious and government led narrative in the media chant will open society up to diversity enabling better solutions that benefit all, not some as currently the case. Independent journalism cannot be funded by the same entity that is trying to make money from the vulnerable. The gates foundation is currently funding many news outlets which is not the definition of "independent", the Guardian being one example. This is premeditated journalism also known as propaganda. The core of the Irish spirit and culture is based on our diversity, courage and survival. The current media narrative seems intent on feeding and breeding fear along with inaccurate scientific and medical information. The salary scale of RTE [REDACTED] must be addressed, otherwise the Irish media have become tools in propaganda and dictatorship. It is vital to have independent agencies that monitor media standards while also allowing free speech and debate without the fear of punishment.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Good journalism funds itself. I subscribe and pay for access to media platforms that are open to debate. Dismantle RTE and ensure those in management positions in RTE are not leaders in a repeat disaster based on large egos and even larger salaries that are unjustified.

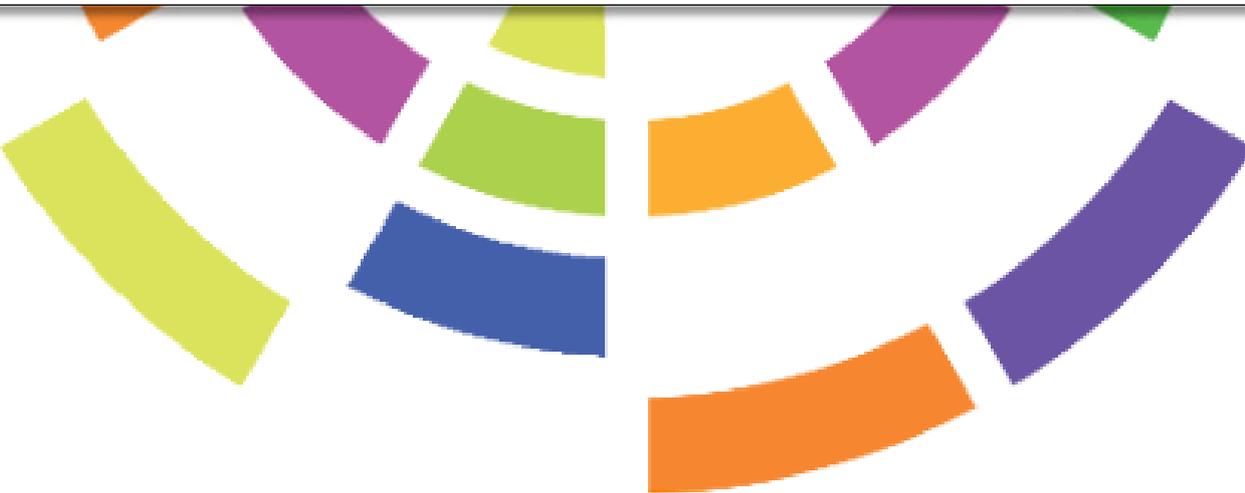
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Our government is corrupt. Start from the top down.



Record #152

Siobhan O'Donoghue



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Trust is a vital part of public service media and needs to be enabled through ensuring RTE can act with high levels of integrity including independence from political interference. Should reflect the diversity of our society - class, ethnicity, rural/urban, sexuality and age. Critical thinking & analysis should be supported more ie investigations and discussion into societal issues - structural inequality, climate change, extremism, Journalists should be paid a fair wages and set standards for decent employment conditions. This should also include reducing income inequality between all people employed in the creation of an delivery of public service media. Broadcasters should also better reflect the diversity of society and there should be state support for educational/skill development in this area There should be stronger regulation of private/commercial media entities ie better limit concentration of media ownership,

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Core funding should be from the exchequer ie taxation. Corporate platforms like Facebook and Twitter should be paying a public interest journalism tax.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Digital platforms need to be government regulated - not left up to themselves to do it. Proactive measures to limit disinformation, misinformation including fines for platforms, financing public information/education programmes, supporting civil society orgs to invest in narrative/messaging of issues that are the subject to exploitation by far-right

[REDACTED]

Record #153

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Dear Commission

In my opinion TV and the Internet gives us a window on the world restricting our right to own a tv, smart screen, or go online is censorship and a human right violation. The government insists that those in direct provision have access to Sky TV because they believe it to be a human right.

The TV Licence Broadcasting Charge is of another age and it can not be justified when one considers that the technology is available for all or part of rte output to be pay per view.

- 1) Satellite tv and the internet has free us from the shackles of rte and Irish journalism. We can now bypass the established form of communion. We can live stream, blog, zoom broadcast, etc.
- 2) RTE is a big monolith designed to serve the political establishment and the artistic elite the new media allows the great the peasants to make programs on various topics “transa na tire” is an example of an internet channel outside control of well-paid elite
- 3) RTE is not fit for purpose and it should be disbanded, its various departments become part of university system ie its orchestra’s absorbed into NUI mesic departments.
- 4) Irish commercial radio is restricted with 20% news and unnecessary costs and type of radio station. I now listen to radio online mostly foreign stations as I have a greater variety with stations specialising in a particular type of music or speech radio.
- 5) I have no interest in journalism or the arts etc I don’t want you people and government shutting down Citizen Journalism in the way the so call pirate peoples radio of my youth.
- 6) RTE is a disaster zone it is living in the past enjoying the good life the time has come to shut it down it as nothing to offer. It does not offer Mobile Phone, Internet, or Subscription service and it has no international business connection.
- 7) Thank you for reading this submission I know this is not a detailed submission designed to maintain what we have at present

[REDACTED]



Record #154

Donal Horgan



## Real Journalism and Fake News

Donal Horgan

At this stage, the proverbial dogs in the street know that the Irish media industry is in crisis. With the setting up of the Future of Media Commission it seems that we are going to have a national conversation of sorts about just where the Irish media is going. The real question at this stage is whether this is a prelude to some sort of state bail out for Ireland's failing media industry.

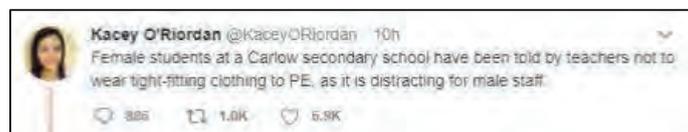
One thing for sure is that journalists have an overpowering sense of their own importance and entitlement. We hear a lot about 'fake news' and the fourth estate with the clear implication that the Irish media are the good guys who serve a critical public service and so need to be saved for all our sakes.

Talk of the dire state of the media industry usually revolves around the damage done to it by social media giants like Facebook etc. This may be true, but it also misses the fairly obvious point that virtually every sector of economic activity has been similarly affected by the tech revolution of the last 30 years. Indeed, entire occupations have disappeared over the same period without scarcely a murmur from the same media.

RTE (and much of the media industry) see themselves as victims of the tech revolution and the nasty side of this is 'fake news', whereby uncorroborated and false stories are spread by their rivals on social media. The popular view fostered by the mainstream media is that it is some sort of bulwark against the scourge of fake news. The recent RTE 'Truth Matters' campaign warning of the dangers of relying on social media serves as a good example of this.

The notion of the Irish media functioning like some heroic fourth estate sounds very wholesome until you start noticing just how untrue much of it is. The proposition that the Irish media provide a vital public service is an untested one especially by journalists themselves.

Take the recent story regarding a second level school in Carlow and the supposed message delivered to its female pupils regarding the wearing of proper PE uniform. There were wild allegations about female pupils being cautioned by the school about what they wore in case they'd 'distract' the male teachers in the school. The story quickly spread via social media and in turn was broken nationally by journalists using the same social media.



While gravely warning people in its Truth Matters campaign of the dangers of 'believing everything in your news feed', RTE had no such problems itself running the story on its own news website based on an uncorroborated tweet by a journalist. Whereas RTE, of late, was pointedly prefacing news stories relating to the tweets of one well known American political figure with the tag 'without evidence' there were no such reservations on this occasion as the publicly funded national broadcaster filled us in on the 'distractions' angle of the Carlow school story.



In the interests of journalistic integrity, perhaps the record should now read that RTE, without evidence, reported on the 'distractions' angle of the Carlow school story. Much the same happened in the newspapers with various opinion writers and activist journalists jumping in and feeding on the story based on an uncorroborated tweet by another journalist on social media.

The entire story was debunked the following morning when the school principal, Ray Murray, was interviewed on Morning Ireland. Kacey O' Riordan, the award winning journalist who first broke the story nationally, quietly deleted her tweet without apology. [REDACTED]

Despite this, the narrative around how badly the girls (not the male staff) were treated continued in the media. Even after the whole story had been debunked, one journalist writing in a reputable national daily still felt entitled to deliver the column she had always wanted to write about the story – the one about the the male patriarchy.



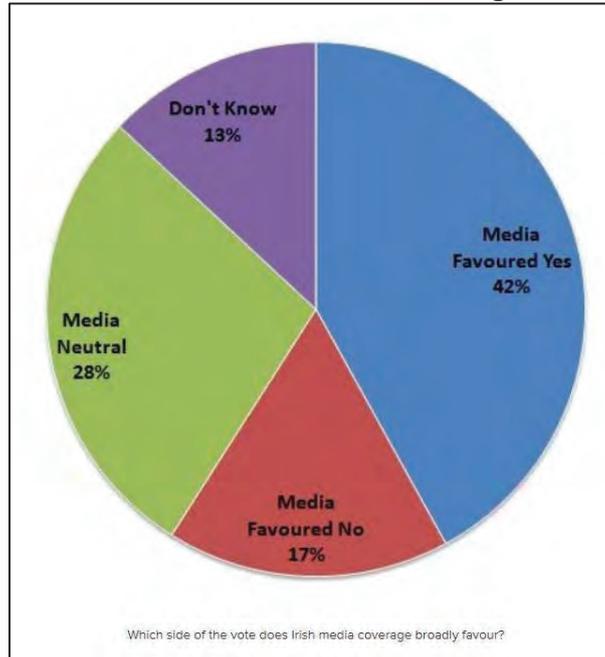
Irish journalists may harbour notions of themselves as some sort of fourth estate holding power to account. However, the problem for journalists these days is that a lot of people don't share their own deluded view of themselves. Perhaps this explains why the Irish media industry is now in crisis.

The point is the Irish media – RTE included - has no problem relying on 'fake news', social media or indeed anything else when it suits their own narrative. For the media, it seems that 'fake news' is something that you ascribe to people and opinions that you do not like.

The contention that the Irish media enjoy widespread public trust because of the vital public service they perform appears to be little more than a modern day wives tale invented by journalists themselves. Take the media coverage of the Eighth Referendum in 2018 and how it was perceived by the public.

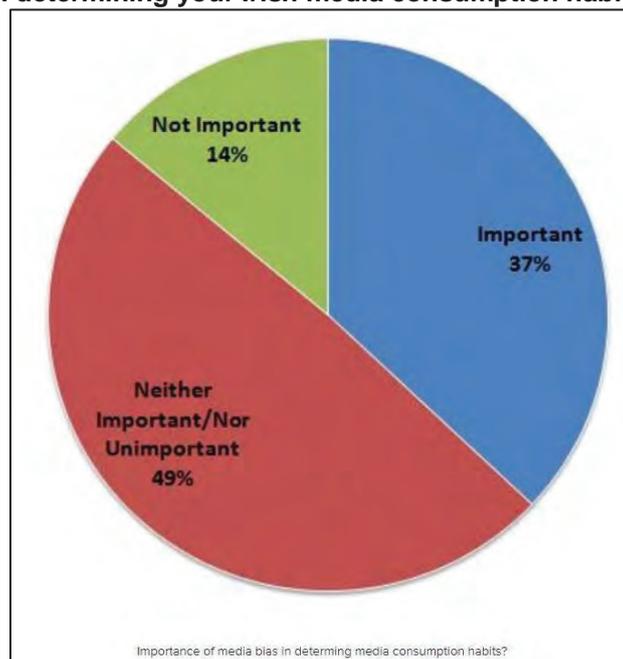
A survey\* of 1,000 adults conducted by Amárach Research while the referendum campaign was in progress asked people about their perceptions of media bias during the campaign. Asked about which side of the vote Irish media coverage favoured, the largest number (42%) responded that the media broadly favoured the Yes side. 28% said they believed the media were broadly neutral and 17% said the media favoured the No side with the remaining 13% not expressing an opinion.

**Referendum on Eighth Amendment 2018**  
**Public perceptions of Media Bias**  
Which side of the vote does Irish media coverage broadly favour?



The survey also asked if this perceived media bias influenced their behaviour as consumers of media. While the largest number (49%) said their perceptions around media bias was neither important nor unimportant in determining their media consumption habits, a significant number (37%) said it did. The declining fortunes of the Irish media industry may have as much to do with a growing distrust of journalists to be fair and impartial as it has with the changes wrought by new tech.

**How important are your perceptions around media bias in determining your Irish media consumption habits?**



The increasing number of journalists jumping ship to become advisers and spin doctors for an assortment of politicians, NGOs and quangos hardly inspires confidence in Irish journalism. These days, the secret ambition of many Irish journalists would appear to be to land a job with the government or one of its state funded NGOs and quangos.

Notions of a contrarian fourth estate holding those in power to account have been replaced by the spectacle of a failing media industry more interested in pushing its own agendas than it is in performing any useful public service. It's not journalism that is failing in Ireland today – it's a particular model of journalism based on big business and the aggressive promotion of a progressive liberal agenda.

This is Ireland's emerging Big State, one in which journalists are increasingly on the side of authority. In a country where increasingly it is state funded NGOs who not only control the language of debate but the very nature of public discourse itself, never has the need for an independent media been greater.

Today, the news story that journalists are most reluctant to write about is the one about why they have lost the trust of the public. The inconvenient truth for journalism today is that society may have as much to fear from journalists as it has from other third party agents. Perhaps, this is the truth that really does matter.

The right not to buy a newspaper or watch a particular TV programme is as much a part of free speech as exercising the right to do these same things. Equally, the rights of tax payers in ensuring that their taxes are not used to fund a discredited partisan journalism is also an intrinsic part of that same free speech.

Of late, state sponsored 'consultation processes' are becoming better known as choreographed set pieces whereby lobbyists and vested interests get what they want. Is this the prelude to a state bailout of Ireland's failing media industry? Only time will tell if the Future of Media Commission asks the questions that Irish journalism prefers not to ask itself.

\*<https://www.new-ireland.com/post/mediabias>



7

Record #155

Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?

Unfortunately the Government no longer supports Irish values in the way that RTE originally did when it was first launched. It doesn't support the Gaelic nation, Gaelic values or Gaelic culture and instead pushes globalist views and ideology. As such the governments role in public service media is practically moot. We have many private media outlets that push these values so unless the government is willing to return to the values espoused in De Valera's inaugural speech they have no business in developing public service media.

Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?

The problem isn't that it isn't financed well it is that because it is getting government money it has no incentive to spend that money wisely. Virgin media runs their television at a fraction of the cost RTE do. If you want to finance it properly the fat needs to be cut in both operating costs and in what you pay talent. Nobody in RTE should be paid more than 70K at the top end. If the "stars" want to make more money simply let them go somewhere else. The death of Marian Finucane proved that you can swap out a highly paid presenter for someone less experienced and no one cares. In this context why is Ryan Tubridy being paid more than the Taoiseach of our country? If someone tells you they can't run RTE in the same way as virgin media (at a low cost) simply replace them with someone who can. The private sector looks for results, this model needs to be brought to RTE. In this context their ad revenue alone would run RTE with no tax or TV licence.

Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?

It shouldn't be governed other than existing laws of harassment and libel with the exception of a truly independent and possibly adversarial body for complaints against the main broadcasters. The likes of Ofcom in England but less political and more functional. People in this body can't previously have worked in those broadcasters to avoid cronyism. Laws need to be put into place to protect independent content creators from big tech companies though. For instance Poland now fine big tech millions in fines every time they restrict the free speech of their citizens. Big tech needs to be reigned in and given strict guidelines with how they can deal with Irish citizens.

7

[REDACTED]

Record #158

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 01:19

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** R.T.E. future funding.

Owing to R.T.E.s blasphemous programme of the 31st of Dec.2020 and it's long time total disrespect for the Catholic Faith particularly I would as an Irish tax payer and citizen call for all grants to be removed from this broadcaster.No other Christian or indeed Islamic religion would accept such insulting programmes which violate our religious rights. You have exceeded your broadcasting laws with your latest programme as stated above and indeed this will no longer be tolerated by the Catholic people of Ieland of which there are many.Your pathetic apologies are not acceptable STOP these blasphemous insults to us Catholics.

Yours sincerely [REDACTED] .

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[REDACTED]  
Record #159  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 17:27

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** Rte licence fee

Dear Sirs ,

I disagree with any proposal to introduce a Tax to replace the Licence Fee.

I also disagree with any Proposal to introduce a Tax to support the Print Media.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Record #160

**From:** Peter Elliott [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 17:22  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Good evening

Will this e mail get through -I tried sending you a submission via your web but it disappeared and if this happened to me one feels compelled to ask how many others had the very same experience and as they say “didn’t make it the length of the salmon leap”? Having said that modern technology and I am not close friends and the same is true of brevity!

Despite my e mail domain I live just outside Ardara (which is in South West Donegal) and have lived here for the last 15 years having previously lived in Northern Ireland all my life except for 7 years when I lived in New York and from there due to my work traveled across North America. I was a civil servant and through this had much exposure to the media and those who work in the media.

All my adult life I have been an avid reader of newspapers and now “get” “news” from newspapers, the internet and the radio (mainly RTE Radio 1) and don’t subscribe to Netflix or any other media platform. I don’t have a TV!

I have a keen interest in the media and so made a contribution to the UK Media Review undertaken in the wake of the Leveson Inquiry and so keen to do the same here. Maybe there are others who express the same views and concerns as I will set out here?

To me the developing Covid crisis has brought into sharp focus the internet divide within this jurisdiction where there are people living in parts of Ireland where internet access is either non existent or problematic but equally there is also a divide between those who can afford internet access and those who cannot as well as people for whom internet access is beyond them and for this reason to me the Irish Government needs to develop a strategy which ensures media access for all so that you have internet access maximised while at the

same time strengthening traditional media (print where to me too many newspapers want their readership to migrate to on line because presumably this maximises their profits) and ensuring that journalists of the calibre and integrity and courage of Mary Carr of the Irish Mail on Sunday are retained by the media in Ireland and prevent newspapers and other media from a race to the bottom by as some newspapers seem to do printing/publicising “stories” which have been syndicated or have been “placed” by those working on behalf on the PR for celebrities (the Beckhams come immediately to mind following as they seem to do and closely the lead given by the Kardashians) who seem to use the media to notch up their “star” credentials and thereby enhance their brand endorsement earnings and do this at the expense of coverage of issues that merit media coverage!

I also think that the media especially radio (and as I don't have TV can only “talk” about radio) has a societal responsibility to employ people working as programme anchors or broadcasters who conduct calm and measured discussions instead of sounding as if they are broadcasting standing on top of railway lines down which an express train is heading in their direction! Alas RTE Radio 1 no longer has Marianne Finucane but now has too many on their air waves who seem only too happy to spread panic and fear about Covid -a point that I recently made in an e mail to Dee Forbes, Director General of RTE! Maybe she and her senior management team don't listen to what is broadcast by RTE Radio 1?

I also think that the Irish Government should give consideration to how local community based radio stations can be supported and whether there is any scope for striking a deal with them whereby they provide platforms to journalists of note (people of the calibre of Michael Harding of whom there must be many distributed across Ireland) in return for financial support of local community radio stations?

As so clearly demonstrated by what unfolded in Washington DC yesterday there is a role to be played by the media in how not to incite violence and how instead to help a society develop a more nuanced approach to how information is shared but in a politically neutral way but how this would or could be achieved could be thrashed out by bringing together people willing to help achieve this outcome and people who, as is true of me, don't have any agenda - with Brexit and Covid Ireland seems on the edge of an important stage in it's development and with it an opportunity to demonstrate a new approach and to so many things and issues!

I hope that the above is of some use or maybe none!

Every good wish with your work which to me is so critically important!

PS In case it is of any use my telephone number is [REDACTED] and I don't mind you publishing the above!

Re my point about access to the internet affordability is an important issue -my own EIR bill (for landline telephone and internet access my monthly bill is a few cents short of 80 Euro!). If the Irish Government are thinking of developing an internet based media strategy they should take into account the real cost of internet in this jurisdiction Nevermind the problem of broadband coverage!

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

[REDACTED]  
Record #161  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 17:19  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Hi

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED].

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Record #163

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 16:27  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** suggestions for future of social media commission

Hi,

I don't know much about how social media is designed, but I think perhaps things like google or youtube or facebook could improve their profits and at the same time improve the customer's mental health. Not everyone shares the same code of ethics, and that is a good thing. Internet services could somehow be positively discriminatory in directing a search towards one end or another based mainly on a code of ethics filled in before using this service. That way, there could be a feed based on personal ideals or preferences, instead of the service trying to second guess what the person is looking for, and it might improve their mental health, sense of worth, and a general positivity, and become encouraging towards the set of ideals that person aspires to. Financially, it also makes sense to me, because everyone buys, so the ads could also become tailor-made to the code applied at the beginning. Obviously, the person is responsible for deciding before it starts what her or his code of ethics should look like and how light, medium or hard should the results be based on those.

I don't know if it makes sense, but I thought I would suggest it.

I hope whatever comes out of this commission, improves mental health overall for everyone.

Thank you.

[REDACTED]



Record #164

Harry Browne



Harry Browne, senior lecturer in School of Media, Technological University Dublin; journalist for various Irish and international publications – anthologised in *Great Irish Reportage* (Penguin, 2013); author of three books, including *Public Sphere* (Cork University Press, 2018); expert witness on media for Joint Oireachtas Committee of Inquiry into the Banking Crisis (2015); author of chapter on ‘Philanthropy-Supported Journalism’ in *International Encyclopedia of Journalism Studies* (International Communication Association, Wiley, 2019); joint founder and co-ordinator, Centre for Critical Media Literacy; and member of TU Dublin Research Practice Network for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

*writing in a personal capacity*

THERE is a poignant typographical error in the text on the Commission’s [public consultation](#) webpage. The passage reads: ‘The media are important for our democracy and society. They inform public debate through independent, journalism.’

That stray comma between ‘independent’ and ‘journalism’ carries a hint of one or more adjectives discarded from earlier drafts. Without any inside knowledge, one can only speculate as to what else might have been thought to constitute valuable qualities for ‘our’ journalism. Vigorous? Authoritative? Challenging? Well-resourced? ‘Watchdog’? How about professional? There are other possible descriptions that might hark back to the cyberoptimism of past decades, or allude to continuing hopes for more equal societies, to be reflected in media: inclusive, democratic, pluralistic, accessible.

‘Independent’ is nonetheless a provocative and appropriate choice as the last adjective standing for journalism in its time of crisis, especially in the call for a consultation process about public service media. It would be easy, and not necessarily wrong, to reflect on how RTÉ’s standing has been burnished through the Covid-19 pandemic because of its connection to the State, rather than any independence it might enjoy. In a crisis that has seen a necessary focus on official national responses, audiences have turned to the national broadcaster as a favoured authority.

What are we to make, then, of ‘independence’ as a value beyond this moment, and how can State policy encourage it? This short submission is based on four imperatives that reflect principles and practices of media independence – ideas that I believe should guide policy on the future of media.

### **1. Complement RTÉ with democratically directed funding for not-for-profit (but not necessarily amateur) media.**

The national broadcaster’s position can and should be defended, and I have little doubt the Commission will hear many such defences. Public funding for independent media, however, must now go beyond historic limited support for community broadcasters and piecemeal payments for worthy programming. There is no question any longer of whether market mechanisms alone can provide informative and thorough journalism at every level, from hyperlocal to international: they cannot. The commercial local radio sector, for example, has fought to keep community radio initiatives in a tiny, underfunded box, where they may serve, at best, as amateur ‘testing grounds’ for would-be broadcasters; meanwhile, these

same commercial stations have all but abandoned any pretense of providing local news, with local newspapers close behind them in this regard. From local to national level, media must be understood as an area where public aid is vital and for-profit actors' complaints about market distortions can be safely ignored in the public interest.

At the same time, public aid should not be used by for-profit media to top up their advertising revenue.

The model of the 'Citizenship News Voucher' (CNV), developed in the United States by scholar Robert McChesney and journalist John Nichols, would be one way to direct such support, albeit not the only one. Limited only to not-for-profit enterprises that meet a minimal threshold of 'journalism', these vouchers would direct funds to media organisations according to individual taxpayers' annually declared preferences – not their websurfing or channel-hopping behaviour. For several years I have run experiments with students whereby each got control of a notional €100 and divided it among the media organisations of their choice. Invariably, the majority of the students' chosen funding has gone toward relatively niche, minority or local services with a clear public-service orientation. (They are allowed to choose from a long list of organisations, mostly popular and for-profit ones: under a CNV system such organisations would be encouraged to convert to non-profit status.) The students have always freely admitted that their favoured media outlets under the CNV were not actually the organisations they read or viewed most often, but rather the ones they saw as most socially and journalistically valuable.

Such an exercise repeated at national level would be a basis not only for democratic and pluralist funding of media, but also for media education, as organisations would seek to persuade members of the public to direct support in their direction. A public entrusted with such a responsibility is one that could rebuild its often-troubled relationship with plural, reinvigorated media. I also believe media that both employ and address the interests of the working class, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and others who are neglected at present would be encouraged by such a system.

Public media, especially in the digital age, must mean participatory and accessible media, not merely media that are state-connected. This and other ways of supporting independent media could help to achieve that aim, well beyond the largely technical questions about the best framing of licence fees.

## **2. Don't treat Big Tech as an inevitable fact of life, even a regrettable one – let alone as 'partners'.**

There is nothing natural or inescapable about the process that has seen the human desire for information and sociality commercialised to an unprecedented degree through digital surveillance. Such transactional surveillance at the level of the click, scroll and keystroke is not simply exploitative, not merely repugnant to individual and collective rights to privacy – but the processing power it involves constitutes an unacceptable drain on the planet's energy resources. Big Tech is killing us.

State policy and the State's position in transnational bodies such as the EU should be to limit, disrupt and ultimately destroy the tech monopolies, and to build publicly supported alternatives that do not repeat the ills of those companies.

In the meantime, the companies cannot and should not be regarded – even with due hesitation and caveats – as partners in society’s efforts to achieve desirable media-related goals. This insistence on antagonistic independence from Big Tech relates also to the next point.

### **3. Resist the temptation to censor, or to encourage censorship by media companies and platforms, in the name of countering disinformation.**

I submit this document in the aftermath of extraordinary scenes in Washington DC. Given the levels of conspiratorial thinking evidently present among the Trump-supporting protesters, it is understandable that a great deal of analysis has already focused on the ‘informational’ rather than material roots of these events. Misinformation and its deliberate subset ‘disinformation’ are real problems for our politics and societies.

However, a commitment to independence as a value in media and journalism must mean that governments and platforms are not empowered to render undemocratic judgments about what constitutes ‘correct’ information.

As Yale University’s [Jack Balkin told the New York Times](#): ‘The central problem we face today is not too much protection for free speech but the lack of new trustworthy and trusted intermediate institutions for knowledge production and dissemination.’ You do not build trustworthy institutions by censoring the untrustworthy ones, but rather by slow and principled processes like the one described under point 1, above.

In the meantime, we must reverse the trend that has seen Mark Zuckerberg and Jack Dorsey turned into the world’s unaccountable information czars, able to silence even the president of the United States. As desirable as that may feel, it is the opposite of a democratic, independent media.

### **4. Look gift horses in the mouth.**

Just as our policies must not accept a world in which the most important decisions about media production and dissemination are made by Facebook, Twitter and Google, we should cast a wary eye on assertions that journalistic independence is buttressed by various innovations ushered in by the market and/or philanthropy.

Gifts from billionaires to news media outlets are highly desirable if you’re the editor at one of those organisations – and as I have written elsewhere, journalism has never been pure and cannot afford to be choosy. Nonetheless, such beneficence encourages a form of dependence that is arguably more problematic than reliance on public monies. As scholarship in this area has suggested, it may also encourage approaches to journalism that are more aligned to elite interests rather than to the information needs of a broad public.

Similarly, exciting developments in the funding of journalism, especially the boom in subscription income flowing to writers and podcasters through platforms such as Patreon and Substack, should be examined carefully for how they may direct funds away from important day-to-day reportage and toward a small number of attention-getting celebrity commentators – like an OnlyFans for opinion-writers.

Unlike the views I outline above about addressing the tech monopolies, I do not suggest it the place of public media policy to disrupt and destroy such narrowcast subscription platforms, which may indeed make a valuable contribution to the media environment. However, the sorts of contributions they make, like those made by philanthropy, cannot compensate for the evident failings in contemporary media that better-directed public funding can address.

[REDACTED]  
Record #165  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 16:14

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** Future media

Hi,

It has often occurred to me that RTÉ favours holding a bias against the church in Ireland. So few of the beautiful carols were played before Christmas. In the morning there is very rarely, if ever, a mention of the feast of the day even if it's a prominent one in the eyes of the church. The epiphany for example. I heard several mentions of little Christmas, women's Christmas etc But not once of the beautiful feast on January 6th of the Epiphany. When it comes to life and living I get the impression that RTÉ is in favour of ending life, not saving it. The mention of euthanasia for example didn't seem to convey the fact that it's murder. But where we badly need help now is being given a balanced view of the state of the practice of abortion in Ireland. The numbers of unborn babies killed has grown so much since it became legal. The government seems to ignore this. We need you RTÉ to look at what's going on. Life is short. We'll all answer for our actions or lack of action at the end of our lives. Let's try to make the world a better place for our having done our part courageously and willingly. Please do the right thing.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]  
Record #166  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 16:00  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** submission

Hi, Here are my ideas of the future of the Irish media

There are some good media outlets. Mainly the local media and newspapers and radio stations. Local newspaper, eg Echo in Clondalkin, Tallaght, Wexford People, Galway Observer, Galway Advertiser. These are valuable and should be protected. They provide information to local communities. I would try and protect the local papers if possible.

I am not so sure about the national papers though.

They should not be subsidized in my opinion by the tax payer. Why because in my opinion a lot of them just reflect the views of the main political parties, eg Fine Gael and also the Democratic Unionist party.

They do not cater for voters of say Sinn Féin. And also have very little Irish language content.

Other Irish media successes are the excellent TG4, and other Irish language media. Example Raidio na Gaeilge. Is é mo thuairm go bhfuil na stáistiun seo an mhaith. I would say subsidize TG4 and Irish language media in general.

RTE, well they have improved a lot recently. And have tried to reflect different viewpoints. That said they are still very pro Fine Gael in particular. Their current affairs dept have fairly close links family wise to both Fine Gael and Fianna Fáil. And to me this should be called out.

RTE don't have enough Irish language programming on their platform aswell. They should also try and reflect more of a Christian ethos. I like the American tv channel- EWTN. It shows good Catholic and Christian programs.

Ní go leor cláranna teanga Gaeilge ag TG4 fresin.

There should also be more Science and Technology programs on RTE.

Programs I like on RTE- "10 things to know" science program, Also the family orientated programs.

To sum up:

Tax payer should fund local papers, but try and insist on a certain quotient of Irish language content. Tax payer should fund TG4, and also RTE but once again only on condition that Sinn Féin viewpoints are allowed.

Irish mainstream media- well I would not fund the Irish Independent or Sunday Independent. They can go bankrupt for all I care.

Regarding the Irish Times, only to be funded if they have Irish language content, and allow Republican viewpoints too. After all the Irish flag is Green! white and Orange.

Finally just look at the USA for an example of what can happen if the media is perceived as being biased. There is deep divisions.

This is what happens when a certain media viewpoint is allowed to go unchecked in my opinion. We need diversity in the the Irish media. Not just a certain viewpoint.

Is mise le meas,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #169  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Date:** 7 January 2021 at 12:23:49 GMT  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Irish Language Broadcasting

A Cháirde,

I have confined my submission to the amount of time given to Irish Language Broadcasting in Ireland. A recent Coimisinéir Teanga Report indicates that less than one per cent of broadcast time is given by RTE to the Irish language broadcasting. If this is the state broadcasting position on the first official language it is a safe bet to say that the amount of broadcast time given by the commercial and community media sector to Irish language broadcasting is perhaps nearer to .01 percent.

I know that my own local radio station Radio Kerry is listened to by approx 85,000 people on a daily basis, that amounts to about 60 per cent of the population of Co Kerry, a very good result for my local radio station. Radio Kerry had one weekly programme on a Sunday evening in Irish, I think it has now been discontinued. This means that thousands of people in Kerry never hear a word of Irish spoken on their local radio station, it is as if Irish is treated like a foreign language on Radio Kerry. Some people might say if you want to hear Irish on the radio you can listen to Radio na Gaeltachta.

The state cannot rely on the schools alone to promote the use of Irish on a daily basis. Most people listen to different radio stations or watch some television each day. It is imperative that the state if it wishes the first official language to survive as a spoken language that it encourages by its laws and financial resources the use of Irish in everyday communication by the people. This is where local, community and national media could play a major role.

A certain amount of time or number of programmes should be given over each day to Irish language broadcasting. This could be done in an informal way and is currently being done by the likes of John Creedon and by Fiachna Ó Braonáin who continuously use Irish in their radio programme. They should be applauded for their approach to the language. They are setting a trend that could be followed by many others. It is sad that most of the high profile personalities on TV and Radio never utter a word of Irish in their daily programmes. Some would be utterly opposed to the language as one of them recently likened Conradh na Gaeilge to The Taliban.

Shouldn't the commercial and community radio stations be requested to adopt a similar approach to Irish Language broadcasting. The state by its laws could enforce such an approach, though given its current attitude to Irish it is likely to be a failure. I would prefer if the state would adopt a "carrot" approach, that is the state would set up a special "Ciste na Gaeilge" fund for local, community, commercial and national radio stations. This fund would be paid on an annual grant basis where those stations have proved to an independent body that they have shown a major commitment to the daily use of Irish in their broadcasting schedule. A financial incentive might persuade these stations to change their attitude to the use of Irish on a daily basis.

I trust that you will give my submission due consideration.

Is mise





Record #170

Ruari Sparks



## **A submission to the Future of Media Commission**

Author: Ruairi Sparks

Tuesday 5th January 2021

I would like firstly to express my regards to the commission for opening up their work to public consultation on this vital issue. As we face increasingly uncertain times, establishing a sustainable framework for the media landscape in Ireland both from a journalistic as well as entertainment perspective will be of paramount importance. Your work will be pivotal in ensuring that Irish people continue to be well informed about the world around them, that the Irish media industry and the many people who work within it are able to prosper, and that the sector continues to be a viable industry to work and earn a living in.

The question that I am best placed to answer in this consultation is Question 2- *How should public service media be financed sustainably-* particularly relating to *'What opportunities exist to develop and implement business model and organisational changes within the public service broadcasters'*

Before attempting to answer it I should provide some context about myself. I am a Television development producer currently working on a cross border basis between Dublin and Belfast for one of the UK's leading independent production companies. I have worked in the media industry since 2012 and after spending the last 8 years working for various companies and broadcasters in London returned back to Ireland to try and make a career here and use my experiences and skills to create new and exciting programming here. I submit my ideas to the commission in my capacity as a TV producer, but also as a freelance creative with my own ideas on what changes I would like to see in Irish media, particularly in relation to the independent TV broadcast sector.

The scale of the challenge facing Irish TV producers is a large one. Revenues are being increasingly squeezed and competition for eyeballs has never been more fierce. Despite this, as producers there has never been as great a hunger for well-produced creative content and as many platforms on which to distribute it. It is my view that the Irish TV sector currently underperforms in terms of its creative potential but that with a few changes the sector could become a powerhouse of creative innovation, storytelling and ingenuity.

Here are my suggestions:

### **An online first approach:**

- Traditional PSB commissioning structures need to be overhauled with commissioners favouring an 'online first' approach instead of one dictated by linear schedules. Public service broadcasters run the risk of losing an entire generation of viewers permanently if RTE commissioners continue to ignore a digital first policy. This is not to say linear TV is dead, but that there needs to be a much greater emphasis on digital platforms as that is where the audience is going and is likely to be in the future. Which leads me to the second point:
- People are increasingly watching content whenever and wherever they see fit and to do that we need to have a top of the range online player that does not crash, is easily navigable and contains live as well as play back options. It is not acceptable to me that RTE's player does not function as well as UK offerings in particular with regard to live streams of sporting events. This should be one of the first things to be addressed.

### **Features and Formats:**

- Formats are the biggest growth market for the future of television, whether that is in scripted or non-scripted formats. I propose a new 'creative label' is set up between RTE and the BAI with a view to harnessing the creativity of top producers and content makers in this country. The objective of the creative label will be to create scripted and non scripted formats that can be sold around the world, bringing a new revenue stream into the Irish TV industry. The creative label would not be the producer of these formats if green lit but would operate more as an ideas shop. RTE would retain a first right of refusal on any ideas created by the scheme which can then be bid on by Irish indies to produce. The creative label would be assessed on how much revenue it has generated by the sale of formats internationally and would be reviewed after 3 years of operation.
- Scripted formats like *The Bridge*, *Homeland* and others are big money makers both in their home markets plus once sold internationally. As far as I am aware there has not been many scripted formats originating out of Ireland which have been sold on the international market which is a disappointment for a country that prides itself on storytelling. To help address this I propose a trade mission to Israel and Denmark- two countries who have had major successes in this space to learn what can be done differently here.

#### **RTE Terms of Trade:**

- Further to the above, in order to better encourage and harness the suppressed creativity of the indie sector, there will need to be a change to RTE's terms of trade particularly section 5.15 of the Code of Fair Trading Practice 2013 relating to formats which I highlight below:

*'In the case of formats originated by producers where RTÉ is the first broadcaster to commission and broadcast the format, RTÉ shall be entitled to receive up to 15% of all consideration received by the producer from the 13 © RTÉ Code of Fair Trading Practice October 2013 exploitation of the format rights in all media throughout the world in perpetuity excluding for the avoidance of doubt (i) any revenues paid to the producer by RTÉ arising from the exploitation of the programme commissioned by RTÉ, (ii) production fees paid to the producer where the producer is commissioned to produce programmes based on the format and (iii) fees and expenses paid by a third party licensee of the format rights to the producer in respect of individual consulting producer fees PROVIDED that such production fees and consultancy fees and expenses are in line with custom and practice in the international television format licensing industry.'*

It is my view that this essentially amounts to a disincentive on creativity. What is the incentive of an independent production company or development producer generating a new hit format that can be sold internationally if RTE is entitled to 15% of all revenues if it has first broadcast the programme? If a producer has created a format and that format has been commissioned by RTE, he or she should own the back end rights to that format and should reap the benefits from its distribution in other markets. The 15% charge on format has stifled the development of Irish independent production companies and has hindered the ability of the sector to sell working formats abroad. In effect, it motivates the Irish productive sector to confine themselves to importing successful formats from abroad rather than invest in developing new formats within the Irish market. It is in my opinion this is one of the essential changes needed that could bring more funds and ambition into the independent TV production sector.

It is my view that with these changes ,the Irish independent production sector could attract more funding to develop the creative side of the industry which is an essential ingredient to becoming a more serious and respected player internationally.

I would be honoured to make my submissions to the commission in person should the commission deem it necessary.

Many thanks.

Ruairi Sparks

[REDACTED]  
Record #172  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 13:45  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Funding of the media, including public service-related journalism

To whom it may concern.

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **1. Funding training and development of journalists:**

Conor Brady suggests today that funding should be provided for ongoing training and development of journalists ('Mechanism needed that enables funding of media', Opinion, Irish Times, 7th January).

Journalism today is under threat from two directions. The unchecked growth of Facebook, Google, Amazon etc has enabled a small group of single-minded obsessives to gain control of what whole swathes of the world's population sees and reads. This has implications for us all.

The other threat to journalism comes from within its own ranks. Groupthink flourishes because recruitment to the profession increasingly lacks social, intellectual and ideological diversity. University journalism courses add to the problem by churning out graduates invariably imbued with the trendy prejudices of progressives and leftists. Thus journalists are often engaged in advocacy but cannot see it because it doesn't occur to them that there is another point of view.

It's hard to see how even more 'training' will solve either of the above issues.

### **2. Encouraging media diversity and fair reporting:**

- With so much advertising revenue going now to the likes of Facebook, Google, Twitter etc the state should work to ensure that there is, as far as possible, a level playing pitch for all media operating/based in Ireland;

- VAT and other taxes should be rated at zero for newsprint and other consumable and measures taken to minimise other charges levied on publications, publishers, broadcasters, news or book printers etc by the state and local authorities;

- The amounts awarded for libel and defamation should be capped BUT this should be on condition that broadcasters and print media etc provide full and prominent coverage of any finding against a media outlet. The 2019 successful action by Kevin Myers against RTE's Morning Ireland for branding him a Holocaust denier is a case in point. The settlement and apology from RTE got only brief mention on Morning Ireland AND there was no mention of it on the main RTE News bulletins later the same day;

- to protect media and litigants from extortionate legal fees the state should undertake to deal effectively with legal costs and court delays;

- allowing the state or some state quango like the BAI to direct control over which newspaper or broadcaster gets grants, subsidies or other financial assistance will result in a chilling effect on reporting. This has happened in Sweden with regard to migration-related matters;

- specific measures need to be taken to reduce the dominance of RTE in Irish broadcasting. RTE's dominance REDUCES diversity and narrows the range of views available given the leftist/progressive bent and bias of RTE producers, researchers, directors and journalists.

Yours etc



[REDACTED]  
Record #173  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 13:02

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** Media bias and lies

Dear Sir or Madam,

Re: Media bias and lies

As an alien in the 'New Ireland', I am shocked at the misinformation, bias and outright lies that appear daily in the Irish media. I am referring to the mainstream media, in particular RTE, and the three main daily newspapers, The Irish Times, The Examiner, and the Irish Independent.

The media in Ireland is the voice of liberal/ secularist ideology. It is a one-eyed Cyclops that sees only what it wants to see. Why can't we have balanced reporting and balanced journalism? For instance, the greatest scandal in the world today is the deliberate killing of unwanted, unborn lives. In 2020, it is estimated that abortion killed 42.6 million human lives. Why is the Irish media silent on this massacre? For honest people, all human life is precious, born or unborn. For me, truth matters.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #174  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 13:31

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:**

The power of the media in all its forms is incredible; that power brings incredible responsibility to present fair and balanced perspectives on all issues to educate, not brainwash, the public. In particular, issues on pro life, abortion and euthanasia. Please be that fair and balanced media.

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[REDACTED]

Record #175

[REDACTED]

## Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?

A long tradition of public service broadcasting is one common trait in Nordic countries, with all rights granted through legislation and accompanying agreements, with a commitment to national culture and language through a broad range of programmes made available on several platforms. The key component is editorial freedom: Nordic countries tolerate no interference from the State. In Ireland, with regards to public service broadcasting, the BBC has long been the paragon par excellence. Why is this? Its reputation in the UK and Ireland around the world is based upon its fundamental values of editorial integrity, independence and impartiality. How can RTE, for example, guarantee editorial integrity, independence and impartiality when Irish defamation laws continue to exert chilling (and sobering) effect on its role as the public's watchdog and its ability to investigate and reveal matters of public interest. However, it is obvious that in a rapidly changing media landscape, public service broadcasters need to adapt if they are to sustain the public service which they provide, and legislation and regulation by the Irish government will need to evolve – with a sense of vision - to ensure a regulatory framework which is fit for purpose. But in the not too distant past, it was a good bet that hell would freeze over first.

## Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?

The funding of public service broadcasting is also an ongoing issue in Scandinavia. The traditional and current financing system (like Ireland) via television licenses is quite common but there have been innovations. Denmark has a household fee on any equipment capable of receiving programming (which inspired Pat Rabbitte when he was Minister for Communications), while Iceland replaced the license fee payment with an individual media fee (tax) in 2009. Finland's has had a new income-linked tax since 2013. In Sweden, the financing question is the subject of an ongoing government commission on public service.

Further afield, in Australia, there are two public service broadcasting organizations--the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), both modelled on the BBC, so they both operate television and radio networks. They are currently in the process of redefining their roles in the new multichannel broadcasting environment while responding to political pressures to become more commercially oriented. This process of change is causing difficulties and uncertainty, particularly for the ABC.

At home, there has been a marked decline in the number of independent production companies working, for example, in the genre of arts, because of financial precarity: companies cannot survive on shrinking budgets. On a lighter though no less serious note, a recent RTE programme which came in under the umbrella of culture, *Deirdre O'Kane Talks Funny*, featured a cast of guests who all worked in the past with the host on RTE. Is it asking too much for RTE in the future, instead of relying on, ahem, dynastic serendipity – nepotism seems a tad extreme - to source future talent and new ideas from further afield i.e., beyond relatives and friends and beyond independent companies exclusively owned by relatives, friends or former staff. The biggest casualty of, and challenge, for RTE programming is not diversity or imagination but innovation. However, shrinking budgets remains the enemy of innovation and the death knell for the independent sector.

## Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?

It's a fact of life that in the news media, more consolidation means less journalists. This is the way of the modern age. In America, the largest 25 companies in 2018 accounted for nearly one-third of all newspapers, up from 20 % since 2004. The philosophy of the purchasers of newspapers in Ireland, for example, is determined by expectations about return on investment. I worked for a profitable family-owned newspaper in the South East, founded in 1902. It was sold to a large media group in 2011 and in 2017, following cuts to staffing, it

folded overnight. Which brings me to the question of an independent public service media in Ireland. Trees have been felled defending it but for my tuppence worth an absence of independent media – whether it is print or broadcast – hinders the democratic choice, and what are we as a country and a people if we are not free to choose, if our choices are compromised because we are ill informed. The raison d’etre behind public funding for public service media is not rocket science: serving the public interest, more important than ever in the era of social media, whose function is not the dissemination of the truth, as we saw with the assault by mobs on the US Capitol in January 2021. Here was a prime example of public service media broadcasting shedding light on a moment of hate kindled by social media, which operates to no regulatory framework and is - the antithesis of journalism - unaccountable. When a growing number of Trump officials resigned after the attack on the Capitol, the BBC commented that ‘resigning in protest from a job that ends in less than two weeks is not much of a profile in courage.’ That quality of analysis is always worth paying for.

[REDACTED]

04/01/2021

[REDACTED]  
Record #176  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 17:51

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** Free speech

"Hi,

*I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut by any means possible. Freedom of expressing any point of view have to respected. If you don't agree with what other people say, it ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling. A free society is build strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP. The people is smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them. Freedom must be the Centre of a society. Otherwise, everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling. Free speech, freedom, liberty. Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble. And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not. So, start acting like civil reasonable persons and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view."*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #177  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 17:45  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:**

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED].

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Record #178

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 18:06  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Media

Dear sir,

I would like to ask you to be more fair in your political programs. I think there ought to be a measure of how often certain parties get air time. Certain parties are not given anytime at all, and others get an excessive amount of time. It ought to be all above board and transparent.

Thank you

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]  
Record #179  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 18:03

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** Future of Media

I suggest that in future in the news media the pro life issue should be discussed in a fair and balanced way rather than in the loaded prejudiced way the issue has been dealt with up to now.

This has been done by use of the false balance technique whereby equal weight is invariably given to the most cruel inhumane views without moral or ethical characteristics.

Hearts of flint masquerading as concern for others.

Regards

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]  
Record #180  
[REDACTED]

## Submission to the Future of Media Commission

From: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

I dtus baire, ba mhaith liom buiochas a ghabhail leis an gCoimisiun as an deis mo chuid smaointe a chur os bhur gcomhair. I'd like to firstly thank the Commission for the opportunity to put my thoughts before you on this matter.

My background is that I worked for 30 years in regional newspapers, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] For family reasons I'm not involved in papers on a daily basis at the moment.

I'd like to think that this time in regional papers has given me a good insight into the workings of journalism in Ireland, myths and realities. Putting it out there a little, as it were, I would say that my life perspective at this later stage of my life is conservative, certainly on social issues perhaps not so much so on economic ones.

Certainly in terms of national media, I find this seems to have put me at odds with them in terms of social issues, me and 30% of the population who have the temerity to think differently!

I think matters such as our traditions and culture, our identity, are important and sit easier with a more conservative approach rather than a liberal approach.

Whether or which what has developed now in our national media is a great “groupthink” with those of other viewpoints deliberately excluded – this “groupthink” has become alarmingly wide in its breadth and range, not just social issues but now a range of other issues – there’s only one view allowed.

There has been a big push towards consolidation in the media here, both locally and nationally, for some time now and this also greatly reduces a diversity of thought in the industry and I think reduces the service to the local community invariably. It can also greatly empower a small group of individuals and this is also contrary to the common good in my view.

I think regional newspapers have not gone to that level of intolerance (as at national level) and are an

important local service. However, it seems that there will be less of them in the future for a number of reasons (eg. population issues in some local regions) and it's difficult to see how much can be done to stop this. Obviously money transfer would be of some benefit but I would think there would need to be a good deal of money involved and these are straitened times – perhaps something in the area of a reduced VAT rate or special tax exemption. It would be no harm to insist as part of this that they carry an article in Irish, local history, on local tradition or some such.

As regards local radio one point I would suggest, but perhaps cannot be implemented, is that each radio should not have an exclusive area in which they have virtually a monopoly on radio matters – maybe the areas should be bigger but there should be some level of competition in each area, thus not again giving a small group a great deal of control

and power. However, as stated, this is possibly not very feasible.

Returning to the national scene, what would be helpful in my view is that there be pressure in RTE and other outlets, broadcasting and print, to carry views other than those “groupthink” ones. Even starting with specialist programmes.

I’d also consider giving special incentives to set up a newspaper or new broadcast station that ensured thought diversity through being conservative, thus the only national conservative outlet in the country, a sign of national maturity. I’m acknowledging people may not be enthusiastic about such a course of action, but it would be a help to the overall media offering and I believe there’s a good market there for it.

Following through on that word “market”, again it may seem cruel to say but the figures can tell a lot about a situation. For example, there has been a great decrease in the hardcopy sales of The Irish Times. I believe a lot of that is based on the ideological mindset of the national media described above and, basically, people get bored of being lectured at.

On the whole there's been a reduction in resources, partly because even local papers are very money-focused nowadays while previously many were family owned and there were other considerations, and this lack of resources, and at times also a lack of competency, is seeing more and more poor newspapers at both a local and national level. There's possibly a growing lack of discernment on the part of the public as well, they have lowered their standards and don't seem to even fully realise

they are sometimes getting a second-rate news and features product.

Obviously another factor is the great growth in the world of social media, and of the companies involved such as Twitter, Facebook, Google. Because they are effective opponents to the indigenous media, I would favour ensuring they are paying their full share of tax here, and efforts made also to ensure they are not avoiding tax as well as evading it. There's a global responsibility we have to ensure they don't use our borders to avoid tax that is important to countries throughout the world.

Leading on from that is a further source of strong competition to indigenous outlets from foreign ones, particularly from Britain, in the form of broadcasting and newsprint. I find it difficult to say anything against that, as our indigenous media

should be able to fend off competition which is basically coming from outside the country. In terms of newspapers support could perhaps be given through their printing and distribution networks (subsidising some aspects of this perhaps?).

To return to RTE, which I understand is central to the work of the Commission, for the reasons outlined previously I don't think the conditions are there to make it a good idea to enhance the situation for RTE. I understand they are already in receipt of large state subsidisation, through the licence fee and so on, and I wouldn't support extra funding, though I would support the ring-fencing of a certain amount of funding already given on an annual basis for services such as Raidio na Gaeltachta, TG4 and the orchestras. There is a great great deal of money there to run a media organization and they should not be indulged further. A radical approach might be to increase

their funding but to stop their having advertisements, thus leveling the pitch for other major media outlets.

Given that it is effectively a state-subsidised entity I think wages at the station should be capped at 150,000 euros per annum at RTE, including for the “stars” and I think that would be popular with the public who are seeing liberties being taken with the public purse in a lot of spheres.

Thank you for your attention,

Le meas,



[REDACTED]  
Record #181  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 18:26  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission re Future of the media.

In the wake of the recent appalling lapse of taste and judgement on part of RTE in transmitting a blasphemous, puerile and most unfunny sketch on the New Year countdown programme, and indeed of the blatant partiality of most of its coverage of the debate prior to the legalisation of abortion in the Republic and in Northern Ireland, among other reasons, I feel our public broadcaster needs root and branch renewal. While I would concede that some of its output is excellent, in general, especially on RTE2, there is a debasing of our general culture in the choice of films shown, in its comedy output and in the reality show format and content of many of the programmes.

Our national broadcaster should have far fewer advertising slots, and less crass advertisement quality in general. There should also be less reliance on repeat programming and imported material of all kinds.

Our national public broadcasting, and especially our news and current affairs programmes, lack intellectual rigour and input from people with an excellent knowledge of philosophy, history, aesthetics, foreign languages and cultures, to name but a few specialisms. This results in a lack of perspective, and in a failure to achieve the objective of public broadcasting to educate as well as to entertain. Thankfully TG4 programs are of a very good quality overall.

Regarding the future of social media, given the globalised nature of its input and outreach, I think the discussion of this topic would be best done at European, if not at global level.

This submission would be better if I had had more time for a broader reflection, but since I only became aware of the request for input in the last few days and with deadline looming it is as it is.

Best wishes,  
[REDACTED]

7

[REDACTED]

Record #182

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 18:23  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Balanced Debate and the future of Media

Dear Sir/Madam

Hope this finds you well. As you both contemplate and navigate towards a new vision for Irish media, I simply ask that you allow more balanced debate and freedom of speech. To this end, I would place a number of important categories in this, but want to ask that Pro Life debates are balanced between both side.

Many Thanks

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

1

[REDACTED]

Record #183

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 18:35  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission

Dear Sirs/Mme.,

Being forced by law to pay taxes to sponsor the mouthpiece of our political ivory-tower dwellers and those they are beholden to is far from the true spirit of democracy. In fact it smacks more of dictatorship.

Our EU overlords and their Irish marionettes care little for the majority of the native Irish. Their aim seems to be to use every means possible, including our media (rather, their media) to further their agenda of reducing practising Christians to just another minority in their own country. This dumbs down opposition to our so-called leaders, thus enabling them operate with impunity and ease in whatever manner they wish.

How is it that true and meaningful debate never takes place in our media? What the powers-that-be want they always get, by hook or by crook.

True democracy would insist on a totally independent media, transparent media, honest and unbiased media. This we do not enjoy. The media debate on abortion or rather farce (where one point of view was clearly favoured by members of government and media alike) demonstrated this amply as did the various joke treaties imposed upon us from Europe.

The only true media are ones where both members of the media and governments collectively have no say. As individuals, of course, they would have a say but no more say than anybody else.

Propping up media via taxation in any type, kind, shape or form de facto places seriously in question the intentions of those proposing such taxation. Media are thus beholden to those who pay their bills to play the appropriate tune on the respective occasion - again just like all referenda past.

Our media and our politicians need to stop pontificating on democracy, eulogising on the pseudo-liberal rights of tiny minorities while bullying and brow beating the majority into submission, and begin to show us meaningful and transparent democracy. After all, is that not their job, their purpose, their raison d'être?

We are not yet an independent-minded nation, thanks to our media. Independence of mind will only happen subsequent to the eradication of the national inferiority complex. This complex ensues from centuries of cowering under British Rule and is most pronounced among our politicians and media. They are so tanned around the mouth from obsequiousness and deference toward Deutschland et alia that they are barely recognisable as Irish. They spurn an Irish accent, play down the Native language and bend over backwards to suck up to world opinion and show how "liberal" and ultra "modern" they are. We were not waiting for pseudo-modern liberalism to carried our proud and ancient

culture around the globe. Our inferior leaders and anti-Irish media are selling off and stamping out our culture while patting themselves on the back en route.

Our media seem to think - as do their overlords - that Dublin somehow has a divine right to decide everything from normalisation of perversions of every hue to social behaviour.

We have at the helm of our society a very lost cohort of sheep who profess to be leaders but who in fact vie with one another in pursuing the lowest common denominators of human behaviour at every turn. So chronic is their inferiority complex.

Leave media fund itself entirely and let's for once see true and transparent reporting instead of the cocktail of lies and half-truth we have been fed on for decades.



[REDACTED]  
Record #184  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 18:38  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission on the Future of Media in the State

Attention: Future of Media Commission.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am e-mailing you regarding the future funding of media in the State. As things stand, for the benefit of RTÉ, the State, in the proposed broadcasting tax, will extend the tax, that is the TV licence, making it an effective household tax, designed to cover RTÉ's losses. It has been suggested, also, that failing print media should be supported from taxpayers' money.

I do not believe that the reported problem of 'fake news' can serve as rationale for the funding of media outlets by the taxpayer, outlets that cannot support themselves, and do not adequately, or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. Irish people are being forced to pay taxes towards programmes that openly mock their beliefs and undermine their principles as Christians, or their politics, when it doesn't conform to the Left-Liberal model.

- RTÉ make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs, and in particular, Catholic beliefs, but not those of other faith-based groups. The failure by RTÉ to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith-based group internationally, and especially in Nigeria, is a case in point.
- The controversy continues over the New Year's Eve Show 'comedy' item, on the idea that the Holy Spirit raped and impregnated Mary. That controversy is due, in part, to the refusal by the station to take down the clip of the offending item, on the grounds that it is satire, and on the grounds of freedom of speech. This, despite the fact that everyone admits that there is no earthly way they would permit such a skit of another religion [REDACTED].
- The mechanisms in place, to deal with unresolved complaints, appear meaningless, as it is now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against Catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible, or to make meaningless, any comment it may make in the future on the New Year's Eve Show 'comedy' item — for or against.
- The BAI, as you know, has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of every episode, it is stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God-fearing days. He is portrayed as the Devil or a vampire. He curses, blasphemes, and tries to extort money, by announcing 'all sinners welcome for a fee', and uses black magic in every episode 'to drag people back to Church'.
- In one episode, a trio sent to fight him, see a host/Eucharist suspended in mid-air, while heavenly music is being played in the background, and the trio quip that the host is Jesus, that the hosts are being used by the priest to make, and sell, crisps with a black-magic Catholic guilt-trip spell. In a closing scene, the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine, Ciara, says: 'your cheating days are done, priest.' 'Fantasy Island' is pitched as a project, and is funded by the BAI.
- 'The Late Late Show' has openly mocked the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and has had guests on who have referred to the Eucharist as 'magic bread'.
- While a large number of young adults may have left the Church, or do not practise the Faith, this does not exempt RTÉ, or the BAI, from adherence to the equality values it often trumpets, nor from its own guidelines on deliberately not provoking offence. It is

questionable whether this exclusive targeting of one religion, to the exclusion of all others, would come under the proposed hate-speech legislation.

Rather than subsidizing them through a national tax, I propose:

- the defunding of biased media outlets.
- that the funding of the BAI be stopped, and that its membership be reviewed.
- that the BAI be monitored on how it deals with discrimination against faith-based groups, and the Catholic Church, in particular.

At present, the BAI cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the New Year's Eve Show blasphemous 'comedy' item, seen as the BAI, itself, has funded deeply offensive skits.

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature and name of the sender. The redaction is composed of several overlapping black shapes, creating a solid black area that obscures the text underneath.

[REDACTED]

Record #185

[REDACTED]

*Are you worried about fake news? Is independent journalism important to you and to society? Do the media reflect your experience of the world? What could they do better?*

*The media are important for our democracy and society. They inform public debate through independent, journalism. They reflect and promote the lives, language, art, sport, music, culture, traditions, and identities of Irish people at home and around the world.*

*The Future of Media Commission invites you to tell us what you think the future of the media should be. We want to hear your views on public service media in Ireland, wherever you live in Ireland or around the world.*

---

## **Comment**

With one important exception, I would concur with your statement that: “The media are important for our democracy and society. They inform public debate through independent, journalism. They reflect and promote the lives, language, art, sport, music, culture, traditions, and identities of Irish people at home and around the world.” I would include the word “should” between “They” and “inform”. Because, regrettably, they do no such thing. The main media outlets, both broadcasting and print media share a uniform “left-liberal” mind-set to such a degree that their slant on almost any public issue is predictable. The term “group-think” has been applied on more than one occasion to the underpinning biases of our media people. Fairness and balance are concepts which appear utterly foreign to these media producers. The presentation of news has a number of dimensions, and the main-stream media displays a bias, which is of concern to me, in each one of these dimensions:

1. The selection *and omission* of items for news coverage.
2. The extent of coverage given to items, including the repetition of certain items across several editions/bulletins.
3. The choice of language used to present items.
4. The content, choice of guests, and tone of “soft media”: chat shows, phone-in programmes, culture shows etc. tends to enforce the message being delivered by the main news programming.
5. The tone adopted by interviewers, and the degree to which searching follow-up questions will be pursued: if a favoured person is interviewed a fairly soft-tone is normally adopted; if the interviewee does not share the media mind-set he or she will be interviewed in a more aggressive and insistent manner.

In the run-up to the referenda of marriage and abortion, RTÉ, Newstalk, and the main print media outlets rarely tried to conceal their bias in favour of change. And this bias is still on display. As but one of countless examples, Ryan Tubridy recently used the platform of his daily radio show to opine that Ireland in 1990 “was a cold place” “where women had no reproductive rights”. Equally, from before the time of his election, right-across-the-board,

RTÉ and all the other media outlets adopted a strongly anti-Donald Trump position which was pursued relentlessly right up to the present. While this bias may be excusable in a privately-owned media outlet, it is simply unacceptable and unprofessional on the part of a publicly-funded broadcaster. Indeed, so ingrained and unconstrained are the biases of our media that one frequently gets the impression that they are convinced that all their viewers, listeners and readers share their world view. Or maybe, they are so arrogant that they simply do not care about the feelings and views of those who are not on their wavelength (no pun intended!)

In each of the 5 dimensions that I mentioned at the start, the mainstream media fall very far short. They do not provide fair and balanced coverage. In that sense, they are very much purveyors of “fake news”.

While I can choose not to purchase or support in any other way many media outlets which I have discovered to be hopelessly biased, the position with RTÉ is not the same. If I wish to have a TV set in my house, I must, perforce, subvent RTÉ through my TV licence. Which brings me to the question of Public Service Broadcasting:

- To me, the concept is patronising, somewhat insulting, and out-of-date. Indeed. It smacks of “mother knows best” and seems curiously at odds with the concept of individual choice.
- If public service broadcasting ever made sense, it does not do so now, in an era of globalism and instant news. It looks like the Government are trying to get a genie back into a bottle – but they are much too late.
- An educated, intelligent population, as the Government are constantly telling us we are, should be trusted to use our intelligence and education to discern what is reliable and what is not. Can the state not trust its citizens to make up their own minds on the reliability of an outlet – bearing in mind that there are countless sources of information available both nationally and internationally?
- Who can say what constitutes “public service” in this context? Certainly, RTÉ does not perform any “service” of value to the public that I can discern, apart from confirming some in their pre-existing biases while irritating others.
- I get the point that some in Government are concerned that social media outlets are unregulated and misinformation may be circulated as a result. Well, the solution to this problem – if a problem it be – certainly does not reside with the existing outlets which, because of their slantedness, are at least as guilty as any online source of purveying misinformation.

Even if one were to accept the obsolescent concept of public service broadcasting, we are left with the problem of the uncontrolled bias of those who bring us the news. This is a major cultural issue and does not allow of any obvious short-to-medium solution.

In summary:

1. I am currently very dissatisfied with the fairness of the main-stream media, especially RTÉ which I am forced to subvent.

2. I believe that the TV licence should be scrapped and RTÉ should be required to fight its way in the market place alongside of other media outlets.
3. I do not support the patronising and meaningless concept of public service broadcasting.
4. I would be totally against any State support, either directly or indirectly, for any of our media outlets.



7

[REDACTED]

Record #186

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 18:46

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** Public Consultation

My issue is with RTE because I am paying a TV License which is going to support it. I think it needs to be overhauled in its entirety.

Firstly too many people in RTE are being paid exorbitant wages. We hear back that they will go elsewhere. Let them go. They are not good enough anyway.

Secondly, they do not provide a middle of the road view on important issues. Most commentators/interviewers display a bias which has served to sway public opinion when people go to vote..

Thirdly, they show political leanings in the way people are interviewed, who is interviewed and time allowed to selected panelists.

Fourthly, while I expect interviewers to be critical, it is not their role to be aggressive and this has become very prevalent in RTE even on programmes that are supposed to be entertaining.

Lastly, I am in the 70+ bracket and find very little to view/listen to on any of the RTE stations.



Please do not print this email unless you really need to. Many thanks.

[REDACTED]  
Record #187  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 18:46  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future Of Media

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. For too long now the MainStream broadcast & print media instead of reporting the news and having balanced debate pursue their own liberal marxist agenda and in doing so exaggerate what favours them & undermine what they don't agree with. This is tantamount to corruption. They are not held to account by anyone! They are feral & out of control! Their bias is quite obvious when it comes to commenting on events in the US or UK!

Whilst they may allow similar times to both sides on certain programmes the presenter will go easy on those who reflect his/her views but almost attack those with contrary views! This is wrong. This can be countered by having two presenters with different views but that is not the answer either.

rte should be immediately defunded by cancelling the licence fee as it is loss making, biased, with its anti-Christian agenda, & with its employees earning enormous salaries. Let it fund itself from advertising like every other station.

To get government funding (which is our taxes) will only compromise whatever integrity they have left as they will continue to be propaganda agents for such governments rather than hold them to account which is their role!

Why should people of the Christian faith pay a licence fee to an organisation that openly & brazenly mocks their beliefs and undermines their values.

We have recently witnessed the contempt rte has for those with Christian/Catholic beliefs but would not dare offend any other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally is another case in point.

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland should be disbanded as it is also biased against those of a Christian/Catholic faith. A new body with new members should be established to uphold decent journalistic standards.

In summary defund rte & disband the bai! Let media outlets fund themselves from sales & advertising like the majority do. We do not need a national broadcaster especially one funded by its citizens who abuses its power, nor do we need a government to fund any media outlet as this can lead to conflicts of interest, corruption, & a blind eye being turned when the truth matters!

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

7

[REDACTED]

Record #188

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday 7 January 2021 18:52  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future Funding of Media Ireland

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is now the TV license, to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax which is designed to cover RTE's losses.

It's been suggested also that failing print media could be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payers funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria which may be at risk of genocide is another case in point.

The controversy has continued over the outrageous skit on God raping and impregnating Our Lady, in part due to the stubborn refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's just satire and an expression of freedom of speech.

This despite everyone knowing, that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

Furthermore, the mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear useless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs in particular, as to make confidence in the system impossible and any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know, has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell to trick people back to Church.

In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". All pitched as a project to and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, plenty of people still do. In any case, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation if not one of the anti discrimination grounds.

So we propose defunding of biased individual media outlets ( rather than our subsidizing them through a national household tax ) that happily break their own regulations and I would say, the law, as long as its about Christians and Catholics in particular.

If you the Commission on the future of the media, propose to advise further funding to RTE and similar outlets then you are furthering the discriminatory practices outlined above. Stop funding RTE or other media outlets through a coercive license or tax which guarantees a conflict of interest in journalistic independence when the government of the day part pays journalists' salaries. Enough journalists have joined government ranks as it is. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI (and in turn of RTE) so as to not engage in discrimination against just one faith based group. The BAI cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

██████████

[REDACTED]

Record #189

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media should be fair and represent and respect all groups equally majority as well as minority groups. Information given should be complete and unbiased with all voices being heard. Currently I believe this is not the case

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Not sure but I do believe probably out of public service pocket. That said they should behave as such

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Current regulations are definitely not adequate as I believe that all groups do not get equal gearing eg pro-life groups, homeless and mentally ill.



Record #190

Michael Glennon



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I feel a greater focus upon community radio & television stations could be beneficial. This could serve communities both through the production of content with local relevance & also by offering a platform for training, work experience & so forth. I feel it is important that there should be an emphasis on community stations producing work to the highest standards. It is important to work hard to banish notions of community media as sub-standard. There should also be clear pathways for outstanding work produced in the community sphere to progress to broader platforms. I would also like to see public service media support artists & the arts more directly. This might happen by providing artists with direct opportunities to create work for these media platforms or, in the case of music, by supporting grassroots artists more thoroughly (radio play can constitute an important & welcome source of income for many musicians).

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Licence fee. Advertising. Governmental support.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

It should be as free as independent as possible but should be required to function to high professional, ethical and moral standards. For instance, misinformation, intolerance or hate-speech can not be tolerated.

[REDACTED]  
Record #191  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

All I know about the media in general is what I read in the newspapers every day and I always feel disappointed with the liberal views of so many journalists and the lack of balance and voice given to anyone deemed to be in any way conservative. What particularly got to me was the coverage of the US recent election. Day after day only the Democrat side of the argument was covered so it does not matter about someone like myself who would have liked to read some good Republican coverage of events. Balance is fair and democratic and should be afforded to the public, Pro-life issues are not getting a fair airing either, totally unfair and unbalanced. I feel so let down. Also, on Saturdays, there is a young female journalist who writes appalling articles, very insulting to women. She should be censored. I am not sure if this is what you are looking for, however, I am not happy in general. I want truth in the news and all points of view taken into consideration.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I have no ideas on these questions, sorry.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I don't know.

[REDACTED]  
Record #192  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

There should not be public service media. All media should be independent. Rte are a propaganda machine for the government .

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

They should be self funding through advertising etc

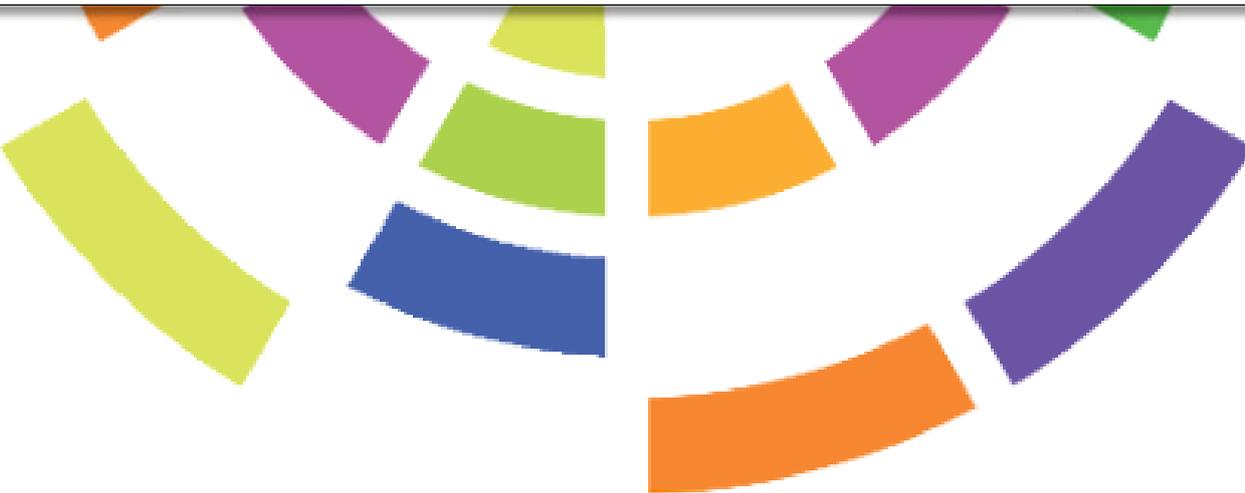
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

It should not be governed as it will then be subject to its governors and their influence. Independent media is the way forward.



Record #193

Ciaran Murray



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I believe that engaging and innovative public service media content could be delivered, but it takes imagination and courage from the members of this commission. The Sound and Vision Scheme needs to be expanded, and developed, but still keeping a tight focus on the principles. The majority of us accept that most Irish radio offers very little genuine diversity, with lots of stations playing 'hits' with a few competitions (really ads), often presented by white, middle class males. These services are mostly profit driven and this has led to a bland and often repetitive service for listeners. I suppose this type of radio has its place, but it certainly does not merit state support. The aim should be to recognize and reward content that goes much beyond this. RTE does a good job, but often it is in competition with these services and therefore ends up mimicking them. Lyric FM and RnaG do a fine job. Journalism needs to be supported, but not news bulletins on local radio. Social affairs journalism affairs coming from a range of sources and voices, such as that supported by the Mary Rafferty fund would be worthy of support. Newspaper investigative Journalism could be supported but Newspapers would also need to submit to regulation, and not just be self-regulated. With regard to learning from other countries we can learn from examples across the EU, especially Austria and Denmark, where Community Media is given real support, which allows it to function effectively and offer a real diversity of information, and programming. On Irish language there needs to be more support for Irish language media. RnaG is trying to be too many things to too many people. Ireland needs a national Irish language station that is not solely aimed at the people of the Gaeltacht. A combination of Raidio na Life and Raidio Failte (in Belfast) could, with some extra support provide this. Raidió RíRá could be further developed too.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

You need to ensure that the Sound & Vision fund does not get swallowed up by the Film Industry. There are other sources for funding film, and in recent years more and more of the Sound and Vision fund has gone to film and this is damaging for broadcasters. The Sound and Vision Scheme's recent approach on Social Benefit for Community Radio is welcome and progressive, but the current ring-fenced amount is too low, and this undermines the sustainability of some broadcasters. Track record needs to be a key factor in determining where funding goes and not only the type of licence that a station holds. The likes of Netflix need to be levied, so that Irish content can be produced, but not just Irish content for Netflix, there needs to be a licensing which allows other producers to make and other broadcasters to also show this material. This is especially true in the case of Irish language. Trust in media agencies is key, and what better way to learn trust than to participate. This participation is delivered by community media. Citizens, with a focus on youth are trained and produce content, with expertise given by professionals. This approach engages people and gives them a sense of ownership of public service media. This type of approach could be supported.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The idea that media are independent and local needs to be challenged. Much of Irish media is only independent in that it is not state owned. This makes it independent of state, but not independent of major commercial forces, such as phone and communications networks. These parent companies sometimes have huge resources, and it is wrong that the state should be funding part of their enterprises. Furthermore many of these services use syndicated material, leading to services which are not local at all. Support needs to be given where local services are maintained in a locality, employing local people with local ownership, and the profits put back into developing the venture locally. Not-for-profit ownership is a good model for media and should be supported.

[REDACTED]  
Record #194  
[REDACTED]

## **How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

First, don't agree with my answer being "directed".

Second. You presume that we agree with government taking a role in the running of media. When government is funding media, media is no longer free, independent or unbiased. That's the end of free speech and the birth of propoganda. Government may use media from time to time and pay like any other customer for services rendered. That said, it is the media outlets responsibility to broadcast the TRUTH in an unbiased, timely, independent manner. It is lack of truth that has cut sales in newspapers, magazines and stopped people watching TV. The pushing of values not native to the culture like it's the norm is another factor. Consumerist ideology another. People turned to the internet because there were no ads at the time.

Another factor was the ridiculously high pay scales of certain presenters, nepotism in RTÉ and having relatives involved in politics. It goes on. Many of us no longer want to be told lies. That's why we stopped listening to, watching and reading you. If you want to fund yourselves, it's simple. Tell the truth, report what's going on in this country. It shouldn't matter what Trump is doing 24/7. Why wasn't the Garda beaten up in Balbriggan by a bunch of youths reported? Why wasn't it reported that the nuns had nothing to do with the babies bodies being desecrated as they were but it was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] whatever about anything else that happened in other places? It shouldn't matter who or what they are. Sensationalist news is old. As for programming. Sex is now boring. Titilation is a dime a dozen. You've lost the people's pulse. People want good stories. Not loads of flesh scenes. That's just pornography [REDACTED]. Young men and women, teens and now even tweens watch this stuff and think they're supposed to behave in the same way, not realising it's fiction. Their emotional life, mental health and even physical health gets screwed up because of it...thanks to your programming. You can't blame it all on the internet. But it's society's fault. How is it Trump can be named, blamed, shamed and his resignation called for, for "influencing" people on Capitol Hill in America but media isn't held accountable for influencing countless young people to terrible life choices? One could even call it child abuse...but the language keeps changing so much these days it's hard to keep up and the definition of what a child is, is being brought lower and lower...just so certain people are covered legally speaking that is. As for other jurisdictions, learn from Netflix. Don't sexualize children. Other jurisdictions can do what's for their jurisdictions. Its about time Irish media stopped looking to other countries and started thinking again for themselves instead of following the world and started showing some journalistic integrity.

## **How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Unbiased, even handed broadcasting and reporting with equal time given to both sides of an argument, no interrupting the speaker until they've answered the question. Sick and tired of presenters and commentators showing no manners by cutting across the person speaking and likewise the speakers to the presenters. Basic etiquette. Still taught in schools! Wait your bloody turn! We want to hear what people have to say. Not what is basically jumbled garbage with the likes of [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

As for funding, that's simple. First, fire all your big names. They've screwed us enough with their salaries so they either agree to a earning no more than 50,000 a year or they can jump ship. Second, people get in on their merits and NOT nepotism. Jobs for the boys days are over. Third set up an account, independent of government! Tell people that all those who still want to have TV and radio broadcasting get in contact with the tax office and tell them that 1% of their taxes is to be contributed

to the TV license. (It is OUR money after all. Not the government's, much and all as they like to think otherwise.) You can't be an objective reporter if the government are holding the purse strings. Let's face it. When RTÉ withheld the story on Mary Harney until after the elections all those years ago, that was the beginning of the end for you lot regarding objectivity. You influenced an election outcome. Then you wonder why people won't pay the license? When a TV license isn't being paid, it's because the viewers aren't happy with the content. Change the content. One time people had no problem leaving their child to watch the TV alone. Now it has to be watched like a hawk for fear of what comes on. What happened to the nine o'clock watershed? If you're not old enough to be up past nine o'clock, you're definitely not old enough to have sex so adverts for condoms or lube or abortion clinics shouldn't be on show. Maybe you should just die with dignity. The more I think about all this, the less I think you should be funded.

### **How should media be governed and regulated?**

What the??? WHAT has the E.U. or anyone else got to do with Irish media and how it's run, regulated or otherwise? They should have no say whatsoever! When did they get a say? Who said they could have a say? When were we sold out? As for vibrancy, forget it. You won't compete. You're too small. Set up legislation that no one can own more than one media provider. By that, I mean for example, you can't own the Irish Times AND the Irish Independent AND the Evening Herald. (You can't have shares in RTÉ or radio is another example. It's not independent if that's the case. It's responsible to the shareholders who may have an agenda.) Besides, practices like that lead to media control. The owner can control the narrative, regardless of what the editor might say. That's dangerous. Also, if that is the case, they should amalgamate the other papers under one title or sell the other papers to independent buyers with no previous relationship with the owner...no third party buyers either. They need to hold the paper in the new name for at least ten years or something to avoid fraudulent activity. Regarding current legislative and regulatory controls, we'd need to know what they are first in plain non legalistic language before we could comment.



Record #195

Theresa O'Donoghue



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

At present the media is doing a disservice to the public by avoiding the climate crisis. We need covid19 style response across all media platforms. Social media should be better regulated and that should be overseen by government. Only this week social media played a major role in a fascist attack on Capitol Hill. The state should never have let things escalate so much via the media.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

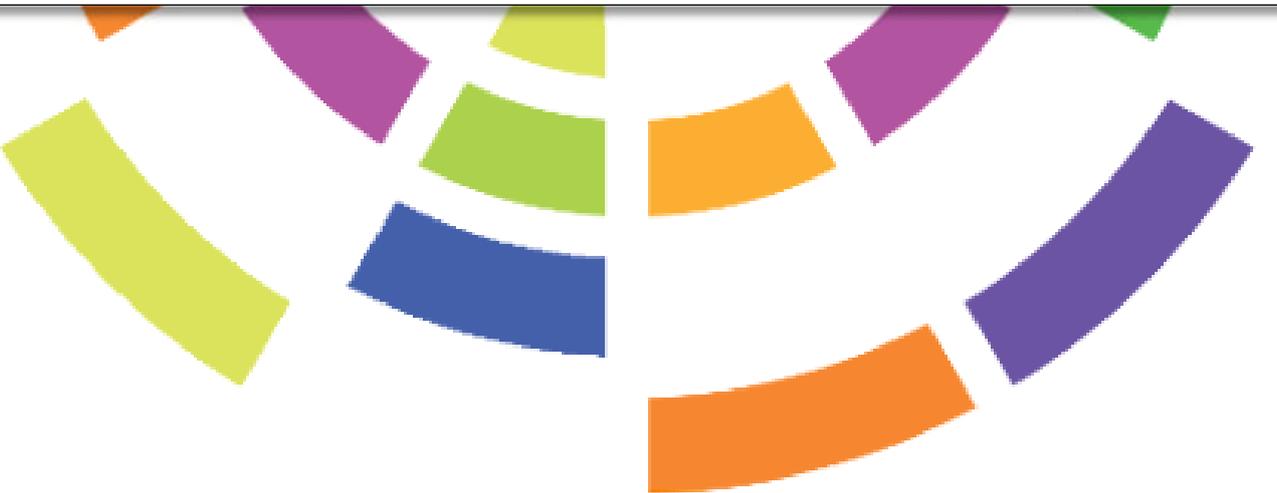
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Government should oversee and ensure no abuse occurs.



Record #196

Gerry Crowley



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Government should sponsor all Media in Ireland. Particular note to be taken of our Irish Culture and all aspects of same... Religion to be reported on in a fair manner and not in a biased manner as is presently the case...

Why is it that the Catholic Church is constantly under fire by most of the Contributors employed by RTE ? I have no problem as a Catholic acknowledging that the Church through some of its People acted wrongfully and deservedly have been shamed for same.... But I object strongly to the constant berating and ridiculing of my Faith and those who are practicing as best they can..... The same scrutiny is not afforded to other Religions..... I wonder why ?

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

By the Taxpayer

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

By a Body which includes persons of all Faiths and None



Record #197

Brendan Crowley



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I believe the Government should refrain from promoting its anti-Catholic, pro abortion, liberal ethos via its public media broadcasting. Please allow a genuinely balanced debate on these topics as opposed to what currently exists. RTE serves us a lot of groupthink ideas which do not represent a sizeable proportion of the public's views.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I believe that it is crucially important to continue to have a free to air broadcasting service which is free from political and commercial influence.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I think it's vitally important that RTE actively listens to what people are looking for and how they are responding to content. The recent anti-Christian sketch which aired on New Year's Eve was disgraceful and demonstrated such bad taste. There appears to be a very obvious hostility towards Catholicism in RTE's broadcasting. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #198  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

THE IDEA OF "PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA" IS OVERSTATED. I CAN SEE NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RTE OR ANY OTHER MEDIA OUTLET YOU WISH TO MENTION. ALL ARE PLAYING THE SAME TUNE WITH THE SAME AGENDA. SADLY THE ONLY DIFFERENCE ONE COULD MENTION ARE THE OVER THE TOP SALARIES. WHY SHOULD TAX PAYERS BE BE SADDLED WITH THIS COMMITMENT ? I AM NOT IMPRESSED WITH THE LITTLE PUBLICITY REGARDING THIS COMMISSION - NICE AND QUIETLY AND WE'LL GET IT DONE - HANDS IN THE SAME POCKETS! GOVERNMENT SHOULD HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA EXCEPT TO GET RID OF IT OR DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE SALARIES AND THE NEPOTISM. I HAVE NO EXPECTATION THAT IT WILL BE CHALLENGED IN ANY WAY BY THE POLITICAL CLASS AS BOTH ARE ON THE SAME GRAVY TRAIN! LET THEM MAKE THEIR OWN MONEY AND PUT LAWS IN PLACE TO MAKE SURE ALL ARE TRUTHFUL. THERE ARE PLENTY OF GROUPS OUT THERE WORKING ON SPORT AND CULTURE- ONLY A SMOKE SCREEN TO JUSTIFY THEM.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I HAVE DEALT WITH THESE IN MY LAST ANSWER - SADLY DISSOLUTIONED AND TAKEN FOR GRANTED

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

THERE ARE PLENTY OF OUTLETS OUT THERE AND I WONDER WHY ONE NEVER SEES ANY INTER CHALLENGE BETWEEN ANY OF THEM - FOR INSTANCE FOX NEWS AND OTHER OUTLETS IN AMERICA- ONE CAN DISAGREE WITH FOX NEWS BUT AT LEAST IT GIVES ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW. WHY IS THAT NOT EVIDENT HERE WITH OUR PRESENT PUBLIC SERVICE MEDIA. WE NEED A TRUTH COMMISSION TO REGULATE BIAS AND COLLUSION. I BELIEVE THERE IS A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF SCEPTICISM BY MANY PEOPLE ABOUT FAITH IN THE MEDIA PUBLIC AND PRIVATE.

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[REDACTED]

Record #199

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The Government should strive for media that is balanced and covers all areas of society. For some unknown reason the media has become very secularized and does not portray the input or values of people with religious faith, recent abortion referendum being an example. We need a more balanced approach to show views of all of society. RTE comes across as very anti religious.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

It should be provided on the basis that content in no way offends any section of the community

With new generations growing up with technology the outlets for print media is going to diminish. New ways of providing economically produced print media will need to be developed

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Current controls are not adequate as large parts of society can be marginalised by the media. This needs to be reviewed.

Record #200

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government should promote content on public service media that is good for the Nation instead of just being entertainment. Materials such as exercise shows or classes as well as educational material on Irish history.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The TV license must be abolished and the Public service media paid from the general government budget with a substantial cut to the amount paid. RTÉ has consistently shown itself to be a waste of money.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Media should be put in legislatively that they must be unbiased and fair.

[REDACTED]  
Record #201  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I would like to see the media being treated more careful but those in the media. Each person dealing with finance and the public needs to be independently qualified but I see the media having a lot more impact in peoples lives than a finance teller. The subtle presumption of public opinion during presenters conversations should be not allowed and the presenter should be trained and sign a code of ethics just like a professional coach would. This would be a great development for public media.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I am happy with current system.

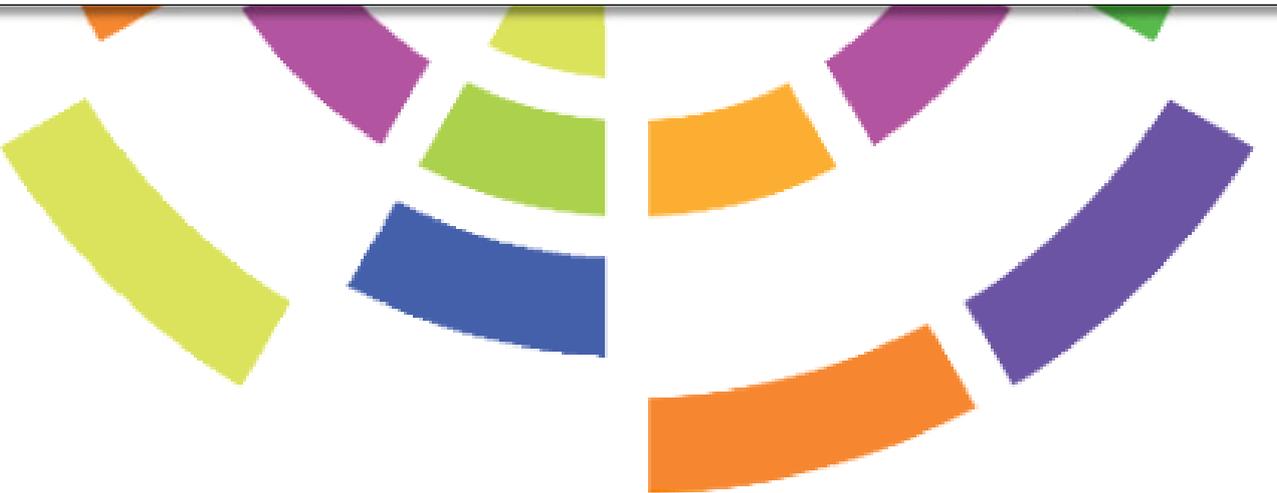
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I believe in free speech and I would worry about too much regulation. But the Huge bias towards the liberal left (irrespective of my persuasions) is hindering free speech. I have heard and see very good discussions ruined by zero representation from an opposing view. This happens mostly in religious and pro life discussions all the time; I.e. the Prolife side is not represented at all! This leaves those people feeling they are paying for a soapbox for an unchallenged opposing view which is not intellectually honest.



Record #202

Liam Heffernan



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Telling the truth for once, without the spin and omissions would be a start. I'm only filling this in to possibly save one soul from their continued debasement by their continued service to an entity which is rotten to the core. Get out now before the lies consume you entirely. Things dont change till enough people do, so leave the devil's den and strike out freely and independently. No amount of money is worth trading for a life lived in attainment of truth.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

If you provided a genuinely unbiased service, and allowed all people equal access to expression of their opinions people would gladly pay a licence fee, but without culling the heads of departments who are key to implementing the globalist programming, your numbers will continue to dwindle and those still wrapped by yer deceit will continue to suffer.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

You have been gagging the public for years, but now i guess ye want to make the truth illegal completely. I hope you fail and that some of ye come to yer sense before all that is good is lost.



Record #203

Aodan MaacDonncha



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The B.A.I.(Broadcasting Authority of Ireland) in my view should be given an augmented role in covering the above list of sub questions of Question 1 and Question 3. In reality when we have a fair, transparent and acceptable funding model for public service broadcasting that will fund a regulator like the BAI they can do the job. We do not need over regulation. Funding should be available to train and develop the skills of young journalists in Print, TV, Radio and modern Trusted and accountable social media. I see nothing wrong in giving not alone TV and Radio public funding provided the authors and sources of the public service content are visible and transparent. In Ireland we should have a system of public broadcasting content which is our desired model and not controlled or dictated from outside Ireland and they should abide to our laws, culture and rules. The Irish language given its status as the first language of Ireland and under threat needs a specific funding stream via TG4 and an upgrade of Radio na Gaeltachta to a service catering for all Irish speakers.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The Funding model is the key to Good well regulated and acceptable Public service Broadcasting. We need a grow a culture that the public will be willing to pay for a public service broadcasting charge and it receives a transparent service from those organisations who avail of the public funding for providing public service content in print, TV, Radio and regulated Social Media providers( accepting Irish laws). The current TV licence has not changed since its inception from the time RTÉ TV was launched in 1962/63. I was involved in the change over from Analogue TV to Digital TV in 2012 via a contract with Dept of Communications, I was employed to target older people to change their TV Aerial, Change TV or purchase a Set top Box providing Saorview or free to air digital receiver. By doing nothing they would lose TV reception. We received Citizen and Community feedback that the TV licence was funding RTÉ only, younger adults under 40yrs view or listen less to RTÉ those 40 plus. Also the same younger people were paying subscriptions to SKY, Netflix and were paying a licence to fund RTE and rarely viewed or listened to RTÉ channels/Services. They saw TG4 as part of RTÉ also. The crucial issue here is how to levy a broadcasting or media charge on the public. There is little or no follow up on licence fee collection door to door in rural areas given the time and cost involved and so many houses may not be occupied in rural areas. An easier method like attaching it to the local property tax and to all business premises who have a Eircode. In reality every premises that has a named address or occupier is liable and its up to each occupier to prove they do not have a TV, Radio, tablet, smartphone and any device connected to broadband or an aerial capable of availing of a service of Broadcasting on their premises.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Yes ,Beef up the B.A.I. and find a collection vehicle like Revenue to collect the charge. I would suggest at this point fix the Collection method of collection of the Media Broadcasting Charge and then reconsider the role of the BAI and Government control, external operators like any foreign media service operating in Ireland and value for money to person or organisation paying a media Broadcasting charge. We could also levy such foreign operation drawing an income from Irish consumers of the Services i.e. if they wish to operate here they must fund the costs of say rural broadband as an example and have a licence to operate here and be regulated by the BAI. I would also say that RTÉ despite its chronic under funding also needs to get its cost base in better order. They must prove transparent value for money, however they need a capital investment of €100-150m to upgrade its equipment and sites in Ireland. Generally RTÉ are excellent for the National events they broadcast year and comparing them to the BBC , however the same can be said of Virgin media TV for their size.



Record #204

Anna Sheeran



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The pro life issue should be dealt with in a fair and balanced way.

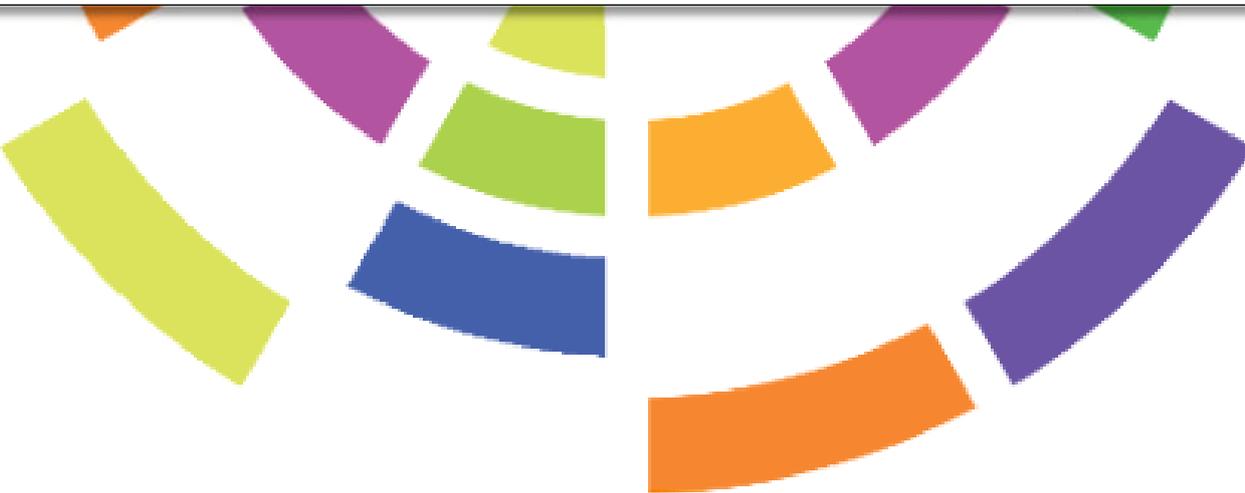
**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #205

Neil Carmody



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media ought not to exclude, as it increasingly does, the perspective of those who seek to sustain the place of traditional families in society, scientific data on the human rights of all our people from preborn children to senior citizens and historically and medically mainstream views on gender identity. It should resist the increasing replacement of traditional faith views with the new religion of cancel culture. It should not allow funding or other legal supports to drown out debate or minority views.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

There should be no central or enforced taxpayer funding of individual media organizations such as RTÉ or large newspaper firms but all organizations, especially local and voluntary ones, should be entitled to draw from government funding on a shared basis if they draw support from their own media consumers within the community. Social media and technology companies should be subject to the same imposition of rules as are at present at play for local and national ones.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

There is currently far too little representation in the media of the views of a huge proportion of the public who believe that the right to life has to be protected and promoted from conception till natural death.

Record #206

What is the best model for future funding of public service media in Ireland? What approach best supports independent editorial oversight while achieving value for money and delivering on public service aims?

Public service media should be financed through a progressive taxation system. If advertising continues to play a part in funding, efforts must be made to ensure that ad sales do not influence content - eg. an awareness of revenue generated by banking ad sales must not have a chilling effect when it comes to investigating and reporting on wrongdoing in the banking sector.

What challenges are posed to a vibrant, independent public service media by increasing consolidation / declining plurality of ownership in the Irish market?

When it comes to news, a dwindling number of exceedingly wealthy owners will have a toxic influence on society in general, but also on public service media. The responsibility to maximise shareholder value will mean that certain stories and narratives are pushed, while others are suppressed - distorting reality. This is not good if we want an informed electorate. Public service media must act as a bulwark against this (necessarily) pro-corporate agenda. This means having a robust investigative arm, and not relying on privately-owned media in order to gauge public sentiment. Public service media, such as RTE Radio 1, should be very careful about having segments, the point of which is to read and discuss newspaper headlines. This could contain very biased information. At the very least, thoughtlessly announcing newspaper headlines helps disseminate the message of private interests. Just look to the UK to see what happens when a handful of billionaires gain control over the media environment - even BBC news programs parrot talking points generated by these biased publications.



Record #207

Paul O'Sullivan



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The Government should be, more supportive about Prolife issues. Everyone's life matters. They are far too one sided, on these matters. I dont think Tech companies should dominate, the funding of the public media. Crowd sourcing is a better option. It should not be funded by individuals, who only have their own agenda to look after

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I think it should be regulated, by the Government and not by the EU

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[REDACTED]

Record #208

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Stay as it was in 1970's, no need to change

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

By Taxpayers, public funding

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

By being impartial,

[REDACTED]  
Record #209  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Efforts should be made to provide balance and opposing views need to be heard. Liberal agenda should not be favoured over conservative agenda and vice versa

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Abolish licence fee. Make it a subscription service.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Don't know but it can't be allowed to be used for government propaganda - there needs to be dissenting views - pro-life opinion largely silent in recent repeal referendum. This needs to be prevented in the future.

[REDACTED]  
Record #210  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

As a public service, all elements of public life should be reflected in an impartial and unbiased manner. No section of society should be ridiculed. Pro life proponents should get Equal time with abortion supporters. News items should be portrayed impartially. Funding should come only from advertising. Salaries should reflect real living costs and not "fairy tale" life styles.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #211

Martina Ui Ghuairmain



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Government should assure free speech.

Government should make certain that there is debate and to avoid monologues.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I've no idea how you might do this without vested interests having influence.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Please insure an end to censorship.

Please Insure sure debate.

Please insure there is no putting down of various groups.

The constitution recognised the family as the natural, fundamental and primary unit of society. It is important to support this in our media.



Record #212

Teresa Haughney



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I feel Government should ensure that public service media is fair and balanced. Evaluation has not been very thorough or carried out in a just manner in the past few years. Government should ensure that journalists are trained to a high standard of impartiality and moral standing. From a personal point of view I feel the pro- life issue was not and is still not being reported on in a fair, just or balanced manner.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Perhaps public service media could be funded by a balance of public and private funding thus ensuring accountability.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I feel there should be an independent, fair and balanced media oversight committee set up which would continually monitor public media and be given the power to impose sanctions in the event of unjust or unbalanced coverage. This Committee should change every three/ four years.

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[REDACTED]  
Record #213  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I do not wish to offer opinions on these questions.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I have significant concerns regarding the coverage of climate change by the public service media. The media has yet to internalise the terrible risks posed by climate change. The joint oireachtas committee on climate action had several recommendations regarding coverage of climate change which should be adopted. These include that BAI should adopt guidelines and measures to ensure comprehensive and accurate coverage of climate change, a code of practice for advertisers and that BAI should consider (their word not mine, I would use the word adopt instead) a mandated quota of climate change programming. I additionally believe that all employees on news and current affairs programming should receive educational trainings about climate change. Too often when changes are proposed to the status quo, however small, the media covers these proposals through a lens that presents not adopting these proposals as a benign choice when in fact the choice of doing nothing has its own negative consequences. I feel that better understanding of climate change and its consequences in the media can lead to a better framing of climate related issues.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I am very concerned by the growth of disinformation and the proliferation of conspiracy theories. I am writing this on 07/01/2020 the day after the US capitol buildings was stormed by radicalised conspiracy theorists. Sections of the online world are absolutely toxic and this has tragic real world effects. Much more effort needs to be put into fact-checking, content moderation and this needs to be accompanied and enabled by strong regulations. The fact-checking and content moderation efforts need to be done quickly in real time as the pace of transmission of disinformation can be terrifying. To accompany this the conventional media needs to be more literate in disinformation, conduct more fact-checking and better inform and educate the public about the dangers of online radicalisation and social media filter bubbles.



Record #215

Gerry Jeffers



## Submission to *The Future of Media Commission*

I wish to make two simple suggestions to the Future of Media Commission:

1. Media education should be given an integrated and coherent position in the formal school curriculum.
2. RTE, as the national broadcaster, should critically assess its contribution to educational broadcasting since its foundation and take action to address a serious gap in its service.

In 2002, I made a submission to *The Forum on Broadcasting* (Appendix 1). Re-reading it from the perspective of today, it is clear that many of the points remain relevant.

Looking at the devastated social and educational landscape since the closing of schools in March 2020, RTE's *Home School Hub* stands out as one of the really positive, imaginative responses to the crisis. It's success underlines what's possible in educational broadcasting. For those who regretted RTE's limited commitment to educational broadcasting, the closing of schools presented a new opportunity and much credit is due to the prompt RTE response (see, for example) <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/education/dear-rte-rte-could-rejig-its-tv-schedule-to-become-a-substitute-for-school-39053898.html> ). As we head into an uncertain school environment for 2021, the absence of a bank of radio and TV resources for schools is a striking national deficit. Ring fencing a percentage of the funding for public broadcasting specifically for educational broadcasting and media education might be an important outcome from the Commission's work.

Compared to the world of 2002, the need for a critically media literate citizenry is even greater today. This current Commission might survey existing curricula and see the various ways in which the formal education system is promoting media literacy. The findings, I suggest, are likely to show some important curricular spaces where learners can engage critically with aspects of media, including the fake news you mention in the advertisement seeking submissions. But, I suspect, the findings will probably also show a fragmented and incoherent strategy. The Commission might then engage with the Department of Education and Skills in articulating an integrated, cross-curricular, critical media literacy strategy<sup>1</sup>.

Within the formal educational world there is a great irony as young people get close to the completion of their second-level schooling. Those considering further education are faced with a plethora of material from universities and other higher education colleges. Much of this is blatant advertising. Unfortunately, many lack the skills of critical analysis to deconstruct such propaganda. I addressed this point in a submission to the 2018 Career Guidance Review (Appendix 2). If there was a sharper appreciation of the importance of media education, much of the material promoting particular colleges and courses would not be seen as ethically acceptable.

I wish the Commission well in it's challenging work.

Gerry Jeffers, [REDACTED]

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<sup>1</sup> One quick and clear example of a poorly imagined media literacy strategy can be seen by glancing at *Literacy and Numeracy Learning for Life, the National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020*, available at [https://www.education.ie/en/publications/policy-reports/lit\\_num\\_strategy\\_full.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/publications/policy-reports/lit_num_strategy_full.pdf)

## Submission to The Forum on Broadcasting

Educational broadcasting in Ireland over the past twenty-five years or so is, in my opinion, a tragic story of lost opportunities. In the brave new world of TV in the sixties, Teilifis Scoile was one of the exciting new developments. At that time one could have reasonably expected that by the start of the new century a wonderful bank of TV/video resources would be available to the nation's teachers to enhance classroom learning. Sadly that is not the case.

Even the legacy of recent years, a time of both economic boom and unprecedented educational innovation, is miserably disappointing. One can imagine how a proactive policy on educational broadcasting could have supported curricular initiatives. Within a little more than a decade there has been the introduction of the Junior Certificate and the re-structuring of the senior cycle with the wider availability of the Transition Year Programme (TYP), the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) and the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP). There have been numerous syllabus revisions and the introduction of new subjects. One thinks, in particular, of the opportunities missed by educational broadcasting in relation to the new Leaving Certificate English programme, ironically with its new emphasis on film as text, or the introduction of the new subject Civic, Social and Political Education.

Apart from the catalogue of missed chances concerning school curricula, there has also been what looks like a systematic neglect of informing the public about educational developments. One thinks of the public discussions that the Curriculum and Examinations Board (CEB) and its successor the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) tried to generate in the eighties and early nineties. Then there was the Green Paper *Education for a Changing World* in 1992, the *National Convention of Education* in 1993 and the White Paper *Charting Our Education Future* in 1995. The Convention in particular, with the unprecedented public participation of so many stakeholders put nearly all the key educational issues 'on the table' and should have been a godsend to anyone interested in capturing the essential issues. Where were the documentaries, the current affairs debates, the background investigations we reasonably expected from the national broadcaster? It's a similar story with early childhood education and adult education and the exciting concept of 'lifelong learning'.

Furthermore, when much of the debate of the nineties culminated in legislation like the 1998 Education Act, the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Teaching Council Act 2001 where were the broadcasters?

As a society, parents, students, teachers and others might also have been better informed about a massive range of other relevant educational issues, for example bullying in schools, the points system, retention and drop out rates, teacher morale, patterns of achievement, educational disadvantage, mixed ability teaching and learning, the integration of refugees and asylum seekers into schools, the education of travellers, styles of educational leadership, the role of the Department of Education and Science; the list could go on and on.

Even in the broader arena of TV drama, the citizen might have expected an occasional engagement with educational issues. Perhaps, the bruising experiences associated with *The Spike* in the mid-seventies warned broadcasters off educational topics. Even soap operas, from *The Riordans* through *Bracken*, *Glenroe* and *Fair City*, seem to succeed in constructing communities where the world of formal education is consistently marginalised.

In the context of the Forum on Broadcasting, some of the central concerns rotate around the idea of public service broadcasting. It is my belief that educational broadcasting has not only a distinct role within public service broadcasting but that its quantity and quality can be seen as one indicator of the effectiveness of public service broadcasting.

The value of educational broadcasting was very well set out in the *Report and Recommendations* of the Educational Broadcasting Committee set up by the then Minister for Education and published twenty years ago. Indeed, developments in technology mean that much of the vision put forward then is arguably much easier to realise today.

The extent to which radio and TV are firmly established as forces in young people's lives as they construct their ideas about society, relationships, politics, economics etc. adds to the urgency for a coherent policy on educational broadcasting. Furthermore, society's growing appreciation that learning is a lifelong process, strengthens the case for a clear national policy.

That 1982 report noted some of the difficulties related to educational broadcasting:

*'.....the main difficulties focussed on the inadequate level of finance, the short-term nature of the financial budgeting, the inadequate communications between programme planners and producers and the lack of a forum for consumers of the service'. (p.11)*

Sadly, many of these difficulties have yet to be addressed adequately.

In an age when the rhetoric of 'partnership' dominates, the 1982 recommendation to establish a statutory National Educational Broadcasting Council seems even more appropriate now than it was 20 years ago.

Chapters 11 and 12 of the 1995 Green Paper on Broadcasting are perhaps indicative of some of the thinking that informs RTE policy in relation to educational broadcasting. Young Peoples' programmes are seen as separate from educational broadcasting. It is my understanding from observing RTE schedules over many years, and from other sources, that funding for young people's programmes is totally separate from that for educational broadcasting. Budgets for young people's programmes are, apparently, also much greater than for educational broadcasting. Perhaps some re-thinking and re-structuring is needed



From Gerry Jeffers

*1. From your experience, how could existing career guidance tools and career information for students and adults be improved, so that they have a greater impact on students making course and career choices?*

In my experience - I completed the Diploma in Career Guidance and Counselling in UCD in 1971 and have worked in education at 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> level since, have devised and published a number of career guidance related books and resources and was course leader of the Post Graduate Diploma in Guidance Counselling in Maynooth University from 2010-2012 – recent years has seen a transformation in relation to career guidance tools and information. We have moved from a landscape of scarce resources to one where the user can be easily overwhelmed by the extent and variety of possibilities. Thus, a key issue is **quality awareness**.

Back in the late 1960s the Department of Labour produced what became known as ‘blue leaflets’. These pamphlets included job descriptions and qualifications required as well as relevant courses and contact addresses. Critically, the Department of Labour oversaw the content and thus restricted exaggerated claims etc. Today, whether in pamphlet, booklet or online, so much information is, in effect, **advertising**.

Advertising tells a partial story. Take, for example, how universities and other 3<sup>rd</sup> level colleges promote their undergraduate programmes. Literature on the most prestigious courses usually does not mention how many actual places are available. Universities and departments offering courses requiring very high ‘points’ can be the worst offenders. A simple requirement in any advertising of an undergraduate programme to include the number of available places would be a simple and effect initiative. A more ambitious project might be to give some kind of quality role regarding career-related information to an agency like the National Centre for Guidance in Education. Thus, learners could be alerted to look out for an Irish quality mark.

Since 1998 the welcome, statutory responsibility on schools to ‘ensure that students have access to appropriate guidance to assist them in their educational and career choices’ presents challenges. The model of support for students that has been developed in Ireland since the late 1960s where dedicated **guidance counsellors combine educational, vocational and personal guidance** offers great potential but this is not always realised. Being a guidance counsellor can be a demanding and at times highly individual role. Ideally, it needs the strong support of official policy, school leaders and teaching colleagues.

Challenges emerge from a variety of sources including how schools deploy personnel, the expertise and confidence of guidance counsellors, an apparent lack of appreciation of this responsibility within the Department of Education and Skills and from the school **curriculum**.

Unfortunately, there is little attention to career guidance information within the Junior Cycle. The emergence of ‘**wellbeing**’ as an overarching theme within the programme and its explicit linking of subjects such as Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) Social and Personal Health Education (SPHE) and Physical Education (PE) with each other and with the Guidance and Counselling role is welcome but prompts other questions. One is the amount of time a designated guidance counsellor can realistically allocate to engaging junior cycle students with career information within the curriculum. While the revised Business Studies syllabus may offer some possibilities two critical caveats must be noted. Firstly, Business Studies is an optional subject and so only some students benefit from any career guidance information encountered. Secondly, as the context is ‘business’ then it could be argued that certain types of careers are being ‘promoted’ at the expense of others, i.e. the subject could be accused of the ‘advertising’ mentioned earlier. I addressed this dilemma, partially, in the first chapter of ‘Education for Citizenship and Diversity in Ireland<sup>2</sup>’, noting that a typical student who opts for Business Studies is likely to encounter the subject for four classes each week over three years. In contrast, the core subject CSPE was then allocated a mere 70 hours over three years (about 1 period per week). The contrast is between an introductory overview of ‘Society’ (1 period per week) and an introductory view of one component of that ‘society’ (Business or the Economy) (4 periods per week).

Thus, curricular provision within Junior Cycle remains a challenge. A healthier situation pertains in **Transition Year (TY)**. Work experience, community service and mini-company<sup>3</sup>, in particular, offer excellent opportunities for 15-16 year olds. My own experience working with students through preparing, monitoring and de-briefing them in relation to TY work experience, suggests that such curricular engagement builds an excellent platform for career and course exploration during 5<sup>th</sup> year and 6<sup>th</sup> year. Some of my thinking associated with this three-pronged reflective approach is available in the school textbook ‘*Learning Through Work Experience*<sup>4</sup>’.

**2. *In your opinion, how do learners form their opinions around career choice including when, who and what influences these choices and which mechanisms and formats have the greatest impact on students and adults career choices?***

This is a most relevant question and one that is **under-researched** in Ireland. In my experience, career choice is complex and can vary greatly from person to person. **Family** and **one’s sense of oneself** appears to be a major influence. At school level, **peer group influences** are usually – though not universally –

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<sup>2</sup> Jeffers, G and O’Connor U (editors) (2008) *Education for Citizenship and Diversity in Irish Contexts*, Dublin: Institute of Public Administration (IPA).

<sup>3</sup> Each of these dimensions are featured in separate chapters in Jeffers, G (2015) ‘Transition Year in Action’ Dublin: Liffey Press.

<sup>4</sup> Jeffers, G (2014) *Learning Through Work Experience*, Educational Company of Ireland (EdCo).

strong. If students attend schools where in Junior Cycle they have to make subject choices, one can see these influences at play. During this process, a teacher's encouragement can also have some impact. I have seen this particularly in subjects like Materials Technology (Wood), Metalwork, Technical Graphics, Music, and Art. When students have had opportunities to sample these subjects, even for a short time, teacher opinions tend to carry greater weight though peer and family influence remain strong.

A similar pattern is evident in schools where students may have to make course choices after the Junior Cycle, in relation to the optional Transition Year (TY) or regarding the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme. Peer and family influences often override teacher suggestions. 'I want to do what my friends are doing,' is frequently identified by teachers as a strong influence when it comes to such choices.

A more complex picture emerges in relation to Leaving Certificate subject choices. Peer and family 'knowledge' often includes perceptions of subjects that are easier or more difficult to attain high 'points'. Sometimes, one sees particular interests flourishing in TY or earlier but students feeling under pressure *not* to follow their interests in LC choices. Art and Music are two of the most obvious areas where this occurs. Utilitarianism trumps interest.

This pattern in relation to subject choice tends to be repeated in CAO choices, though here an unfortunate unintended side-effect of the points system is that many students select choices closely related to their expected points achievement. This reinforces a view of courses and careers in hierarchies of status and prestige.

Sometimes, second, third and subsequent CAO choices appear to be quite random. This latter pattern suggests a distinct lack of sense of agency among some young people.

Hence, overall, **social class**, as mediated through family and peer influences, is a major determinant of career choice across the socio-economic spectrum. To answer the question as to '*which mechanisms and formats have the greatest impact on students and adults career choices*' a longitudinal study – similar to the ESRI research commissioned by the NCCA on students' experiences of moving through school or the *Growing Up in Ireland* research – with a specific focus on career choices would add greatly to our understanding. I think, in particular, investigating the pathways and decision-making of people who change careers in their late 20s and 30s might be especially revealing. In my experience as a teacher-educator I have been especially struck by those who opt to become secondary teachers after a career in, for example, business, banking, engineering or scientific research. While they may struggle greatly during their PME (Professional Master in Education) year, the insights and wisdom they bring to teaching can be very

rich. This example is just one that **challenges the traditional idea of a single career path for life** (which may be implied in the terms of reference of this review).

**Interest and aptitude tests** can, on the surface, appear to offer useful mechanisms for assisting people make career choices. In my experience, they are of limited use. Norms tend to be developed on UK or US populations and the **cultural contextual** differences for Irish populations ignored. Quite simply our population is too small to generate the numbers required to validate many of these tests for Irish consumption.

*3. Outline what measures could be designed and what framework created to enhance enterprise engagement with the education and training system in relation to providing information on career pathways for students and adults.*

As indicated in response to previous questions, career guidance information should, ideally, be **research based and quality assured**. An agency such as the National Centre for Guidance in Education could play a bigger role in ensuring such development.

I would also hope the review would recognise the significant role that is currently played in Ireland by **school guidance counsellors and adult guidance counsellors**. In my opinion, envisioning school counsellors as combining educational, vocational and personnel guidance functions is particularly inspired and relevant to the needs of adolescents. In schools where the school leadership strongly appreciates the threefold role of the guidance counsellor, the impact can be especially powerful. However, more needs to be done to consolidate this.

The 2012 DES decision to remove the ex-quota status of guidance counsellors – apparently taken without consultation with either section of the Inspectorate with responsibility for school guidance or the NCGE not to mention providers of courses leading to guidance qualifications – greatly **undermined** the position of guidance counsellors. Subsequent decisions suggest some acknowledgement of the damage done by this decision but a statement from this current review of the potential of school guidance counselling could be a valuable measure. It would be worth the reviewers' time to explore and articulate, in particular, the **contradictory views** regarding school guidance counselling that operate both within the DES as well as among some significant figures associated with school leadership. It is worth noting that, for some educators, the aftermath of the 2012 cutback on school guidance services helped them realise just how central effective guidance counsellors are to well-functioning schools, a reminder that we sometimes 'don't know what we've got till it's gone'.

A similar exploration of ambiguous views regarding adult guidance might also be explored especially among decision makers in official education and training bodies.

When re-imagining the NCGE, the reviewers will, I expect, look at the model of **CEDEFOP**, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/>). While much can be learned from this model, it, in my opinion, tends to suffer from the unfortunate separation between ‘vocational’ and other forms of education. At school level, Ireland has done well by maintaining non-specialist schools (or forcing young people to make choices about particular strands too early). The ETB sector has been particularly good at ensuring the availability of a general education to all young people.

**Other countries** offer various models of how career related information can be researched and quality assured. In 2012 I was invited to speak at a conference in South Korea organised by **KRIVET** (Korean Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training) ([/www.krivet.re.kr/eng/](http://www.krivet.re.kr/eng/)). Then, and on subsequent visits to Ireland by KRIVET staff, I was impressed by how well that organisation combines its vocational education focus with schooling in general. We could learn much from the KRIVET model.

A well-equipped **careers library** should be an essential feature of every secondary school. Ideally, this should include traditional hard copy booklets and brochures relating to courses and careers. There should also be devices to enable access to online resources such as Qualifax and others. Such a careers library such be available for all students and their parents and not for select groups or at very restricted times. Whether this facility should be incorporated into the general school library is a debateable point. Few schools have dedicated school librarians so a further value of a school guidance counsellor is that s/he can ensure that relevant material – which changes so frequently – is current.

In a broader context, the frequently excellent Adult Educational Guidance services provided by ETBs could be supported by designated career guidance information sections within the **public library network**.

*Gerry Jeffers PhD*

*Educational researcher, lecturer and writer*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

24<sup>th</sup> May 2018



[REDACTED]  
Record #217  
[REDACTED]

In view of the “comedy” sketch broadcast by RET on New Year’s Eve which was outrageously offensive to Catholics, the requirement on public service broadcasting to be respectful of different views and beliefs needs to be strengthened.



Record #218



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:00  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Re Future of Media Submission

## Re Future of Media Submission

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.
2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.
3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.



[REDACTED]

Record #219

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:59

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** Submission for Commission

Wish to make a submission on the future funding of media in Ireland today.

I feel the TV Licence fee donations to RTE must now be reviewed in view of the appalling material appearing from time to time from the station which offends the huge number of citizens who hold the ethos of the catholic church dearly.

The latest episode was the NYE output from RTE which best captures this trend and their immediate response to the tsunami of complaints was to acknowledge but not remove the offensive material from the RTE Player. After a week of constant appeals calling for its removal , RTE relented and now have referred the matter to BAI for review.

So, we have a body here out of touch who are the beneficiary of the licence fee and that must be up for review now by your commission as a matter of urgency.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #220  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:57  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission on the future of RTE

Dear Sir or Madam,

I have been deeply disappointed at the amateurish level of journalism in RTE as well as the unnecessarily enormous salaries paid to presenters some of whom are quite mediocre.

As a taxpayer I urgently require change.

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

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3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #221  
[REDACTED]

## Submission to the Future of Media Commission

### Introduction

The concept of public service media (PSM) in Ireland served its purpose in a bygone era, but it is now an outdated and irrelevant concept. RTE and TG4 are the designated PSM. In 2018, RTE received public funding in the amount of €189m from the TV licence fee. In 2020, TG4 received €40.7m from the Exchequer.

Ireland is now well served by a clutter of print, broadcast and online media that operates in a competitive marketplace that induces creativity and provides diversity for Irish citizens to be informed and to engage in democracy. Hence, the rationale and the strategic importance of RTE as the PSM has diminished. The TV licence is a form of taxation. Government is now proposing to introduce a household charge to replace the licence fee. That tax will be along the lines of the aborted water tax but with the significant difference that non-users will be charged similar to customers of RTE. That would be fundamentally inequitable and unfair, and, thereby, a flawed system.

Fianna Fail proposed in 2018 that taxpayer funding be extended to national and local print media under the guise of ‘public service content’. I believe that the setting up of this Commission was a method, like with the Citizens’ Assembly, to get an ‘independent’ recommendation for this policy which would then be used to minimise public opposition to its implementation by government. I believe that it would be a bad decision to subsidise the operating costs of privately-owned and profit-driven media organisations.

### Question 1.

- Citizens are now well served with a diversity of media which has to compete for news delivery and programming. Fair competition is always good for the consumer.
- I can discern no evidence of the standard of journalism prevailing within RTE being any more independent than that in non-state funded media, and I doubt if such evidence exists.
- RTE has a practice of selecting and churning the same interviewees and panels whilst most of those who offer a contrarian or ideologically different viewpoint are generally side-lined or ignored. It shows a high reliance on input by journalists from the *Irish Times* which has the effect of an echo chamber.
- RTE does not operate on a level playing pitch with its competitors who do not enjoy state / taxpayer funding
- RTE is not always impartial in the news, current affairs, and the chat shows that it broadcasts. Over the years, it has devised ways to evade equal and impartial discussion of issues that are contentious or are headed towards referendum, e.g. Repeal of the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment. It has shown significant bias against Christian values, and many of its researchers, editors, and presenters act like advocates for modern left liberal ideologies that are controversial. Its bias against the Catholic Church is profound and has been the subject of numerous complaints to the BAI. The most recent occasion was its NYE Countdown programme which its own Editorial Standards Board adjudged to be offensive to Catholics. Its standard defensiveness in this case was obvious in its first qualified apology (‘if offended’) which, after almost

5,000 complaints and a petition signed by 8,000 people, it issued a full apology and self-reported to the BAI.

- The salaries of several RTE presenters are extravagant by any measure and cannot be justified morally. A non-state funded organisation would not be able to afford such salaries.
- State subsidised organisations are by nature less cost efficient than private organisations. The state refused to subsidise the social element of sub-post offices which for decades were a core fabric of rural Ireland in particular. Today, An Post considers it reasonable that rural citizens may have to travel up to 15kms to use a local post office. Yet, the state subsidises RTE which should be self-sustainable like other broadcasting organisations that provide competing programming.
- RTE often displays a cavalier attitude to public money. The story of the sacking of Kevin Myers, a journalist who by anyone's reckoning is 'independent', from the *Sunday Times* led RTE's news bulletins for a full 24 hours, giving enough scope to one of their broadcasters to defame the vilified journalist. When RTE recklessly gambled public money defending and losing the ensuing defamation case brought by Myers, the apology which was a condition of the very considerable settlement, was buried inside a single news bulletin at 8.50am on a Friday morning. Another example of that attitude was the poor research and journalism involved in the false story about Fr. Kevin Reynolds whose defamation case cost RTE around €1m.
- The Commission aiming or working on the basis of full editorial impartiality in public service content may be a pious dream. When it comes to selecting news stories, choosing which ones need in-depth discussion, lining up a panel and the questions they will be asked, there are as yet no anti-bias safeguards, perfected or otherwise.

### Question 2.

- If the public service content of RTE programming was considered to be of continued strategic importance, such content could be measured within a Universal Service Obligation (USO) framework and funded accordingly. However, it is noteworthy that An Post has to fund its USO under an EU Directive.
- If the Irish language and culture programming on RTE need to be subsidised, then specific funding could be provided for such programmes rather than a blanket subsidy of €189m annually and increasing. TG4 operates specifically to promote the Irish language and Irish culture programmes which it does quite well.
- The public / taxpayers have no say or influence around the independent editorial oversight of RTE, and the BAI have minimised some requirements around equality in treatment of controversial or contentious issues, especially those disguised within chat shows or light entertainment.
- A subscription model of funding would quickly demonstrate the public's genuine interest in 'public service content' which I believe is outdated in this century. I believe that market forces should be allowed to determine the value and the public's interest in 'public service content'.

### Question 3.

- Global tech social media organisations have grown to gigantic levels of influence nationally and internationally without any meaningful control or independent editorial oversight. They continue to dilute the advertising revenue once enjoyed by national

media organisations. Governments, apart from the current attempt by Poland, appear fearful in tackling the carefully guarded independence of these companies despite the inordinate influence they exercise on politics and society in general. They appear to be more powerful than blocks like the EU or the UN. The Irish Government bows to them because of the large numbers of people they employ in the country and the economic spin-off from that. The amount of corporate tax these sophisticated companies pay is questionable. They have done huge damage to the Irish media funding base. Their method of operation needs to be scrutinised – nationally and internationally – as a matter of urgency. Why should Irish taxpayers subsidise public service content when these global companies can do what they like and how they like without any contribution to public service content?

- The policy advanced by Fianna Fail to subsidise national and local print media is not acceptable. It is little more than a ploy to court favouritism from these media who have a special relationship with the political system. It is un-acceptable for a number of reasons:
  1. In normal arrangements where the state grant-aids or subsidises an entity there are conditions attached ‘to protect public funds’, e.g. MoU, legal contract, service level agreement, etc. which give certain rights and controls to the funding agency as to how its money is spent. That principle was emphasised in the 2019 *Report of the Independent Review Group established to examine the role of voluntary organisations in publicly funded health and personal social services*. The media operates under the principle of editorial independence. If that independence is to be safeguarded, how could the state exercise any meaningful oversight over public funding provided to media organisations? How could the state ignore oversight for a publicly subsidised media sector, whilst the same oversight is key to basic good governance in other publicly funded sectors?
  2. The state could only fund media organisations that produce impartial journalism and is unbiased in reporting on political, religious, controversial or contentious issues. Such media organisations are difficult to find in Ireland. Instead, the national media takes sides in such issues. Abortion has been one of the most divisive issues in Irish society over the past 10 years in particular. The national print media showed extraordinary bias in the matter. For example, an extensive forensic analysis of every article on abortion published by the *Irish Times* in the years 2013 – 2015 showed an overwhelming and persistent bias in favour of abortion, both in the paper’s news reporting and opinion pieces. Amongst the key findings were:
    - Of the 312 articles published by the newspaper on the issue, 91% were found to have exhibited a pro-abortion bias - 284 of 312 articles
    - For news reporting the bias was most evident with 98% of news reports showing a bias in favour of abortion - 205 of 209 articles
    - Almost 77% of opinion pieces showed a bias in favour of abortion with just over 23% taking a pro-life position – 79 articles in favour and 24 against
    - The *Irish Times* published an average of 2 articles per week in favour of abortion whilst articles taking a pro-life position appeared less than 10 times a year, thereby, making the newspaper more of a campaigner than a news agency.

In order to determine if an article was balanced or biased, each article in above analysis was examined to see if it contained bias in any of the five categories which are commonly used in assessing media bias.

Above is just one example. Other examples include some journalists actively involved in campaigning for appeal of the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment or editing books for the same purpose. That is not impartial journalism. It is biased reporting and commentary that has a significant influence on citizens' views and opinions, and eventually on how they exercise their vote in referenda or elections. It is contrary to the Commission's interpretation of 'public service content'.

The state, without any meaningful oversight over privately-owned media businesses, could not fund journalism that is biased and partial, especially on social / political issues, and which leaves a large proportion of citizens confused or unsure on issues of significant public importance for society and the democratic process.

- I believe that Ireland is over served by the number of national, regional and local newspapers which are competing for audience and advertising spend whilst consumers, particularly young people, are moving more and more to online channels.

The number of online channels is also increasing – some, for example, Gript.ie, was set up to fill a gap that was not being served by existing media plus the biased reporting of the national media, especially on social and political issues. State / taxpayer funding would only exacerbate the clutter of media which is best left to compete in the commercial market.

- There is also the issue of foreign-owned print media operating in Ireland. I believe that it would be wholly inappropriate to subsidise them with Irish taxpayers' money.



8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

[REDACTED]  
Record #223  
[REDACTED]

You never miss the water 'til the well runs dry, goes the saying and the truth of that can be seen across the Western world as traditional, professionally-run public service media organisations which provide an invaluable public service, are being eroded on all sides, with a knock-on effect on how democracy functions.

We only have to look at recent events in the USA to see how the decline of local newspapers coupled with the growth of unregulated online platforms, has led to echo-chambers and misinformation that have created a dangerously blinkered, simplistic world view.

Part of the decline is the fault of traditional media. In the early days of Google and Facebook, traditional public service organisations were unable or unwilling to respond to a rapidly changing landscape. That, coupled with lack of regulation of online platforms, allowed Google and Facebook to use their growing dominance to gain leverage over how the information and news coverage generated by traditional media organisations were disseminated online.

A large part too, is due to the failure of governments in the Western world to take on these massive tech companies. That failure has given the likes of

Google and Facebook ever greater power when it comes to dictating terms of engagement between people who consume news and those media organisations which generate and provide news – as opposed to fluff and marketing spin.

My area of greatest knowledge is of public service media is at a local level having worked as a journalist for local papers for decades. It's that experience which makes me realise the invaluable role they play in a properly-functioning democracy

By covering local authority meetings of all sorts – be these political, related to our health service or local development commissions – local journalism allows people to engage with how our country is governed. And it's engagement at the most fundamental level – local.

For journalists, this isn't always the most exciting of work; it often involves long hours at meetings, covering topics such as County Councils annual budgets. But the way our counties, cities and towns are governed matters, and that we are kept informed about how this is done, matters hugely.

Similarly, the service provided covering courts and inquests is one which informs and educates people – again, this isn't glamorous work but, offering

information and accountability, it's work that's vital for the functioning of a democratic society.

The role played by local papers in terms of informing people about what's happening in their community in areas such as sports, the arts, and the church is also crucial. I'd go so far as to say this role is so fundamental and taken so much for granted, that its importance can be overlooked.

As I mentioned, we need only look to the US, and also England, to see the impact of the demise of local media. While the rise of populism can't totally be blamed on lack of local journalism, there is a link. People lack basic information about how democracy works and that, in turn, has reduced their ability to have informed discussions.

No social media giant provides that basic information – doing so costs money and the profit margins are low.

The French government's move to force Google to negotiate payment with publishers for linking to their content, is a step in the right direction. Australia is creating a mandatory code that will force Google and Facebook to negotiate payment with publishers in that country before using their content.

This points to a simple fact: these behemoths don't generate the news that they disseminate – traditional-style news organisations, be they print,

broadcast or online, are the ones who put in the groundwork and investment to cover and investigate what's happening. They do this by employing trained journalists who are taught the importance of facts, ethics and impartiality as part of their training. Not every journalist – or news organisation – adheres to these values, but they are fundamental to the way most traditional organisations present news. And in a country like Ireland, there are strict regulations curtailing inflammatory and hate speech, not to mention our libel laws. But these only apply to traditional media while Twitter and Facebook seem to be free-for-all platforms,

Local papers are where many of our finest journalists trained and gained experience of democracy at its most fundamental level, before moving to national media organisations.

Like local democracy itself, the service provided by regional journalism is an intrinsic part of a properly-functioning society.

Print may be losing its currency, but the value of the work done by local media is not. The issue is how to fund this work. While broadcasters have benefited from State grants in recent times, papers were overlooked.

This inequality has to be addressed, especially in light of Covid-19. Journalists in local papers are working longer hours and under greater pressure to ensure

readers are informed of the facts. And this is being done against a background in which advertising revenue, already problematic, has plummeted as most businesses are closed. It cannot hold and print must be supported.

Broadcast and print media – whether in paper or online form– serve different functions, both invaluable. Print journalism allows for issues to be covered more comprehensively than any news bulletin can allow for.

The diverse range of topics within any local paper shows how these organisations continue to fill the age-old remit of ‘educating, informing and entertaining’. In modern times, society still needs this service.

News is the bread and butter of local papers but other areas are also crucial. Sport, especially at local level, binds communities, and local reporters understand and capture the importance of sporting events of all kinds, shining a light on communities and local heroes.

Likewise, with the arts. A company or a writer who is based in the regions will often struggle to gain coverage in national media organisations. Generally, it's local media which will put a focus on them initially. Some of these creative people will go on to national and international prominence, others won't. But an accessible platform which takes them and their work seriously is of huge benefit to – mostly young – artists.

On many occasions, theatre companies in Galway point out that having their productions reviewed in the Connacht Tribune is of huge benefit when it comes to successfully applying for Arts council grants. That support helps to create and sustain a vital creative community – working in Irish and in English in Galway’s case – and now with an increasingly multi-cultural dimension.

What makes this support truly valuable for local artists is that it’s not uncritical or unconditional.

Interrogation and accountability are as vital for a functioning arts community as for political, health or sporting organisations.

And here is where local media can shine. An example is the Connacht Tribune’s coverage of the organisation tasked with running Galway’s tenure as European Capital of Culture, Galway 2020. Our ongoing, forensic investigations into the waste of public money and the ignoring of local arts groups (many of them afraid to speak ‘on the record’) led to national coverage of this affair and, ultimately, to public representatives declining to fund the City of Culture organisation any longer. Asking questions about such a major institution was not universally popular and, in the beginning especially, our reporters were criticised by high-profile community figures who felt their coverage was disloyal to Galway. But it was that local knowledge and a commitment to the

truth that allowed this kind of reporting to take place, coverage which has since been vindicated.

There are many similar examples of local stories that have broken in our papers, stories that have forced institutions and organisations that are funded by State money to be accountable to the public. They don't happen every week, but they do happen – and they happen because there are journalists on the ground who can be trusted to deal with the facts, fairly and fearlessly. That's part of the foundation of democracy.

As younger people increasingly consume their news online, and in many instances have not been taught how to distinguish between real and fake news, local newspapers face increasing challenges. But we owe it to these generations and the ones coming after them to serve them in a way that print media has served the public for centuries. We have to become relevant to them. I would make a case that we need to get involved at a school level, something many journalists are happy to do but can't, due to existing pressure of work in already critically understaffed newsrooms. Children and teenagers who do engage with us are fascinated by the work and the process by which we gather information and write our stories.

We need to use new media and new methods to be relevant to them, because the services we provide is as badly needed now as it ever has been.

That can be done but we need young people coming into the industry and this is not happening. How can it? Precarious badly-paid jobs with long hours are not attractive. Time is running out to address this and that's why proper funding is vital.

It might not be popular politically in Ireland, but the tech companies need to be taxed to help fund the work of public-sector media. Other revenue streams could come from a national licence fee, serving broadcast and newspapers – there may be issues around this, given already-limited resources, but it needs to be examined.

National public sector broadcasters have a role to play in the regions, but they cannot and do not fill the remit of local media. A quick look at the 'Regional' section of the RTÉ website demonstrates that. Frequently RTÉ follows the regional stories broken by local media and that's a natural order.

Its remit is different to ours. Both are invaluable and therefore need to be valued. It's time to find a funding model that works locally and nationally, across print and broadcast before the well truly has run dry.





Record #225

8 January 2021

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It is being suggested also that failing print media should be supported with taxpayer's money.

I do not believe that the argument, that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians/ conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith-based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith-based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the New Year's Eve (NYE) skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it is satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]. The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it is now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against is meaningless. The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it is stated that an evil priest, Fr. Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God-fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church". In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host/Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it is Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While many young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It is questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So, we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith-based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

7

[REDACTED]

Record #226

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:52

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** The Future of RTE.

To whom It concerns,

RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Your Faithfully, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #227  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:51  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future funding of "public" broadcasting

Dear Commissioners,

I was born in Cork and have been listening to Irish public broadcasting for over 45 years. The bias and crudeness in RTÉ's delivery of chat shows, current affairs etc has been grossly disappointing.

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.
2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.
3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

yours,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #228  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:47  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Recommendations for the future of media in Ireland:

To whom it may concern,

I wish to make the following recommendations for the future of media in Ireland:

- 1) Broadcast mass daily on RTÉ 1,
- 2) Have TV shows educating us on various religious beliefs in Ireland e.g. Jewish, Muslim etc,
- 3) How different ethnic groups practice their religion,
- 4) Keep the angelus a permanent feature at 6pm each day,
- 5) Broadcast the rosary on RTÉ daily,
- 6) Respect and promote religious beliefs and not to have tv sketches like the Waterford Whispers sketch depicting God as a rapist,

I thank you for considering my recommendations and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #229  
[REDACTED]

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland.

As it stands Ireland and RTÉ will extend the tax that is the TV licence to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTÉ's losses. It has been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with taxpayers' money.

I do not believe that the argument - that fake news exists - can be a rationale for taxpayers to fund media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately, or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians.

- RTÉ makes every effort to dismiss, lampoon or distance itself from those with Christian beliefs and in particular Catholic beliefs, but not other faith-based groups. The failure by RTÉ to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith-based group internationally and especially in Nigeria, is another case in point.
- The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary. The controversy is due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it is satire and on the grounds that it constitutes freedom of speech. This, despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]
- The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it is now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland is so biased against Catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible. Any comment they may make in the future on sketches like the NYE skit, for or against, will be meaningless.
- The BAI, as you know, has been funding 'Fantasy Island'. It is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it is stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God-fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or as a vampire. He curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money: "All sinners welcome for a fee". He uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".
- In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a Host / Eucharist suspended in mid-air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the Hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is seen cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". 'Fantasy Island' is pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

- The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.
- While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practise, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft-reported adherence to equality values and to their own guidelines not to deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So, we propose:

defunding the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidising them through a national tax;

stopping the funding of the BAI and reviewing its membership;

providing new oversight of the BAI to prevent it from discriminating against one faith-based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

████████████████████

████████████████████

[REDACTED]  
Record #231  
[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION TO *THE FUTURE OF MEDIA COMMISSION*

in response to public invitation advertised 28<sup>th</sup> November 2020

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The working definition of Public Service Content refers to that which *'informs, educates and entertains'*. I suggest *'informing and educating'* be kept separate from *'entertainment'* in the Commission's deliberations. This submission is concerned with the former.

I would like to see the Commission address the lack of respect prevalent in the broadcast media for politicians and public office-holders.

Interviewers seem to think that they are representatives of 'the people' and have a role as interrogators on their behalf. They have no such role. The confrontational style, aiming to unsettle the interviewee, whipping-up hysteria, pandering to the shrill voices of outrage, does not serve to *'inform and educate'*.

In contrast, when it comes to the media interviewing the media – presenters interviewing 'specialist' reporters from the same or a different media organisation – the interviewee is given the opportunity to contribute uninterrupted, and the tone is affable, unhurried and always courteous.

I suggest a penalty-point system analogous to that for driving offences be developed as part of the regulatory framework for the media sector. Instances of disrespect, misjudgements etc. need to have consequences in sanctions that are proportionate.

Footnote, for the Commission's attention:

*Modern culture affects to despise politics and politicians even though they represent the only way that society can collectively determine its approach to the big political questions. Why is that? To me this is the really big question.*

*Politics is increasingly seen as irrelevant and failing voters. Voter turnout is falling and insurgency politicians – Trump, Sanders, Corbyn, Farage, Le Pen again – are rising. It is also communicated to us through a broadcast media that is too often adolescent in outlook as it sets itself reflexively against authority and in favour of protesters, whistleblowers and outsiders. Boring competence thus gets devalued and exciting failures elevated and – with it – the prospect of additional future failures.*

Cormac Lucey, The Sunday Times, Oct. 2016.

8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

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Record #232

Er [REDACTED] yal

**From:** The Finglas Maypole Arts Festival [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:44

**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

**Subject:** Submission

Dears Sirs/Madam,

Our submission is a simple one.

We feel that a media driven initiative at a Community level could be a positive driver for all media at a wider societal level.

We suggest Radio and TV Community Stations in localities. The benefit would be to inform, educate and up skill participants and local publics towards the creation of a more beneficial societal media sphere.

Kind regards

Ernest Beggs (Chair)

The Finglas Maypole Festival

[REDACTED]  
Record #233  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:42

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** biased rte

Sent from my Galaxy

Dear Sir/Madame,

Regarding the future funding of media in Ireland, I am opposed to paying my yearly TV licence as I feel RTE make every effort to undermine, dismiss and disregard those with Christian beliefs, in particular Catholic beliefs.

The failure of RTE to respect God our Creator, to report on the persecution of Christian's world wide, and to air a NYE skit completely insulting the divinity of God our Father, and Mary, our Immaculate Mother, and the Holy Spirit, has made me decide that I will no longer support RTE.

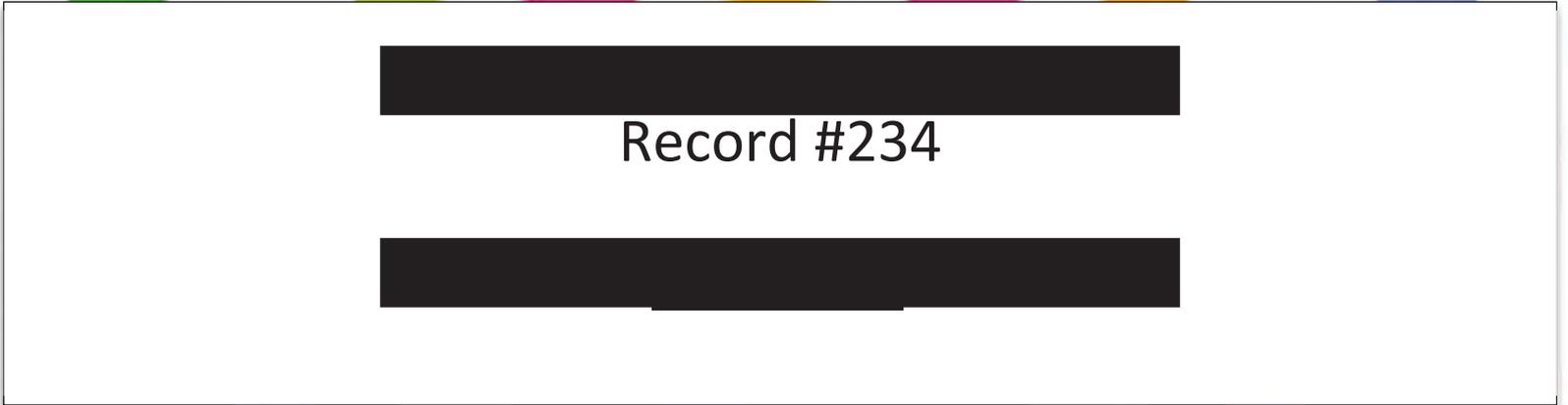
Also, many of the home produced dramas fall below the standards of decency, being very crude, vulgar and offensive.

I will in the future seek to watch other channels for news and entertainment.

I fully support the proposal the defunding of biased media outlets, unless they can provide news coverage and entertainment suitable all.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]



Record #234

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:43

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** Defund RTE

To The Commission

The national broadcaster does not represent me or my interests on any level. I have not been availing of it for several years yet I am expected to pay for a service for which I have neither need nor interest. Everything broadcast from advertising to current affairs to so called "entertainment" is agenda laden propaganda. Despite not having it broadcast in my home I still am occasionally exposed to it in public places, waiting rooms and other people's homes. The warped nature of programming has only become more apparent in the years since I ceased consuming it in my own home. The recent appalling "comedic" reference to the Christian God as a rapist is yet more evidence of the national broadcaster having completely lost the run of itself and being entirely disconnected from the Irish public.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This moribund entity is no longer fit for purpose. It doesn't provide any public service. It is a vehicle for pushing liberal agendas. Let those who support those agendas support the broadcaster of their own choosing and stop forcing those of us who do not support the agendas to pay.

Regards



[REDACTED]  
Record #236  
[REDACTED]



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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:42

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** Assessment of Public Service Media.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make submission as follows:

From my experience with listening and viewing content on RTE radio and Television I would wish to made the following observarions.

1. RTÉ should be completely defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of Christian faith, who are compelled by law to fund the station.

2. RTE's presentations and purported news presentations customarily incorporate actual inaccuracies and omissions, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of public debates. Despite many complaints which I have made I find that these have remain uncorrected or dismissed out of hand. The most recent example was in the New Year's Eve Countdown show. That feature had a silly and offensive item which falsely accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ. This was not funny but decidedly offensive. Some kind of apology was only finally given after reportedly thousands of people complained about the matter. It is particularly objectionable when RTE staff and contractors are allowed mock and undermine traditional and Christian values, where they use the resources of the taxpayer and licensepayer to further their own personal or politically correct belief

systems.

Other examples of selective exclusion include the failure to make reference to aborted fetal tissue in so-called approved vaccines. This omission is misinforming the public.

When pro life and pro family values speakers at on RTE shows, they are always put on the defensive in unequal and unbalanced panels or presenters. Thus family and pro life values properly so-called, are unjustly done down.

Other examples include failure by RTE to cover the religious persecution and genocide of Christians in Nigeria and other countries which gets no treatment. However such matters as unborn babies buried in a septic tank in Galway are presented as fact without any confirmation from the local authority that such a cavern was ever used for that purpose. Similarly presenters from RTE occasionally refer to prostitutes as "sex workers" though no such category of registered employment exists in Ireland. Thus RTE presenters earning exorbitant fees are allowed to campaign in a subtle way for changes to public morality with no legitimate mandate to do so and all at the licence payers expense. Similarly in all of the abortion debates no reference to the proper right to freedom of conscience was given hearing. Additionally the use made of the remains of unborn babies killed in abortions has had no mention in RTE presentations, despite the profit making use of such organs, tissue and the like. Other examples of selective omissions include the unfavourable fisheries deal for Ireland in Brevit, the EU deal with China in spite of the gross human rights violations done in the country and also the violent conduct in Blanchardstown in recent days, all more or less ignored by RTE. Such news suppression and information manipulation is certainly **not** public service broadcasting meriting public funding.

**2.** The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption by means of unfair exclusion and suppression of legitimate debate. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

**3.** If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, needs to get a better representation, not a remote means of objection where complaints are almost never upheld. Other entities such as Gript.ie are doing a more balanced and fair treatment rather than RTÉ. Improvement could be done by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would have to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives should have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who are merely uncritically the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Please give consideration to the point which I have made.



Record #238

Gail Henry



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**From:** Gail Henry <gailhenry74@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:41  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Subject:** Submission to Future of Media Commission

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC VALUE DELIVERY in Music, Arts and Cultural Media**

On a cursory look at the broadcast media landscape today one can hear the homogenisation of the music radio industry, arguably stations are minimising risk and maximising reach which results in diminished innovation and considerable imitation (Croteau and Hoynes, 2001).

When you turn the radio dial or internet radio one often hears isomorphic stations, creating generic programming. One questions why we have a 'functional fixedness' of radio being merely that box in the corner of the room while meanwhile many of us consume broadcast content in new ways (McCaffrey and Pearson, 2015).

Heretofore PSB broadcasters were funded to create terrestrial and digital radio, but the dynamism of the technological landscape means that the environment has rapidly advanced. Covid demonstrated that artists, musicians, theatres, concert halls all

sought to reach out to audiences through audiovisual streaming – YouTube, Facebook and other platforms became their audience reaching mechanism as they strove to adapt and remain relevant.

The PSB broadcaster strives to meet audience's needs as McCaffrey and Pearson (2015) suggest that up to this point 'we saw the object's use rather than the object itself'. Radio is no longer simply radio; it is more than radio! The Covid-19 pandemic has provided PSB with many challenges - How can they make live music happen and keep their PSB orchestras broadcasting safely? How can they ensure they reach, entertain, employ and engage their performers and audiences alike in this climate?

While the challenge provides them with an opportunity to mobilize and maximize the potential of the PSB's resources. It also necessitated the requirement to work closely and strengthen relationships with multiple stakeholders. Radio has become more than just terrestrial radio, as it now embraces the opportunity to collaborate across outputs toward a hybrid broadcasting model, in this dynamic digital broadcasting environment. It's now about synthesis and sustainability - seeking and refining, efficient multi-platform media production (radio, online streaming, TV). Undoubtedly, this requires great flexibility in production and requires above all a commensurate funding model for the scale and development of such projects.

We now know, more than ever, that greater public value is being created by taking resources and increasing their value through the productive processes internal to the broadcaster (Moore, 2010) be it in any platform, digital, audio, visual or hybrid models. It is necessary to be relevant to audiences by driving creative content through community partnership and engagement, all of which would have merit in fulfilling PSB's mission.

Now more than ever it's necessary to co-create content in order to deliver multifaceted projects to audiences. It is about the safeguarding and enrichment of the 'public sphere' with the delivery of 'what the public values' (Benington, 2011).

Naturally, PSBs should query whether they add value and question what makes an organisation valuable to society, not just from a financial perspective, but from a cultural and artistic standpoint and one that uniquely frames Irish cultural identity. Consumers connect with what they believe is valuable in their cultural environment. PSB's need to match this, with the required

resources, in order to improve its delivery of stakeholders' needs (Moore 1995).

Ultimately, we can see a shift in user needs and indeed in the perception of 'functional fixedness' to a dynamic media model (McCaffrey and Pearson, 2015). Change is imperative in a highly competitive and rapidly changing technological environment and what remains at the core of the PSB model is the broadcaster's purpose: value co-creation for all citizens (consumers or those yet to be reached), community and society in general. For the PSB and cultural community alike value co-creation it is ever more relevant whether it is with Opera, Orchestral music, Folk Music, Jazz Music, Literature, Choral music, Composers and Musicians or with the Education and Arts sector or collaborations with Festival Curators.

The future is about increasing the creative value and hence the experiential value to the licence fee payers (Moore, 2000). The PSB should aim to extend its public value through new and emerging digital communication technologies. Arguably, it currently points to public value being created above and beyond the willingness of licence fee payers to pay for the services.

I welcome the commission's evaluation of the funding model of PSB from a public value perspective as discussed. While also considering the protection and adequate provision of funding to RTE lyric fm and Arts and Culture public service broadcasting, therefore ensuring the sector continues its valuable output and delivery to its audiences in new value creating way. The PSB needs to be able to continue its work and as theorised by myself - making audiences and consumers a DEAL: a journey of **d**iscovery, **e**xperience/**e**nrichment, **a**ccessibility and **l**ife-long listening.

Submitted by: Gail Henry, MBA, MA (Music Education), BMus

7

[REDACTED]

Record #239

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:46

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:**

You should consider cancelling RTE as a media as they don't know how to edit their media before showing a deeply upsetting sketch to Christians everywhere.

In the past the true information regarding abortions was not allowed to be aired, Prolife speakers given little or no airing time. Furthermore the Irish GP's who opposed the abortion measures were not given sufficient time to allow their voices to be heard so that all the viewers only heard one side of the story to repeal.

Freedom of speech is among some of the things our descendants fought for on our behalf, the Irish media should be allowed to speak for democracy and society as a whole. They inform public debate through independent journalism, and reflect the lives, culture, traditions, beliefs, sport, and identities of all Irish people at home or abroad in whatever part of the world they live in.

Are current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media adequate?

How will regulatory changes in EU and Global level impact governance on public service media in years ahead?

Regards



[REDACTED]  
Record #240  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:41  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Subject:** Defund RTE

**1.** RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

**2.** The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The [Journal.ie](#)* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

**3.** If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support [Gript.ie](#) rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by

asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Yours in Christ [REDACTED]

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.



[REDACTED]

Record #243

[REDACTED]



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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:37

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** RTE Funding

A Cara,

I believe that RTE should no longer receive the amount of state funding via the TV licence it currently is in receipt of. There is no particular reason why this station alone should benefit from such generous subsidies when other media have to manage on their own resources. On many occasions in the past, they have been guilty of misrepresentation of the merits of matters of public interest particularly with regard to referendums being held to change the constitution. They achieved this by giving disproportionate coverage the station wanted the public to hear.

The airing of the crude blasphemous article depicting the raping of Mary the mother of Jesus by God Father shows the contempt with which this broadcaster holds those who profess the majority faith on this Island. I submit that this unfair financial assistance to what is a very average channel ceases and that fair distribution of broadcasting revenue be shared more equally among the diverse media currently operating in this country.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #244  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:37  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Subject:** Shockes

Praised be Jesus & Mary

To whom it may concern,

We were shocked beyond words or belief, at the blasphemy on NEV against God our Father. We will all appear before Him whether we choose to, or not. Let us prepare well. Now is the time, the only time.

I wish to make the following recommendations for the future of media in Ireland:

Regarding mass I would like to recommend it be broadcast on RTE 1 daily.  
Having the rosary said daily on RTE 1 would be great.  
A catechism hour and/or programme daily would be very interesting for  
I would like to see more appropriate religious pictures during the Angelus daily and that the Angelus would continue daily in the future.  
Furthermore, I would like to see Sunday mass continue on RTE 1 in the future also.  
Dedicating more time to religious programmes on RTE 1 and increasing the coverage of religious programmes featuring the scriptures daily.  
Input of scriptures into RTE1 programmes would be of interest also.

Yours sincerely,  
An Irish citizen.

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted text]

[REDACTED]  
Record #247  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:31  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Submission to Commission

A chara,

I would like to submit as follows:-

RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be

achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Mise le meas,

[REDACTED]

1

[REDACTED]

Record #248

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:31

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** Future of medics Ireland

RTE should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the Tax payers each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently in their New Year's Eve Countdown show they accused God of raping Mary, Mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions and eventually removed this from the RTÉ Player.

The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that The Journal.ie which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merits, not at the favour of the government

If this commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers and include all platforms who had an established presence.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #249  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:29

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** Not favourable to all.

I just want to put forward my request, that RTE should be defunded, as they don't represent my values in life, and material that is shown to viewers is getting worse in content. This has been happening over the last number of years, and as for truth and material content that is shown, family values and morals are lost. We are supposed to have a means of censorship, either they are asleep on the job, or are without qualifications. Of late it was published the amount, that all the hosts on RTE shows were earning. Even the Taoiseach or President did not come near the earnings they were getting. It's time to look at who is in charge, this is taxpayers' money they are spending, an independent review should be done, on how the 180 million is spent? They are supposed to be a media company for information and entertainment, they fall short on both, most of the guests on talk shows are repeated like a calendar, money is being wasted, as a lot of the hosts lack the people skills in conversing with one another. Talking over each other, and missing some of the answers, don't allow people to finish an answer to a question. It's like they can't wait to get finished and over with. For a 64-year-old Irish man, it's like living in a foreign land, they have forgotten that there are age differences old, middle of the road, and young, and children. They might consider everyone, if their money vault and pay was reduced, they will have to justify their funding.... Kind regards.... God bless.. [REDACTED]

7

[REDACTED]  
Record #250  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:29  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Subject:**

Please defund RTE, it's latest reprehensible segment of God as a rapist on NYE being the straw that broke the camels back.

In keeping with the so called "woke" mentality of RTE, the Journal should also be noted for its biased ideological agenda.

Both of these are examples of media where only one voice is heard with a disingenuous nod to the other side.

Robust debate, critical thinking, fact checking ( the Journal renowned for its lack of facts in its fact checking) are becoming a thing of the past.

Time to fund the up and coming newcomers, prepared to tell it like it is and who welcome open debate and discussion. The newcomer Gript media deserves a special mention.

There is more than one opinion.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

Record #251

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:29

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** Consultation submission

The government should not fund or otherwise control or manage private or non-state media outlets in any way. Intentionally or not, this creates an incentive for pro-government bias and is a conflict of interest for the editorial freedom of those outlets. I believe having the government interfere more with non-state media would worsen public opinion on them, not improve it. The government is a self-interested party just like any other organization, and this should not be overlooked.

State media and private media counter-balance each other. It is crucial for the two to remain separate in terms of funding and control.

The most important issue that I believe the government should be considering is fake news laws and their complete failure in other parts of the world. Just about every time laws looking to combat 'fake news' are brought into force, they are used to silence political dissent, even in otherwise 'free' nations. The government in these countries simply takes an interpretation of an event and allows no others to be discussed or advocated. There should be no laws regarding 'fake news' in Ireland.

The state should consider the right to hold views and represent events in ways that are entirely different from those of the state. The right to stray fundamentally from the state's or the public's generally held view on an event should be protected from interference.

Also, the right to partisan interpretation of events should be protected, as it is in other countries. If the state begins to maintain some form of power over what defines the 'truth', then they have simultaneously been granted a monopoly on lying. You cannot afford to the state this power in any respect.

The shift towards big tech firms in terms of advert revenue means nothing significant. Whether an ad is in print or online, there is no real difference, besides that there are software available to remove ads online from your personal view.

There is no real way to form 'impartial' bodies to regulate media. Even forming a government body which contains representatives from differing parties always leaves out someone, and always leads to a situation where the commonly-held 'status-quo' perspectives and beliefs are reinforced. It is the smallest minority views that require the most protection.

[REDACTED]  
Record #252  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:19

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** Submission on Future of Media

### Short submission on the Future of the Media

- I support the principle of public service broadcasting as I think this model is the only way in which a range of voices can be reflected on our radios and on television. Hence I support public funding for such broadcasting and feel that the source of such funding needs to be creatively addressed in light of radical changes in the broadcasting landscape in recent years.
- My specific interest is in the representation of faith voices, and in particular, the voice and views of ordinary Catholics, on our public service broadcasters. It seems to me that there is an under-representation of mainstream Catholic voices and views, apart from in 'slots' where faith is overtly being discussed.
  - In Irish society, we come across a range of views and perspectives, of which the Catholic perspective still represents a significant and regular part.
  - However, on our public service broadcaster, such views are generally absent as part of the regular ongoing discourse and discussion, e.g. between presenters and guests, and are only represented when there is an overtly 'faith' item under discussion. The result is a clear mismatch

between the importance / frequency of Catholic and other faith views in society at large, and the frequency with which such views are presented in Irish PSB.

- If RTE is to continue to receive public funding and support, this must be addressed.
- It is unreasonable to expect presenters / guests who don't hold Catholic/ other faith views to artificially provide this balance: the solution would have to involve actively ensuring that competent and talented people who hold different views are employed, or invited as guests, and not just in faith specific slots.
- Such an overt 'positive action' policy would also help counter any chilling effect on any current employees or guests of PSB who may feel that certain views are acceptable and can be expressed on air and other views are frowned on and should be kept hidden. There is no point in replacing one hegemony with another.
- A wider range of reasonable views within PSB organisations, and specifically of mainstream Catholic / other faith voices will help ensure a healthy and more representative range of views in programming, to the benefit of all.

Best regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

7

[REDACTED]  
Record #254  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:25

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** Submission

### **Submission Under Questions 1 and 3**

With reference to “What systems may be required to support and sustain public service content, e.g. high quality, independent journalism, in an increasingly competitive and consolidated market?” and “Are current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media adequate?”, a number of issues exist in Irish media, particularly the broadcast media, in relation to “independent journalism” and how it should be regulated:

1. The role of “campaigning journalists” and others who subtly promote a particular point of view. While it is quite valid for any journalist to promote their view (as long as they have editorial permission), this should come with a caveat stating that they are not neutral on the issue. Quite often broadcasters interview an “independent” commentator who expresses a biased opinion unchallenged and if their background is subsequently checked out prove to be partisan. This point applies to broadcast journalists themselves and to those being interviewed.
2. The issue of freedom of expression. Quite often it seems acceptable to insult or mock a particular viewpoint where the broadcaster considers it is “open season” on that viewpoint. A current example is the anti-Christian bias in the media. Put simply, if broadcasters accept that it is ok to mock Christianity, then it follows that it is acceptable to mock Islam, Judaism and other religions. In the extreme, this will result in the broadcast equivalent of newspapers like Der Sturmer (a Nazi rag whose editor Julius Streicher was hung at Nuremberg). While it is acceptable (and

indeed necessary) to interview people with extreme views, the broadcaster needs to make it quite clear where the interviewee is coming from. Similarly the use of satire in broadcasts is permissible, as long as a particular line is not crossed. This whole issue is one of defining the balance.

3. The issue of “fake news”. The common understanding of “fake news” relates to Tweets by Donald Trump or posts by QAnon. In most cases such “news” is obviously fake. The more insidious element is where a blind eye is turned by journalists to falsehoods because to challenge them would undermine a narrative that the broadcaster is subtly promoting (this could be anything from a social issue to a political agenda).
4. Limitations on a broadcaster because of the threat of legal action. Some stories are not covered or are covered in a very restricted manner because the broadcaster is concerned that they will be sued by someone with unlimited financial resources. This is a severe restriction on reporting stories that are in the public interest. While it is proper that broadcasters should be restrained in certain situations, it is somewhat legally unbalanced where a person of limited means has less sway in influencing restrictions compared to someone of wealth.
5. The application of codes of practice on broadcasters. While codes need to be applied to all broadcasters, more stringent codes of editorial independence need to be applied to those receiving funding from the TV Licence.
6. The influence of advertising revenue on a broadcaster. An organisation that contributes significant revenue to a broadcaster through advertising could be treated preferentially by journalists. Such organisations range from those manufacturing consumer goods right up to the Irish State. Preferential treatment is likely to be subtle and based on the principle “don’t bite the hand that feeds you”. One element of a solution would be for broadcasters to publish (on the Commission’s website) a list of advertisers and the revenue received from each.

In relation to the above, the term “journalist” should include talk show hosts as well as more mainstream news journalists. The Commission should address the above points by setting out editorial principles in codes of practice and where necessary by getting Government to enact supporting legislation. In addition there needs to be compliance monitoring by the Commission and robust penalties for breaches.

Many thanks for the opportunity to contribute.

██████████  
██████████████████  
██████████

[REDACTED]

Record #255

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:23

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** Submission

. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

**2.** The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The [Journal.ie](#)* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government. We need a system that is fair and just and new systems can be tried on a trial basis.

**3.** If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. It is totally biased. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support others rather than RTÉ. A list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who are biased, anti religious and who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Yours sincerely.

[REDACTED]

Permission to publish name is not given. Private submission.



[REDACTED]

Record #257

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:22

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** Submission to the To the Independent Future of Media Commission

**To the Independent Future of Media Commission.**

I wish this to be considered as my submission as you assess the public service media and issues such as fake news and independent journalism.

I object strongly to what RTÉ has become.

It should be defunded because it inflicts left and liberal leaning views and opinions on viewers and listeners. This is becoming more slanted all the time. It also serves to explain the anti christian and in particular anti-Catholic views coming out of RTE.

It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are given no choice but to fund the station.

Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

They would not get away so lightly if they insulted some other sectors (particularly minorities) in our society, or other religions [REDACTED]. Yet RTE insults Catholics and conservative christians time and time again. The directors, programme makers and RTE management are all allowed to get away with it.

RTE should be defunded for insulting a large sector of Irish society, and we, the citizens and tax payers of Ireland should not be obligated to fund such recklessness, that our Government turns a

blind eye to.

If this Commission is going to have any credibility, it should ensure that the majority and minority sectors and all religions are treated fairly and equally by the nationally appointed broadcaster. If they don't offer fair, unbiased, and truthful coverage, their funding should be taken from them and given to other media that will treat all Irish citizens and tax payers fairly and correctly.

Kind regards,



[REDACTED]

Record #259

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:16

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** The future of media in Ireland

I wish to make the following recommendations for the future of media in Ireland:

Having enjoyed programmes in the past such as All walks of life by Mary McAlesse and in particular the interview she did with Joe Canning. I would like to recommend that such programmes in the future be created.

I think there is a great interest in such programmes among the young and the old with both male and females watching on. I have heard many people talk about the programme even last Summer it was discussed and searched for online. I think it is great to have such modern day heroes as Joe Canning talk openly about his faith. I would be very interested to see more programmes like this that discuss the link between sports people and their faith and religion in Ireland. As Simmel (1950) believed that **religious and cultural beliefs** develop from one another and are inseparable. Similarly, I believe the same. Evidence of this link between culture, religion and sport was illustrated with Katie Taylor speaking about her faith after she won her olympic medal.

Such programmes are inspiring for all age groups and for people in hospital, nursing homes and who may live alone with no access to the internet and whom may be computer literate such programmes are vital and uplifting to keep them inspired and entertained, particularly if they live alone and in rural areas.

Regarding mass I would like to recommend it be broadcast on RTE 1 daily.

Having the rosary said daily on RTE 1 would be great.

A catechism hour and/or programme daily would be very interesting for

I would like to see more appropriate religious pictures during the Angelus daily and that the Angelus would continue daily in the future.

Furthermore, I would like to see Sunday mass continue on RTE 1 in the future also.

Dedicating more time to religious programmes on RTE 1 and increasing the coverage of religious programmes featuring the scriptures daily.

Input of scriptures into RTE1 programmes would be of interest also.

I thank you for considering my recommendations and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

[REDACTED]  
Record #260  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:15  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Subject:** Consultation

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to make the following brief point:

The current funding model, which enforces taxpayer support of RTE has in my opinion turned the channel into little more than a government propaganda source. One example in recent days was particularly striking. On the same evening in which there was extensive coverage by British TV of the vaccination programme in the UK there was not one word in the Six O'Clock news about vaccination here. At least some newspapers gave information about the woefully inadequate roll-out here and the reasons for it, whereupon RTE belatedly mentioned it and allowed Government excuses to go unchallenged. The whole approach was clearly to avoid embarrassment to the Government.

Many other examples could be cited, but the point I wasn't to make is that any media outlet that receives funding from the Government cannot be relied on to be an impartial source of news.

I am therefore not in favour of a media tax the distribution of which is determined by the Government.

Yours sincerely,



1

[REDACTED]  
Record #261  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:13  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Subject:** Public consultation process submission

Dear sir/madam,

Please find below my submission as part of the public consultation process.

Fake news is a smoke screen to cover up the lack of real news. If all news and views were reported, my own common sense could weed out any so called "fake" news. I don't want to be treated like a child or a half-wit. There should be no censorship to freedom of speech. Independent journalism is vital to get information to the public and there has been a chronic lack of it since March 2020. RTE, Newstalk, The Irish Times, The Irish Independent and The Irish Examiner have published and pushed biased, unbalanced reporting which has been extremely harmful to the public. The Irish public need to be told the truth. Disband RTE. They are no longer a public service broadcaster but a government propaganda machine and the public should not have to fund them. Bring back independent, investigative journalists with integrity and bring all experts to the debate, not just the few hand picked by RTE. Bring democracy back to the media, we don't have it in the media anymore and our society, our futures and our children's futures depend on it. Do the right thing for a free and just society. STOP MEDIA CENSORSHIP PLEASE.

Kind regards,



1

[REDACTED]  
Record #262  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 18:02  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Subject:** Defunding RTE

I think RTE should be defunded.

I believe in God & the Catholic faith. I understand that others don't. Having fair & balanced media representation in this regard would be reasonable. RTE do not provide this. I consider them almost always anti Catholic. Their influence, unfortunately, is substantial. Many readers assume media neutrality. We don't hear, for example, about the holiday enjoyed by so many underprivileged people via annual parish pilgrimages to Lourdes & so much other wonderful, quiet, sincere work the Catholic Church does.

RTE's influence for abortion was and is an example. How many have heard of the massive increase in abortion numbers in the first year that abortion was allowed in Ireland - to 6,666 abortions? Was it publicized, either, that the vast majority of those abortions were for social reasons?

I could continue and continue on much other unbalanced RTE coverage.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]  
Record #263  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Re Future of Media Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:01:20

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## Re Future of Media Submission

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

[REDACTED]  
Record #264  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** re submission to the Future of Media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:12:54

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Dear Sirs,

In Ireland we are subjected to a constant barrage of left wing reporting in our media. No effort whatsoever is made at presenting fair or balanced coverage of any particular news item. The Media in this country are merely mouthpieces for the Government and a stick with which to beat anyone who has the temerity to question the prevailing social or political view. There are frequently radio and television advertisements warning the public not to trust what appears on their social media feed and extoling us to rely on the so called quality journalism that comes from RTE. I am not on social media. However, the journalism which comes from RTE cannot be described as “quality” or “factual”, perhaps “biased”, “unprofessional”, “partisan” or “corrupt” might be better adjectives to describe the lies broadcast by RTE. I am not sure what the current viewership figures are for RTE, but I wager that there are very few watching this rubbish any more.

RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Kind Regards,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

1

[REDACTED]

Record #265

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Defund RTE  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:11:39

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I am asking that RTE should be defunded.

They now only represent the views of some of the license holders and decide what should be aired and will not put out views of many of those who fund it.

[REDACTED]

Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

1

[REDACTED]

Record #268

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission to The Future of Media Commission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:07:38

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To whom it may concern,

I would like to have the following matters taken into consideration in the Future of Media deliberations;

**1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.**

**2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.**

**3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.**

***The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media***

*platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.*

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #269  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission to the Future of Media Commission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:07:24

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To whom it may concern, please find below submission.

This submission concerns future media content regulation with regard to the dangers of amplifying and platforming damaging and harmful ideas, which promote and incite stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination and hate. It also concerns the need for a public service media which reflects a multicultural Irish society.

Amplification of harmful content is happening more and more in Ireland in both public service and commercial media. Far right ideology, conspiracy theories and fake news are seeping into our mainstream content. It is my view as a former journalist, an activist and a concerned citizen that Ireland's broadcasting and publishing guidelines do not adequately provide guidance or standards to address this issue.

Just this week in Dublin a number of publishers publicised discriminatory, damaging and untrue information about a young man who was shot dead by gardai. This amplification of untrue material was devastating for a grieving family and community who knew and loved the young man who was shot. Some call it "fake news" some call incitement to hate. Time and rigorous investigation will hopefully tell.

Then we need only look at the result of years of amplification of right wing ideology in the United States which this week culminated in violence and destruction and a violation of democracy in Washington. It is my belief that Ireland is on this trajectory and needs robust and ethical media guidance, which holds diversity and inclusion as amongst its key values.

There is much evidence to point towards the dangers of media amplifying far right ideology and conspiracy theory. Irish journalism seems to believe that amplifying false information or far right ideas and figures is acceptable, once they provide something they call "balance". This usually involves a journalist or commentator pointing out that the idea has been disproven. In fact this was recently offered to me as the sole justification for this practice, in a response to a recent complaint made to RTE regarding the amplification of The Great Barrington Declaration, the "Herd Immunity" myth and the featuring of a prominent far right figure from the US on one of the state broadcasters most listened to radio programmes. However this provision of "balance", as evidence has shown, is irrelevant. Once the idea has been amplified the damage is done, regardless of what comes next. The idea, the proponent has been given oxygen.

We now have a situation in Irish journalism where untrue stories are being "balanced" to the same extent as true and worthwhile stories and, most worryingly, this is being the norm. This is not acceptable. There is no requirement, journalistic, ethical or otherwise, to report on something which is untrue. And there is no justification for it either. A [2017 report on dis-information](#) for the EU Commission stated "Getting to the mainstream media to amplify rumour and dis-information is the ultimate goal of those who seek to manipulate. Without

amplification, dis-information goes nowhere.”

There is, of course, a function to finding out if something is true or not but it takes resources and motivation. In the case of the reporting around the young man, George Nkencho, killed in Clonee, instead of running with the story you’ve seen on social media (or not running with it at all), talk to his family, talk to his friends, talk to his community. Amplify their voices. Discover why they could not engage mental health services. Why there were no supports there for them? Ask what is it that makes a trained Garda shoot a young man?

The far right in Ireland is building. It uses vulnerable people and poorly trained, under-resourced and ‘click hungry’ media to spread its message. It latches on to “topical” discussions, news stories real and imagined, events, and twists and turns until it has created a parallel scenario it peddles at “the real truth”. It uses racist dog whistles and preys on communities let down by the state to further its cause.

A report on the issue entitled “The Oxygen of Amplification” contains the striking quote from one journalist: “At a certain point you have to realise that you’re promoting them”.

Another unfortunate modern phenomenon is the tendency now to equate poor quality reporting, footage, photos etc as authentic. This needs to be combated with informative guidance on who and what should be published by public service media.

Ireland is in the privileged position of being able to turn this around. To create a strong and ethical public service media which champions diversity, inclusion, authenticity and truth.

We need a public service media which not only talks about the value of diversity and inclusion, but which also practices diversity and inclusion. We are a multicultural society and have been for generations, but this is not reflected in our public service broadcasting personnel. We are all familiar with the “if we can’t see it, we can’t be it” phenomenon.

I welcome initiatives such as the diversity and inclusion officer appointment to RTE, the wonderful Black and Irish podcast, the amazing enriching content on diversity and inclusion in children’s programmes “Home School Hub” and “After School Hub” but public service news and current affairs has a long, long way to go. We need to see reporters and presenters representative of Irish society. We need to hear stories that matter to all of our communities. We need ethical, well guided content.

I very much welcome the opportunity to put this forward for consultation and wish the commission every success in its task of providing an excellent future for an Irish public service media which reflects us all.



Sent from my iPhone

Record #271

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** The future of media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:05:06

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To whom it may concern,

I wish to make the following recommendations for the future of media in Ireland:

Regarding mass I would like to recommend it be broadcast on RTE 1 daily.

Having the rosary said daily on RTE 1 would be great.

A catechism hour and/or programme daily would be very interesting for

I would like to see more appropriate religious pictures during the Angelus daily and that the Angelus would continue daily in the future.

Furthermore, I would like to see Sunday mass continue on RTE 1 in the future also.

Dedicating more time to religious programmes on RTE 1 and increasing the coverage of religious programmes featuring the scriptures daily.

Input of scriptures into RTE1 programmes would be of interest also.

Yours sincerely,  
An Irish citizen.

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #273  
[REDACTED]

## **The Future of Media in Ireland Commission**

In this third decade of the twenty first century the influence that media can have for the common good or to harm our society cannot be underestimated. With modern technology media infuses our lives like never before. It is therefore vital that media is reliable, accurate and balanced.

In the past Irish media whether it be printed, radio or television provided news and information in an objective way that allowed people to make up their own minds on issues. Then gradually the information provided came with a slant to a particular point of view and now sadly our media is blatantly active and biased in trying to shape people's attitudes towards a very liberal and left wing ideology. This is causing huge harm and undermining the whole bedrock of our society.

### **RTÉ**

In its mission and values statement our national broadcaster RTÉ states "that as an organisation and individually, it will be outward looking, creative, respectful, sustainable and accountable, collaborative and transparent". Sadly it is seriously lacking in some of these areas and does not live up to its mission. As recently as last week RTE showed a complete lack of respect for the heartfelt religious beliefs of many of its viewers when it broadcast a deeply offensive and blasphemous sketch on New Year's Eve which depicted God as a rapist.

It shows little evidence of accountability as can be seen when several complaints about a well known RTE broadcaster were upheld by the Irish Broadcasting Authority for his lack of balance during discussions about the 8th Amendment of the Irish Constitution at a very crucial and sensitive time. There seems little or no evidence of any accountability or disciplinary action being taken by RTE in this matter.

There needs to be much more transparency about whom and how editorial decisions and item selection are made both for news and documentary items. There is widespread belief that people of particular political persuasions are having undue influence in these areas. Many people believe that RTÉ is anti Christian and particularly anti Catholic not only in its obvious bias in its news, current affairs and documentaries but also in its almost complete lack of coverage of important events such as the relentless persecution of Christians being perpetrated in many countries. Over eighty percent of all persecution worldwide is directed against Christians and 250 million people are affected yet it is rarely if ever mentioned on RTÉ. The national broadcaster highlights and over emphasizes any item or piece of news that shows Christianity and particularly Catholicism in a bad light. There have been segments on other programmes such as The Late Late Show which have been offensive to many people who hold Christian and Catholic beliefs. Yet RTÉ never causes offense to people from other religions such as Islam? Their radical bias is obvious to any fair minded person. It is plain to see the embarrassment of some of the RTÉ newscasters and other station broadcasters when they are delivering items that they know are clearly biased and unfair in their content.

## **Print Media**

Much of the present Irish print media is also guilty of "social engineering". This was clearly seen during the run up to the 2018 referendum on the 8th Amendment of the Irish Constitution. There was a tsunami of articles and editorials promoting a "Yes" vote while apart from a small number of token pieces there was very little coverage that challenged this opinion. The same thing occurred during referenda on other social issues.

## **The Role of Advertisers**

The role and influence of advertisers needs to be explored. Many advertisements on radio and TV and in the print media promote lifestyles and beliefs of vocal minority groups. Large companies and corporations who have "an agenda" must not be allowed to dictate advertisement content and standards must be closely monitored.

## **Politicians and the media**

There now seems to be a too close and cosy relationships between some politicians from the main parties and the media in Ireland. Recent disclosures have revealed the inappropriate leaking of important documents by certain politicians to their media friends. While watching speeches and debates from Dáil Éireann one can clearly see some politicians "playing to the media" in the gallery. This is unhealthy for our democracy.

## **Access to the Media**

There must be fair and even access to the media by politicians from all the parties. This has certainly not been the case in recent times. Parties who pursue a far left wing agenda have been given much more time and space in all branches of the media than other parties who have similar amounts of support in national surveys. This needs to change.

## **Broadcasting Authority of Ireland**

Many people have lost confidence in The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland. It has been involved in funding programmes that are objectionable to many people. It does not seem to have any teeth or it is reluctant to follow up on breaches of the broadcasting legislation.

## **TG4 (Teilifís na Gaeilge)**

I believe that TG4 is one of the great success stories in recent Irish broadcasting. The excellent music, documentaries and sports coverage provided by this channel are first rate as can be seen by the many awards and prestigious prizes which have been achieved both at home and abroad. It's contribution to the Irish language is invaluable and as an important employer it plays an important role in the

sustainability of the Connemara Gaeltacht. I would like to see TG4 receive greater funding so that it can grow and continue its great work.

### **Amount of Irish Produced Music on Radio**

The amount of Irish produced music on our radio stations is still too low. While many radio stations had set a target of 30% airplay for Irish produced music in many cases nothing like this percentage is achieved. In fact airplay for indigenous Irish music on some Dublin commercial radio stations can be as low as 3%. The Broadcasting Act should be amended so that quotas of Irish produced music on our stations is increased to 40% as is the case in France, Canada and South Africa. This would promote growth and help secure the eight to ten thousand jobs in the industry here.

### **Social Media**

A serious erosion of our democracy is obvious due to the power that is being yielded by the giant companies and corporations who control social media. There have abuses in the way they have limited what people see and hear in relation to very important social and political issues. This has been clearly evident in Ireland in recent years. More legislation needs to be introduced and these monopolies needs to be broken down and more competition introduced.

### **Funding of Media**

I don't believe that I should be expected to pay a license to fund a national broadcaster who regularly offends and demeans my beliefs. Who promotes an opinion that anyone who practices their Christian faith and who holds family values as important are somehow backward and ignorant. I will vigorously oppose any attempt to introduce any new tax or license to increase funding to this broadcaster and to any publications in the print media who are of similar mind set.

Yours faithfully



1

[REDACTED]  
Record #276  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 18:27

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** Defund RTE

TO WHOM IT CONCERNS

I hereby submit my request that RTE be defunded.

My dissatisfaction with RTE's reporting is as follows:

Reporting is:

- (a) Unbalanced, (b) unfair, (c) often untrue and
- (d) (generally biased)

in respect of matters of : Moral, religious and political events.

Apologies (only one of which I am aware) are useless after the damage is done.

Please defund RTE.

Thanking you in anticipation,



[REDACTED]  
Record #277  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 18:21  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Subject:** Submission to Future of the Media Commission

My name is [REDACTED]

The following is a personal submission, made on my own behalf.

### **Submission to Future of the Media Commission**

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.
2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that The Journal.ie which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.
3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media

platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this submission.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

1

[REDACTED]

Record #278

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 18:17  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Subject:** Funding

Dear person

I am hereby writing to you to put my point across that RTE IS NOT REPRESENTING MY VIEWS, BELIEFS,

My tax must not be used to fund this station or any newspaper groups since I don't buy them nor do I watch RTE anymore.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

Sent from my Huawei phone

7

[REDACTED]

Record #279

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 18:07  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Cc:** info@prolifecampaign.ie; info@thelifeinstitute.net  
**Subject:** defunding RTE

RTE has a biased left wing view of matters.  
During the. abortion debate for example, a pro life speaker was not "allowed" to appear a second time .Why?  
In the Claire Byrne "debate" the audience was packed with pro abortion speakers.  
There are many other examples, but, suffice it to say  
I no longer listen to or trust RTE , except for sports broadcasts. It is a shame that my licence fee is so abused,  
with no opportunity for contrary opinions to be voiced  
Regards

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #280  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 18:04  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Subject:** SUBMISSION

SUBMISSION TO THE FUTURE OF MEDIA COMMISSION

I have been totally dissatisfied with RTÉ for many years. The station displays a strong anti-Christian bias which I find very offensive. The recent debacle surrounding the disgraceful and blasphemous New Year's Eve show is just one of numerous examples I could cite. The production and broadcasting of that show involved many personnel, not just those involved in the show directly, but also those in management. All these people must have known that this sketch would be deeply offensive. But they did not care. The initial reaction (I won't call it an apology) from Ms Forbes to the public outcry was so feeble and insincere as to reinforce the insult. It was only when the public outcry reached a groundswell that the Station, belatedly, issued any sort of apology. Presumably, they were concerned that many would not renew their licences. But no disciplinary action was taken by RTÉ against those involved. This episode was symptomatic of an unaccountable organisational culture within RTÉ which has gone on for far too long.

In summary, I strongly support the defunding of RTÉ. It does not seem very fair to me that I must fund an organisation which stridently insults the values that I hold dear. It does not provide any form of objective and fair broadcasting. Similarly, I would be totally opposed to the public funding of any other media outlet.

Thank you,





[REDACTED]

Record #281

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 18:00  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Subject:** Public Consultation submission

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am delighted with this opportunity to make a submission on the important issue of the future of media.

It is very important to me that the media remains independent and trustworthy.

Unfortunately I do not feel the media has been very independent in recent events especially regarding Covid 19. It seems there is only one narrative and journalists are not asking questions or challenging this narrative. There are many views and experts medical and legal who challenge the efficacy of lockdown for example and their voices are not heard in mainstream media. The media should be impartial and allow and d courage debate on all issues,

The media did not show any impartiality in relation to the Abortion debate recently either.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]  
Record #284  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:58

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:**

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that The Journal.ie which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by

asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #287  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:43

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** RTE

All State Funding should be removed from RTE for its failure to maintain impartiality in much of its broadcasting on so-called social issues; it's obvious bias against certain sections of society, and for the regularity of presenters to display their own opinions on issues, contrary to the Broadcasting Act 2009. The BAI itself has repeatedly failed to penalize the Broadcaster for obvious breaches of the Act and Broadcasting regulations.

[REDACTED].

Sent from my iPad

[REDACTED]

Record #292

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:32

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** defunding RTE

I would like to see the defunding of taxpayer monies to RTE. I feel they were completely biased on many political and moral issues.

Regards [REDACTED]

1

[REDACTED]

Record #293

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:31

**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie

**Subject:** Future of Media Commission Submission

Dear Commission Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to make a submission to the Future of Media Commission.

While there is much that I could say on this topic, I would like to focus on the current method of funding RTÉ. RTÉ does not provide balanced and fair coverage across a wide range of issues. In general, its content and tone are anti-Christian. Consequently, the station has lost the trust of me and many others whom I know. I do not see why the public should be compelled to support financially a station which so many find offensive. This is a grossly discriminatory arrangement. The fairest way for RTÉ to fund itself is by way of subscription raised from those who wish to view its programming output.

In conclusion, I would urge the abolition of the compulsory licence fee as a means of subsidising RTÉ. Equally, I do not think that any other media outlet, whether broadcasting or print media, should be supported by the State either directly or indirectly.

Many thanks for reading my submission.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #294  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:30  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Subject:** the Future of Media Commission

To whom it may concern

When conducting the review could the following be taken into consideration

- 1 is the abortion issue being dealt with in a fair and balanced way
2. the BBC are running a new drama 'the Activist' highlighting a young pro-life activist. Could this issue be dealt with on TV drama in a similar way in Ireland.
3. Could some of the less well known aspects of our rich Irish history be highlighted

[https://www.wetheirish.com/?fbclid=IwAR1XZaCxboQm3cSX4iTupIQTMza39QGEYgf5aBt9uN-pn3LthZFoigWH2\\_o](https://www.wetheirish.com/?fbclid=IwAR1XZaCxboQm3cSX4iTupIQTMza39QGEYgf5aBt9uN-pn3LthZFoigWH2_o)

Thanks for considering these.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #295

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:30  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Subject:** Future of media in Ireland

A chara,

We feel that the media in general is not giving fair and balanced coverage especially in relation to the social issues that have arisen over the last few years. One side (generally the liberal side) is put forward without a balanced opposite viewpoint being presented. In any debate each side is entitled to express their views but there must be an equal presentation of both sides of the debate. Therefore media must be required to provide balanced coverage of any issue and must be held accountable if it does not do so.

RTE has not shown itself to be fair and balanced in its presentation of debates especially on social issues. Also the broadcast of a deeply offensive sketch accusing God of having raped the Blessed Virgin Mary and the subsequent refusal to remove the sketch until public opinion forced it to do so, shows that RTÉ have no respect for peoples' deeply held beliefs (in the present case, the Christian faith).

The licence fee goes exclusively to RTÉ. Therefore it is our view that if the licence fee is to be allocated exclusively to RTÉ, then there must be a change of policy and decision makers to ensure that fair, balanced and respectful journalism and programming is broadcast. A proper system of accountability must also be established.

Mise le meas,  
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

[REDACTED]  
Record #297  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 11:01  
**To:** info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
**Subject:** Submission [REDACTED]

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am e-mailing you regarding the future funding of media in the State. As things stand, for the benefit of RTÉ, the State, in the proposed broadcasting tax, will extend the tax, that is the TV licence, making it an effective household tax, designed to cover RTÉ's losses. It has been suggested, also, that failing print media should be supported from taxpayers' money. I do not believe that the reported problem of 'fake news' can serve as rationale for the funding of media outlets by the taxpayer, outlets that cannot support themselves, and do not adequately, or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. Irish people are being forced to pay taxes towards programmes that openly mock their beliefs and undermine their principles as Christians, or their politics, when it doesn't conform to the Left-Liberal model.

- RTÉ make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs, and in particular, Catholic beliefs, but not those of other faith-based groups. The failure by RTÉ to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith-based group internationally, and especially in Nigeria, is a case in point.
- The controversy continues over the New Year's Eve Show 'comedy' item, on the idea that the Holy Spirit raped and impregnated Mary. That controversy is due, in part, to the refusal by the station to take down the clip of the offending item, on the grounds that it is satire, and on the grounds of freedom of speech. This, despite the fact that everyone admits that there is no earthly way they would permit such a skit

of another religion [REDACTED]

- The mechanisms in place, to deal with unresolved complaints, appear meaningless, as it is now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against Catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible, or to make meaningless, any comment it may make in the future on the New Year's Eve Show 'comedy' item — for or against.
- The BAI, as you know, has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of every episode, it is stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God-fearing days. He is portrayed as the Devil or a vampire. He curses, blasphemes, and tries to extort money, by announcing 'all sinners welcome for a fee', and uses black magic in every episode 'to drag people back to Church'.
- In one episode, a trio sent to fight him, see a host/Eucharist suspended in mid-air, while heavenly music is being played in the background, and the trio quip that the host is Jesus, that the hosts are being used by the priest to make, and sell, crisps with a black-magic Catholic guilt-trip spell. In a closing scene, the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine, Ciara, says: 'your cheating days are done, priest.' 'Fantasy Island' is pitched as a project, and is funded by the BAI.
- 'The Late Late Show' has openly mocked the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and has had guests on who have referred to the Eucharist as 'magic bread'.
- While a large number of young adults may have left the Church, or do not practise the Faith, this does not exempt RTÉ, or the BAI, from adherence to the equality values it often trumpets, nor from its own guidelines on deliberately not provoking offence. It is questionable whether this exclusive targeting of one religion, to the exclusion of all others, would come under the proposed hate-speech legislation.

Rather than subsidizing them through a national tax, I propose:

- the defunding of biased media outlets.
- that the funding of the BAI be stopped, and that its membership be reviewed.
- that the BAI be monitored on how it deals with discrimination against faith-based groups, and the Catholic Church, in particular.

At present, the BAI cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the New Year's Eve Show blasphemous 'comedy' item, seen as the BAI, itself, has funded deeply offensive skits.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]



Record #301

Brendan Balfe



## THE FUTURE OF MEDIA COMMISSION

### Submission by Brendan Balfe / January 2021

As a broadcaster who started in Radio Éireann in 1964, my submission is chiefly centered on Public Service Radio and the principles that attend it. I hope that the Commission will find the observations of an experienced Presenter/ Producer/Writer helpful in their deliberations.

#### **1. The essence of Public Service Broadcasting (PSB).**

A BBC broadcaster, Huw Weldon, coined a neat encapsulation of Public Service Broadcasting: ‘to make what is good - popular and what is popular- good’. In my view, regardless of the programme genre, PSB should have three important characteristics: it should be **Impartial, Distinctive** and of a **High Standard**

The concept of PSB can be a little inhibiting, if viewed as a dogma, requiring great thought and care. But in practice, it should come naturally, as if the essence was part of the bloodstream. It simply means don't be unfair to anyone, try to be innovative and do things well. In my own experience of producing and presenting music programmes, comedy and satire, commercial programmes and documentaries, I have to some extent acquired some insights into popular radio. A brief outline:

#### **2. Key Principles of PSB in Practice**

My first mentor in radio, Denis Meehan, Head of the Announcers Section in the GPO Studios of Radio Eireann) stressed that if we respect the listener, we must treat them as being intelligent. They may be uninformed on certain topics, but they are not stupid. So, talk down to them at your peril.

If you respect your audience, they deserve you at your peak. That means taking care of professional standards – getting it right, be it pronunciation, preparation or production values. As the motto goes, ‘be the labour great or small, do it well or not at all’. Ad-libbing and being spontaneous work best when you think it out first, that you have a mental map. Nonetheless, it takes a lot of experience before you can open your microphone on radio and be confident that something interesting will come out.

Serving the listener entails building a relationship with the listener. A pleasant personality, a sense of humour and some intelligence established a rapport with his audience. We understood that service is not servility – it means connecting with the audience on an equal level, conscious that if what you are doing doesn't entertain them, then you're doing it wrong. The opposite of entertainment is not seriousness, it's opposite is boredom.

The paradox of radio is that although your audience may be numbered in millions, they are listening in ones. That means that they should be spoken to as individuals, not multitudes. So, speak gently and in civil tones, as if to friends who were in the same room as him, as indeed they were.

Art doesn't become Art until it reaches its audience. And your audience becomes your friend.

**Impartially** is vital, but it should not be too much an inhibiting factor. If discussing an area of current public concern in interviews, allow the guest to talk and, if required, represent the viewpoint of the missing party.

**Distinctive programming** is a scheduler's burden, but, in the case of RTE Radio 1, it can seem that the station is doing the same programme over and over during the day, apart from a music selection at midday. I note that whereas BBC Radio 4 has 31 individual programmes per day, RTE Radio 1 has 12.

**High Standards** are pursued by most broadcasters, who take great pride in their work. The illusion is that 'it all comes naturally', but like any professional, it takes an awareness of standards. And crucially, it takes some training. There is growing concern at slipshod practices, particularly in production and presentation. I have had much experience in training, being senior Lecturer in Radio Broadcasting at IADT for many years and I offer the following training strategy for any station or broadcasting operation, but is particularly addressed to the Public Service Broadcaster, RTÉ Radio.

### **3. A Training Strategy**

One of the hallmarks of Public Service Broadcasting is its adherence to high standards. Whether in programme choice, editorial integrity or production values, it should serve the audience with the best that it can do

This underscoring of programme quality that RTÉ Radio is built on can be compromised by a lack of training of on-air presenters. In recent years, I have been asked to coach presentation announcers for TV, weather forecasters from Met Éireann, and the main presenters on Lyric FM. On each occasion, I asked what training or mentoring that RTÉ had already provided. In each case, the answer was none.

This was not surprising. The practice in RTE was to hire presenters and allow them on air without feedback or encouragement from producers or management. This practice of critiquing is common in local and commercial radio, but rare in the national broadcaster. To my knowledge, there are many producers who are adept at organising or directing programmes, but have no skills in producing a performance. In most cases, an unsatisfactory output was never brought to the attention of the presenter, but was discussed at department meetings by producers. No effort was made to address the problem and the first the presenter knew about the perceived flaw was when their contract was not renewed.

Such lack of intervention to address performance issues is usually the result of a misplaced sense of politeness, compounded by a lack of expertise on how to adjust the performance. The deficits can be in presentation, interviewing, writing, delivery- all irritants that affect their communication with the audience. All of which, over time, are hard to listen to. All of which, unfortunately, can result in the listener moving the dial.

While RTE is cognisant of its duty to the listener, it is not overstating the case to say that RTÉ also has a Duty of Care to its on-air personnel, to ensure that RTÉ's standards and those of its presenters coincide. Call it Training, Coaching, or Mentoring, a strategy should be put in place to ensure that presenters – newcomers and experienced hands alike- are minded and cared for in their professional careers. In short, that they are produced. Getting it Right is not pedantry; establishing a Quality Threshold makes good commercial and public service sense that benefits the station, the presenter and, most importantly, respects the listener.

## A TRAINING METHOD

The aim of effective presenter training is not to impose a style of presentation, but to bring out the best of the inherent talent. Like Michelangelo seeing David in a block of marble, my approach is to 'chip away the bits that aren't David' by removing irritants and stumbling blocks and allowing them to be authentic, to find their true voice.

In addition, the eternal verities of broadcasting, common to any style and station, are also considered. While it is a truism that you can't teach talent, you can certainly instil key principles, techniques and skills, as required in individual cases.

## TRAINING BACKGROUND

My training/coaching experience goes back to producing Gay Byrne on the Urney sponsored programme when I was 19. I have produced dozens of well-known presenters and personalities since then and trained over a hundred radio broadcasting students in IADT, many of whom now work for RTÉ or the commercial sector. I have also trained many thousands of individual candidates in career and personal development, interview and presentation skills. In all my experience, my approach to trainees has always been to produce an encouraging atmosphere, concentrate on the positives and gently remove the bits that hold them back.

## TRAINING PROPOSAL

To address training requirements in RTÉ, I suggest a combination of one-to-one encounters and workshops. Participants could volunteer for some training/mentoring or be recommended by management. The training would be available to a number of groups:

1. *Newcomers* - includes presenters currently appearing on DAB radio, who may have received scant training. It also includes prospective candidates for future on-air work and for part-time contributors.
2. *Intermediate candidates* – includes presenters who are currently on air but are thought to need some quick corrections or have deficiencies in particular skills, for example, interviewing, delivery, presentation or writing. This category also includes presenters making a transition from TV to radio, or vice versa (the skills are similar, but not the same).
3. *Refreshers*- experienced presenters who would welcome a second ear on their performances, who may have slipped into some bad habits and would welcome a chance to revive and re-group, on a one-to-one encounter.

The audience of RTÉ Radio should know that, amidst a plethora of commercial stations, when they listen to the National Public Service Broadcaster that they are taken seriously and respected. That respect should be evident in everything the stations do – that we treat them as equals, that they are worthy of then best we can do and that we take care of even the small things. With that approach come the qualities which are most noticeable when they are absent- sheen of professionalism, a patina of integrity, a ring of authenticity and an air of confidence; qualities which sum up the sound of a National Station. There is an old Marketing principle which is apt, 'When you encounter competition, you don't become more like them – you become more like you.'

As an experienced broadcaster, I submit these thoughts to the Commission and would be available, if required, to add develop them. A brief biography follows.

(Signed) **Brendan Balfe 7/01/1021**

## **BRENDAN BALFE**

Brendan Balfe has been broadcasting for over 50 years and has regularly produced radio and television programmes illustrating the cultural and social history of Ireland. He has an unrivalled knowledge of the RTÉ archives as well as first-hand experience of Irish audiences, from his days as an announcer, presenter, producer, scriptwriter, writer, author and performer. He has worked extensively in RTÉ radio and television, commercial radio, as a trainer and lecturer in broadcasting and as a Communications Consultant.

Complementing his music, entertainment and comedy shows on radio, Brendan's track record in programmes built on social history and popular culture includes:

- **The world of Entertainment** (1967) - (sponsored) – 1<sup>st</sup> radio arts/culture magazine.
- **A History of Pop** (1977) – 22 part series tracking the evolution of popular music
- **Sounds of the Century** (1979)- 20 parts, the radio model for *Reeling in the Years*
- **The Audio Visual Show** (1982)- first arts show on 2FM
- **Balfe's Audio File-** ( 1982-1985) – series of weekly radio documentaries
- **The Spice of Life** ( 1986)- a history of the Irish Variety Theatre ( Jacobs Award)
- **Showpeople** (1987) –series of interviews with American artists and performers
- **A Day by the Wireless** (1986) – full day of vintage radio for 60<sup>th</sup> birthday of R.É.
- **Soundtrack of the Century** (1999)- 24 hours of radio clips for the new Millennium
- **RADIO 75** (2001) – Co-ordinator and Exec Producer for radio, video and TV coverage
- **The Irish Voice** (2010)- acclaimed series tracking the sounds and soul of Ireland. (Triple CD issued 2011 was best-selling album of the year)
- **The Irish Eye** ( 2012) – 15 part series charting the 50 years of Irish television (voted *Best Radio Programme of the Year* by the Irish Independent)

On Television, he has acted as Programme Associate/Writer on the following programmes:

- **The Daniel O'Donnell Show, The Sandie Jones Show, The Sandy Kelly Show, The Tony Kenny Show, Shades of Red, Encore, The Twink Series, Judy Garland Show**
- **Sunday Night at the Gaiety / Sunday Night at the Olympia** (1986-1988)
- **Radio Maze** (1994) –a quiz show that used the entire Radio Centre as a set, celebrating 15 years of 2FM.
- **30 Years a Glowing-** devised and produced full day's TV schedule, a retrospective celebrating 30 years of RTE television ( 1991)

Featured as performer is the following television programmes:

- **Password, To Tell the Truth, Off the Beat** ( panel games- presenter)
- **The Greening of America** (Uncle Sam character)
- **Duets for Piano and Voice**- performer
- **Sing a Little Bing** –writer and performer

*Other relevant experience includes:* Recording Ireland's first comedy album, winning three international awards for radio comedy, stage appearances in musical productions, forming production company for radio sponsored programmes, managing director of company to supply syndicated radio programmes to local Irish stations, toured one-man humorous show in 2016. He was also the first face in colour from RTÉ TV studios, the first voice on 2FM and the last voice on Radio 1 Medium Wave.

[REDACTED]  
Record #304  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Fw: Future of media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:24:51

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[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** "info@futureofmediacommission.ie" <info@futureofmediacommission.ie>  
**Sent:** Fri, 8 Jan 2021 at 17:21  
**Subject:** Future of media

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

[REDACTED]

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

7

[REDACTED]

Record #305

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Defund RTE  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:24:03

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URGENT - Defund RTE? Make your submission TODAY to Future of Media in Ireland.

[View this email in your browser.](#)

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**You can email your submission to [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie) or complete an online form here: <https://form.typeform.com/to/Ure4d3Qc>**

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

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The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

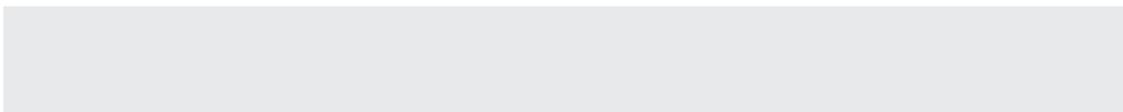
You can email your submission to : [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

or complete an online form here : <https://form.typeform.com/to/Ure4d3Qc>

Kind regards

.....

.....





[REDACTED]

Record #306

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:19:12

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Dear sirs

RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that The Journal.ie which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Record #310

Máiréad O'Higgins



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of Media Commission Public Consultation  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:14:59

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Coming from a community Radio Station perspective based in a very rural Community in West Clare the Government must continue the develop and support the concept and role of public service media. The Community Radio listenership is huge in Ireland and the people who listen to us know that the information that we give them is important to them and the news is not fake. The programmes that we produce reflect the experience of the community and where they live. It is important to the listenership that the information and public debate reflect their concerns of society, through how they live their life, their culture, traditions and their local area. The independent nature of Community Radio really does get into the community and report and reflect the social history of communities.

Community Radio productions are on par and above with any other Commercial Radio and they need to be recognised for this. The People who contribute and work in this sector under CSP, CE and Tus schemes in conjunction with partnerships and Volunteers have presented and produced excellent programmes. The social benefit that they get and give is very important. The partnership with Enable Ireland, Brothers of Charity and NCBI to mention a few in our Community Radio Station give a voice to marginalised groups and allow their voices to be heard by enabling them to present their own programmes and speak about what is important to them. In terms of inclusivity of people, we certainly do provide this to our community by working in partnership with vulnerable groups and provide them the opportunity to get their voice or message heard.

We have a distinct public value and should be recognised for this in the same way as Commercial stations are and we will continue to try to get this recognition.

Mise le meas  
Máiréad O'Higgins Finnegan BSc,  
Station Manager,  
South West Clare Community Radio L  
T/A Raidió Corca Baiscinn,  
Community Centre Circular Road,  
Kilkee, Co. Clare,  
[REDACTED]

  
Web: [www.rcb.ie](http://www.rcb.ie)

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #312  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** RTÉ  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:12:21

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## To whom it concerns

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.
2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.
3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

[REDACTED]

7

[REDACTED]

Record #313

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of the Media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:11:58

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To: The Future of the Media Commission

I write to give you my submission on the future of the Media in Ireland.

I understand that the issue of public funding of Irish media by way of a broadcasting charge is under consideration.

I am strongly opposed to such a proposal for the reasons given below.

#### Independent Journalism

Your website asks: "Are you worried about fake news? Is independent journalism important to you and to society?" The answer to both of those questions is in the affirmative. However, I do not believe that publicly funding existing Irish media is the answer as my impression of Irish journalism, for the most part, is that it is agenda-based journalism, it is not independent. A prime example of this is the media coverage in the lead up to the referendum to remove the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

The Pro-Life Campaign monitored Irish national newspapers over a two week period in the lead up to the referendum and found that there was 1 pro-life article as against 33 articles "pushing hard for more abortion." during that period. (<https://prolifecampaign.ie/5547-2/>)

This is agenda-based journalism. It is not independent journalism. Irish citizens should not be forced to fund such a biased media.

#### Political Interference

If the media is funded by legislation passed by the Government this raises the issue as to whether pressure can be brought to bear on the media by an unscrupulous government. It is vitally important for democracy that the media cannot be manipulated by the Government of the day.

#### Public Support for Private Business

If a private business cannot survive in a changing market then it should go into liquidation. Taxes should be used to provide public services, not to prop up privately owned media businesses which are no longer viable.

#### What is Our Current Experience of Funding of the Media in Ireland

The TV licence gives some experience of citizens being taxed to support the media. We are told this is because RTE fulfils a public broadcasting function.

On New Year's Eve, 2020 the RTE Countdown Programme included a grossly insulting and disgraceful "comedy" section portraying God as a rapist of a young migrant woman.

In a very short segment RTE managed to insult all people of faith, in particular Christians, victims

of rape and migrants. How the producers of the show could consider this to be in compliance with its public broadcasting obligations, or even common decency, is beyond belief.

RTE issued an apology after several hundred complaints were made, but refused to remove the grossly offensive material from RTE Player. Several thousand complaints later a further apology issued from RTE and they took down the disgraceful material.

So, Irish citizens are required to subsidise RTE so that RTE can insult their faith and make a joke about rape?

An earlier example of a breach of its obligations by RTE occurred in 2016. It is noteworthy that it was only after receiving a warning from the BAI, after a third offence by the particular broadcaster, that RTE put in place "...a plan to ensure there is no re-occurrence of the issues identified."

(<https://extra.ie/2016/12/22/news/irish-news/e250000-fine-if-ray-darcy-over-steps-on-abortion-issue-again> ) . The delay exhibited by RTE on that occasion is evident again in its delay in taking down the disgraceful clip in the aforementioned Countdown Programme.

The ongoing subsidisation of RTE by the Irish public should be discontinued. To extend such funding to the print media would be most unjust.

Your sincerely,

██████████



[REDACTED]

Record #314

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Funding for media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:09:40

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3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTE. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

[REDACTED]  
Record #315  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 17:07:06

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I hope the media in Ireland respect human life both born and unborn.

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

[REDACTED]  
Record #316  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Unjust law forcing me to support RTE  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 19:36:51

---

I wish to submit that the current obligatory tv licence, which forces me to support RTE against my conscience, is unjust. Everybody should be free to support that which they do, in fact, support.

As a national broadcaster, RTE does not fairly represent the operative culture of the vast majority of citizens, specifically Roman Catholics. Instead it actively seeks to undermine, diminish, ignore and change that culture. After recent broadcasts, I have decided that any campaign of civil disobedience against this unjust law will have my full and active support.

Regards

[REDACTED]

1

[REDACTED]

Record #317

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Media commission  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 19:28:30

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I'll never pay a TV tax again  
The media has become biased and arrogant  
They've begun this division tactic  
One side that suits the governments agenda and push the belief that what they state is the  
be all of popularity amongst the fast public  
When in fact in 5 years thus tactic will come back to haunt them

--

Sent from my Android device with Sync for iCloud Mail. Please excuse my brevity.

[REDACTED]  
Record #318  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 19:18:39

---

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church". In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

---

[REDACTED]

Record #319

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of media in Ireland.  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 19:17:28

---

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point. The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemers, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]



Record #320

Frank Mc Neill



Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe either that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

- RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.
- The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]
- The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.
- The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".
- In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.
- The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.
- While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,  
Frank Mc Neill

[REDACTED]

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #321  
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]  
To: [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
Date: Thursday 7 January 2021 19:07:01

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded

deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

 \_\_\_\_\_

[REDACTED]  
Record #322  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Biased Irish Media  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 19:06:47

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is now the TV license, to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax which is designed to cover RTE's losses.

It's been suggested also that failing print media could be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payers funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria which may be at risk of genocide is another case in point.

The controversy has continued over the outrageous skit on God raping and impregnating Our Lady, in part due to the stubborn refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's just satire and an expression of freedom of speech.

This despite everyone knowing, that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion

[REDACTED]

Furthermore, the mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear useless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs in particular, as to make confidence in the system impossible and any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know, has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell to trick people back to Church.

In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". All pitched as a project to and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, plenty of people still do. In any case, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation if not one of the anti discrimination grounds.

So we propose defunding of biased individual media outlets ( rather than our subsidizing them through a national household tax ) that happily break their own regulations and I would say, the law, as long as its about

Christians and Catholics in particular.

If you the Commission on the future of the media, propose to advise further funding to RTE and similar outlets then you are furthering the discriminatory practices outlined above. Stop funding RTE or other media outlets through a coercive license or tax which guarantees a conflict of interest in journalistic independence when the government of the day part pays journalists' salaries. Enough journalists have joined government ranks as it is. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI (and in turn of RTE) so as to not engage in discrimination against just one faith based group. The BAI cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,



Sent from my iPhone

1

[REDACTED]

Record #323

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of the media.  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 19:06:38

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I am Catholic.

I don't expect to see the Catechism aired.

But I would like some discussion around the great philosophical arguments about liberalism, postmodernism, objective morality. That sort of thing.

Subjects which raise the intellectual bar.

All with respect for opposing views.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #324  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Defund RTE and prevent their being supported through household tax  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 19:04:04

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is now the TV license, to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax which is designed to cover RTE's losses.

It's been suggested also that failing print media could be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payers funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Catholics / other Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular Catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria which may be at risk of genocide is another case in point.

The controversy has continued over the derogatory and blasphemous New Year's Eve skit with Deirdre O' Kane and Kathryn Thomas, in part due to the stubborn refusal by RTE to take down the clip from the internet, on the grounds that it's just satire and an expression of "freedom of speech".

This despite everyone knowing that they would not attempt this with another religion

[REDACTED]

Furthermore, the mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear useless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so evidently biased against Catholic beliefs in particular, as to make confidence in the system impossible and any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

For instance, the BAI has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which violently attacks and mocks priests, laity, the Catholic belief in the Eucharist. The Late Late show has openly mocked the Sacraments of Penance and had guests on mocking Catholic belief in the Eucharist, calling It "magic bread".

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, plenty of people still do. In any case, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft-reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate-speech legislation if not one of the anti-discrimination grounds.

We therefore propose defunding of such biased individual media outlets ( rather than our subsidizing them through a national household tax ) that happily break their own regulations, as long as it's about Christians and Catholics in particular.

If you, the Commission on the future of the media, propose to advise further funding to RTE and similar outlets, then you are furthering the discriminatory practices outlined above. Stop funding RTE or other media outlets through a coercive license or tax which guarantees a conflict of interest in journalistic independence when the government of the day part-pays journalists' salaries. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI (and in turn of RTE) so as to not engage in discrimination against just one faith-based group. The BAI cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Sincerely,

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #325  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission on future of media  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 19:02:30

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded

deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

— [REDACTED]

7

[REDACTED]  
Record #326  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** re submission to the Future of Media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:12:54

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Dear Sirs,

In Ireland we are subjected to a constant barrage of left wing reporting in our media. No effort whatsoever is made at presenting fair or balanced coverage of any particular news item. The Media in this country are merely mouthpieces for the Government and a stick with which to beat anyone who has the temerity to question the prevailing social or political view. There are frequently radio and television advertisements warning the public not to trust what appears on their social media feed and extoling us to rely on the so called quality journalism that comes from RTE. I am not on social media. However, the journalism which comes from RTE cannot be described as “quality” or “factual”, perhaps “biased”, “unprofessional”, “partisan” or “corrupt” might be better adjectives to describe the lies broadcast by RTE. I am not sure what the current viewership figures are for RTE, but I wager that there are very few watching this rubbish any more.

RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Kind Regards,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #327  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission to The Future of Media Commission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:07:38

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To whom it may concern,

I would like to have the following matters taken into consideration in the Future of Media deliberations;

**1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.**

**2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.**

**3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.**

***The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media***

*platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.*

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

[REDACTED]  
Record #329  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Recommendations for the future of media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 16:04:45

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To whom it may concern,

I wish to make the following recommendations for the future of media in Ireland:

I would like to see more programmes relating to Climate change, the environment and religion and how they are linked and how as a society we can do more environmental work as per the Pope's advice. As pope Francis has said the following regarding the topic 'Without prompt **global** action to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and slow the planet's warming, it says, there will be profound **environmental, social, political and economic consequences. The pope** clearly identifies the use of fossil fuels as a cause of **climate change**'.

In addition, I would like to suggest that the Laudato si would be integrated with Climate change it translates to the following:

### Praise Be to You

**Laudato si'** (Praise Be to You) is the second encyclical of Pope Francis. The encyclical has the subtitle "on care for our common home". ... The encyclical is the second published by Francis, after Lumen fidei (The Light of Faith), which was released in 2013.

Fr. Brian Grogan has written a great book on the subject entitled: Finding God in a leaf. Fr. Brian has been interviewed in the past and he is a great spokes person on this topic. Perhaps he or other priests and/or theologians would be available to speak on this topic and other related topic.

Programmes in the past were very interesting By Gay Byrne, whereby he interviewed people on their faith. I believe this and other such programmes lead by Priests, theologians and nuns would be vital to people of all **ages and gender** in society. I think these programmes do a lot for people struggling to understand God in the modern day and who may be suffering with mental illness, bereavement or just have a general interest in the environment and religion.

I know a lot of people who dedicate their time to environmental work via groups such as Climate ambassadors with An Taisce, The Dodder River Action group, SDG ambassadors and perhaps they would be interested in featuring and/or watching more about how the work they do is also a religious act.

I think Senator Ronan Mullen does fantastic work in the Senate on promoting religion and I think people like him deserve to be spoken to if they wish to speak on the work he does in the religious groups he is involved in. Hearing about the work people do via Television is sometimes the only way of hearing about this work if they are not on social media and would like to be involved. It may help them feel less isolated and lonely if they had such television programmes to watch which are of interest to them.

Regarding mass I would like to recommend it be broadcast on RTE 1 daily.

Having the rosary said daily on RTE 1 would be great.

A catechism hour and/or programme daily would be very interesting for

I would like to see more appropriate religious pictures during the Angelus daily and that the Angelus would continue daily in the future.

Furthermore, I would like to see Sunday mass continue on RTE 1 in the future also.

Dedicating more time to religious programmes on RTE 1 and increasing the coverage of religious programmes featuring the scriptures daily.

Input of scriptures into RTE1 programmes would be of interest also.

Yours sincerely,

■

[REDACTED]  
Record #330  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Funding  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:59:26

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Sent from my iPhone. Dear Sir/Madam

I write to say that I do NOT look at RTE's programmes, and as such, do not see why we the taxpayer should be obliged to pay for a licence fee at all. This also applies to the print media as they do NOT report "truth"

[REDACTED]

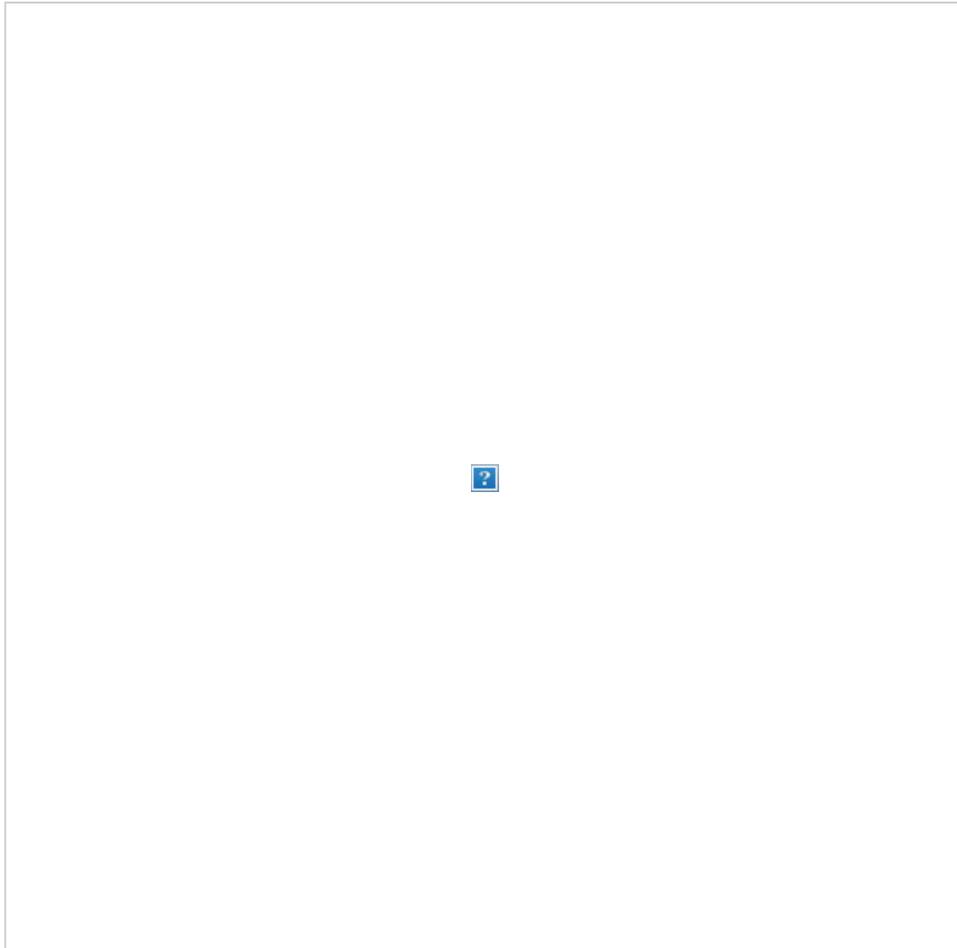
[REDACTED]  
Record #331  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:57:56

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**URGENT - Defund RTE? Make your submission TODAY to Future of Media in Ireland.**

[View this email in your browser](#)



**LIFE INSTITUTE : 8th January 2021**

**URGENT - Defund RTE? Make your submission TODAY to Future of Media in**

**Ireland**



Dear [REDACTED]

As you may know, the Independent Future of Media Commission has been set up by the Irish Government to assess the public service media. They say they will address worries regarding fake news and independent journalism.

**Closing Date for submissions is TODAY, Friday 8th January 2021. We've included some key points sent by supporters below**

**You can email your submission to [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie) or complete an online form here: <https://form.typeform.com/to/Ure4d3Qc>**

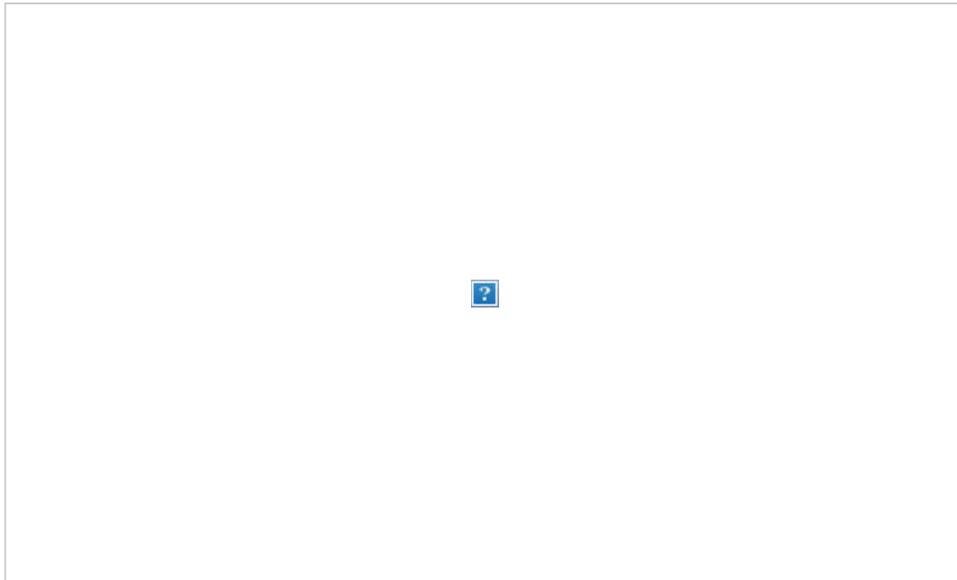
1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.
2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The [Journal.ie](#)* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.
3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support [Gript.ie](#) rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

You can email your submission to : [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)

or complete an online form here : <https://form.typeform.com/to/Ure4d3Qc>

Kind regards



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Sent from my iPad

7

[REDACTED]

Record #332

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of media funding in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:56:55

---

Dear Sir or Madam

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point. The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

---

Sent from my iPhone

7

[REDACTED]

Record #333

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Request for showings on RTE.  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:56:05

---

Hello,

I am a license payer to RTE.

Therefore I feel I have an opinion in what is shown on the station.

The majority of the population in Ireland is Roman Catholic and as a practising Catholic I would love and appreciate daily Mass on RTE. In these times of no Mass available in our Churches and vast areas of Ireland without broadband this is needed, it also will benefit older people who are not able to manage online Mass. Some Catholic programs would also be welcome and religious scenes while the Angelus bell is ringing on TV.

Thank You

[REDACTED]

7

[REDACTED]  
Record #334  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Defund RTE  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:53:14

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As a priest I have been appalled by the almost daily onslaught by RTE on my values and those of other authentic Catholics I know. I resent having to pay a licence. Accordingly rather than pay another penny I have decided to rid myself of my television. Nothing in this world will ever again make my pay money to have my faith attacked by ignorant and bitter 'journalists' who are overweening and arrogant to an extreme degree. The saying comes to mind: empty cans make most noise!

[REDACTED]

7

Record #335

**From:** [Oisin Kyne](#)  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Let people choose who gets their TV license money  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:53:14  
**Attachments:** [Screenshot 2021-01-08 at 15.36.31.png](#)

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Hi there,

My name is Oisín Kyne and the following is my submission for the public consultation process for the future of media commission in Ireland.

I run a software development business specialising in Blockchain technology, and my primary goal for the commission is to adopt what is called a **quadratic funding** model for funding public service media in Ireland. What this means quite simply is that the government should allow the public a choice in which entity receives their TV license fee/public media tax money, and that the government should then use this information as the basis for allocating additional funding to subsectors of the media.

This concept was published as a paper by Harvard Economist Zoe Hitzig, Radical Markets Author Glen Weyl, and Ethereum founder Vitalik Buterin in 2018.  
[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3243656](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3243656)

The premise is that allowing people to choose who gets their money is a capital and time efficient manner for getting the most bang for the state's buck, and it allows the state to be transparent and impartial in how public service media is funded. There is a rising belief in the alt-right that the state shouldn't fund public media at all, which I absolutely do not agree with, but I appreciate that the Government needs to be delicate about how it chooses to fund media, and should use a transparent light touch model. I think the government should fund these entities proportionally to how the general public have spent their money. This would remove claims of bias and partisanship, while simultaneously being cost effective and open for everyone to take part in, rather than having a select group of "media/establishment elites" choosing who gets the funding. (Alt-right beliefs, not mine)

The co-author of the above paper, Glen Weyl, has expressed his interest in speaking to the commission about the effectiveness of this model to me on Twitter. To date I have tried getting in touch with Professor Brian MacCraith and Mr. Mark Little to make them aware of this offer to no success. I hope if you read this submission you might reach out to me and allow me to arrange for the commission to hear from the highly acclaimed author himself about the pros of this community driven model for public media financing.

Screenshot 2021-01-08 at 15.36.31.png



You can learn more about quadratic funding here: <https://wtfisqf.com/>

And you can see quadratic funding working in practice funding open source public goods software to the tune of millions of dollars per year here: <https://gitcoin.co/grants/>

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me, contact details are below. I think this relatively small change could radically impact how receptive the general public might be to a brand new TV license fee, which is not currently favoured, but it could be if people felt empowered by the fee rather than beholden to it.

Le gach dea ghúí,

Mise le meas,

Oisín

--

Oisín Kyne

**Director - Kyne Software**





[REDACTED]  
Record #336  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future funding of Media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:53:06

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A Chara

Further to your invitation to the public to let you know its views, please see the submissions below which attempt to address the elements proposed on your website.

### **1. How public services should be delivered**

RTE's radio and television service has always been delivered in the shadow of the BBC's service that is frequently regarded as the world broadcasting benchmark. The UK Government's provision of resources to the BBC have enabled it to produce programmes that are generally of an enviably high standard without the benefit of advertising revenue. Despite RTE having the advantage of both Government subvention and advertising revenues, its productivity appears often to be limited by the size of its annual budget. Noticeably, many of its home-grown programmes do not demonstrate a consistency in quality standards that appears to have little to do with resources and is in contrast to its foreign-sourced material.

a) Regarding television channels, the Irish public are not short of choice - the opposite is the case. RTE1 and 2 are competing with each other. In turn, they are competing with dozens of other broadcasters on satellite and cable services. RTE must be restructured: the two stations should be amalgamated and resources channelled into one station. TG4 should be the alternative provider with its mandate to broadcast in Irish retained.

Most of all, RTE should be subject to financial sanctions where its programmes offend against the dignity and beliefs of its viewers. At the time of writing, many thousands of complaints have been lodged with RTE against its broadcast on New Year's Eve of a supposedly satirical item. Other than a corporate slap on the hand from the BAI, RTE will not suffer any loss, notwithstanding that many licence-payer viewers were extremely offended.

b) Regarding radio, again the public is not short of choice. Radio 1 should be mandated to produce high quality programmes with less news and less talk-shows. RTE's services are completely saturated with news programmes: there is news on-the-hour on Radio 1 and 2 together with news on-the-half hour on RTE Lyric. Then there are daily programmes beginning with Morning Ireland, News at One and Drivetime interspersed with current affairs (i.e. more news and opinions) each morning and afternoon. Afternoons are dominated by talk shows including Liveline and the Ray Darcy Show. Aside from news, there is very little educational, documentary or entertainment content.

Radio 2 should be closed: its music is targeted only at young people who have many other options to choose from, whether local/regional stations or international ones.

RTE Lyric's mandate should be significantly broadened to provide different genres of music with appeal to young and old, highbrow and popular.

### **2. How this should contribute to supporting Ireland's cultural and creative sectors.**

a) RTE's television broadcast hours should be reduced. Again, most Irish people are not short of a choice of channels. RTE must be mandated to produce programmes more

creatively within limited budgets. ("Nationwide" is an excellent example of an inexpensive, simply-produced programme that is informative, educational, cultural and entertaining.) By reducing hours, resources could be concentrated on producing better-quality programmes. More focus could then be brought to creative and cultural matters.

b) As stated, Radio programmes are dominated by news and talk shows. The result is that the quality of these is often not of a standard that they could be. Moreover, some show hosts develop a familiarity that descends into them expressing their own strongly-held opinions on matters that can offend and alienate viewers. Moreover, such familiarity is occasionally characterised by poor language more commonly heard on the street.

(When seeking public donations, the Iona Institute, the family-supporting Irish Christian body, quotes in its advertisements - to its fund-raising advantage - Ray Darcy as saying: "*The Iona Institute makes my blood boil!*" Regardless of his/her own cultural views, should any broadcaster who is extremely highly-paid, not least by Irish taxpayers, be free to express his prejudices or bias against any group or organisation that clearly enjoys support amongst those same taxpayers? And is it right that language should be used occasionally by broadcasters that most people would regard as the 'language of the street' or the dressing-room of a sports club?)

### 3. How this work can be funded in a way that is sustainable, in a secure way that ensures editorial independence and delivers value for money to the public.

The options for funding lie between (i) complete subvention by Government; (ii) partial subvention together with advertising; or (iii) advertising and commercial activity.

The difficulty posed by (i) above is that RTE will inevitably become anti-competitive and lethargic once its revenues are state-guaranteed. And in times of Government cutbacks, the quality of RTE's programming will suffer. Any proposal to change the annual licence fee to a household tax must be refused. Not all houses have televisions, nor should those who do not support RTE be obliged to subsidise it. Nor will it guarantee editorial independence - Governments are not beyond punishing national radio stations when their interests are in conflict.

Regarding (ii) above, that is the status quo and it no longer works: RTE in recent times was reduced to selling its art collection to fund a defamation settlement to a well-known journalist. Notwithstanding its sale of surplus lands for over €100 million, there are no signs that this will solve its apparent death spiral in competing with international broadcasters.

Regarding (iii) the complete independence of RTE can only come about when the station is cut loose and told to stand on its own feet. That will best bring about creativity and good management. It will also limit the broadcaster from either offending or boring its own viewers. It will cause the station to sink or swim. That must be the only realistic way forward in giving the viewers value for money, unless RTE is subsumed into the civil service and its editorial policy becomes the Irish equivalent of China's radio and television channels.

### 4. Making recommendations on RTE's role, financing and structure within this framework.

As suggested above, RTE must be given complete control of its own existence to best serve Irish society. This would include financing and programming and all that goes with running a successful broadcasting business. It cannot compete with the likes of BBC or

Sky on their terms. It must learn to compete on its own terms with whatever freedoms and limitations that offers. Since this option has never been attempted in the history of RTE, the time has come to try it now and let it sink or swim.

**5. How this is overseen and regulated, having regard to our EU obligations.**

Many, many Irish people pay a monthly fee to receive dozens of international channels delivered by satellite and/or cable and/or internet. These channels are not subject to an Irish authority. Why should RTE be if it were truly independent?

However, all channels should be subject to basic standards of what might be termed 'Common Decency'. When channels cannot be regulated to ensure these standards, viewers should have the option of disconnecting them and not paying for them. This principle should be enshrined in legislation for enforcement against cable and satellite-service providers.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

[REDACTED]  
Record #337  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Offensive and discriminatory targeting of a religious group  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:52:23

---

To whom it may concern,

I strenuously object to my taxes being used to fund RTÉ when they see fit to insult and denigrate my faith.

If they choose to be equally offensive to all other faiths , then they are morally corrupt. If not, they are not only morally corrupt but biased and discriminatory in their programming.

Time for them to fund their own prejudices at their own expense. Defund them now and use our taxpayers' money to look after those who need help ie the old, the vulnerable, those awaiting scoliosis operations .....

RTE has been cocooning in a bubble of their own making ever before Covid 19. Get out into the real world for a change.

Yours,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

7

[REDACTED]

Record #338

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Defund BIASED LEFT-WING RTE  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:51:27

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1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Rgds,  
[REDACTED]

7

[REDACTED]

Record #339

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** The future of media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:10:52

---

To whom it may concern,

I wish to make the following recommendations for the future of media in Ireland:

I very much enjoyed the programme on the 50 Francis street photography. I thought having a priest on it discussing changes in religious practices over the decades was extremely helpful. I think it would be great to see more of such programmes. I thought it was a programme that all generations could watch.

It also highlighted that there is a need to have a better explanation on the meaning behind religious symbols and cultures in society. Therefore, a programme explaining the bible to lay people would be an idea for a future series of programmes on RTE 1. perhaps a priest and/or theologian would be available to give such talks.

I also recommend that at Easter perhaps there could be a programme from the Holy Land and an explanation by a priest and/or theologian on the scriptures relating to that religious festival, the events that unfolded and where they took place could be aired.

I think more programmes on holy wells, monasteries those in ruins and occupied currently by priests and nuns, the skelligs etc would be of interest to people of all generations in the country.

Additionally, Eddie Stones of Emmanuel House gives talks and prayer meetings and gathers large number for prayer, mass and pilgrimage to his Church and the Churches in Clonfert, Co. Galway all year round and particularly in the month of May. A programme on this and some of the prayers and masses along with the talks Eddie gives would be of interest to vast numbers of the population in Ireland of all ages.

Relating to mass I would like to recommend it be broadcast on RTE 1 daily.

Having the rosary said daily on RTE 1 would be great.

A catechism hour and/or programme daily would be very interesting for

I would like to see more appropriate religious pictures during the Angelus daily and that the Angelus would continue daily in the future.

Furthermore, I would like to see Sunday mass continue on RTE 1 in the future also.

Dedicating more time to religious programmes on RTE 1 and increasing the coverage of religious programmes featuring the scriptures daily.

Input of scriptures into RTE1 programmes would be of interest also.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #340  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of media commission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:11:01

---

iDear Sir/Madam

My name is [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] In my travels I have lived and worked in Scotland, England , Wales and finally here in Ireland [REDACTED].

I observe that almost all households have televisions nowadays. It is universally stated by these viewers that " we now have so many channels available yet I cannot find anything decent to watch". Clearly the quality is therefore not up to a suitable standard.

Current affairs programmes typically present the facts of a topic then invariably focus on the minority or unique view for discussion. Typically this sets the scene for adversarial discussion with invited guests. When I buy my new car I do not concentrate on the make of tyres.

Is it possible to improve the standard in these areas.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

7

[REDACTED]

Record #342

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Fwd: submission on Future of Media.  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:14:40

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Fri, Jan 8, 2021 at 3:08 PM  
**Subject:** submission on Future of Media.  
**To:** <[info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)>

Dear Dr. Mc Graith

This is a rushed submission due to recent family bereavement as a consequence of Covid 19 .

The importance of the work of the Commission on the Future of the Media cannot be overstated.

Q 1 : Protection of Our Democracy relies on access for every citizen to truthful unbiased balanced information in every situation but particularly in relation to, General Elections and referendums on the Constitution, Current affairs, Politics. The Government has an important role in delivering this information across all media platforms to young and old alike.

My experience of Public service Media in past ten years has been overall reasonably balanced generally .

However I believe there has been a serious lack of balance in recent referendum information where the needs of adults were prioritised over those of children . I totally accept that there was a genuine need to correct prejudice in Irish society and to ensure that people of different sexual orientations are equally cherished and respected in all aspects of life in Ireland. However I believe this has been achieved at the expense of children who should have had their legal right to be reared as often as possible by their biological parents protected.

Similarly the information provided in the media on the termination of Pregnancy Bill should have been presented with equal balance being given to Pro life arguments

All public service Broadcast Media including RTE should consider providing ongoing education to the Public in a balanced unbiased manner on how to critically appraise information provided in the Media, also on issues of Citizenship . Ideally this could be done in a fun creative way to engage young and old alike.

Q 2 .

Need as a minimum for the Public to be able to access information as to who is funding the promotion of different viewpoints on Social, Print and Broadcast Media. This is particularly important on issues which influence our Constitution for example referendums.

Q 3 : How should the Media be regulated and governed ?

The BAI and The Ombudsman for the Press Council of Ireland should work with a permanently established Referendum Commission and a permanently established Electoral Commission administered by the office of the Ombudsman on issues relating to Referendums and General Elections to strengthen Democracy.

Need to establish the Referendum Commission as a continuing Legal Identity so that the recommendations made in previous reports after Referendums, are acted upon and the issue of How to present both sides of an argument in relation to future Referendums can be done more effectively . While I understand it can be difficult to educate the Public on the complexities of topics which are the subject of Referendums it is vital that both sides of the argument are presented in a fair and balanced way . The legal issues raised in overturning the Mc Kenna Judgement should be revisited.

Kind regards ,

██████████.

7

[REDACTED]

Record #343

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** public consultation  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:14:58

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I as an indigenous Irish Citizen believe that the Television License should be scrapped and that a subscription service should replace it. Thereby giving the proper freedom to Irish Citizens who do not wish to watch RTE Programmes. Especially since that very insulting 'broadcast' on New year's eve. Which I as a Practicing Catholic was very insulted by and which insulted the very God I believe in. I resent being FORCED to pay a television license to support a bigotry based state owned broadcasting company who at every opportunity insults My Faith and those who follow the same Faith as myself.

I am happy to pay taxes to uphold the infrastructure of my country however I as said resent paying money of any amount under duress to a company who does not respect my beliefs.

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #344  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Religious programmes  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:19:05

---

To whom it may concern

I was very disappointed over the Christmas period that there was very little religious programmes on RTÉ.

I think more than ever now we need more input .

I live quite close to Knock and there is a lovely story regarding the apparition in 1879.

Also it would be nice to have daily Mass on RTÉ 1 where older people/nursing home patients and people living alone to have it.

I would also suggest a few minutes talking about the saint of the day before Mass would be of interest.

I'm glad to see the Angelus is still part of our evening and again a few Christian pics would be appropriate.

Looking forward to seeing some of the above implemented.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

7

[REDACTED]

Record #346

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:24:01

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## Some suggestions

Public funded media needs to be more diverse. One organisation should not be getting the bulk of the public funding.

The question of sanctions needs to be looked at. Recently in RTE, there has been the offensive New Year's Eve program and the photo gathering that did not respect social distancing, to give two examples where nobody is held to account. Would RTE current affairs coverage accept that from others in society.

There is too much speculation about future events in news bulletins. News bulletins need to be separated more from comment and speculation. There needs to be more emphasis and coverage of what has or is actually happening

7

[REDACTED]

Record #347

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** The future of the Media.  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:32:47

---

To whom it concerns,

I believe that a fair, honest and unbiased media is an essential to our democracy. As the media is such a powerful influence, it is vital that the opinions of all sectors of society are accommodated. Unfortunately during the debate on the 8th amendment to the our constitution, I and thousands of others experienced a very unfair bias against the opinions of people who were pro life. Most of the time allotted for debate was given to those who were pro abortion and what was most unfair, I believe is that individual presenters were allowed to promote their own agenda on the issue, instead of remaining neutral and allowing the public to make up their own minds. I and many others were very disappointed and saddened that the experience of mothers and medical practitioners who were pro life were not given adequate coverage in the written, oral and visual media. Respect for all members of the public with regard to race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and background is essential for the development of a democratic and progressive society. I hope that in the future we will see fairer, more truthful and unbiased media.

Yours sincerely ,

[REDACTED]

7

[REDACTED]  
Record #349  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** FAO Future of Media Commission.  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:35:22  
**Importance:** High

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To whom it may concern, my name is [REDACTED] and I would like to offer some personal, possibly anecdotal, opinions on the current manifestation of the media in this country.

As a father, my gravest concerns lie around thwarted views being peddled as norms and standards. I am worried that my children will grow into a society that deems one gender more important than the other, and does so based on a myriad of poorly substantiated, historical datasets, supported by biased media. In many instances, these argumentative concepts are being redefined to suit the agendas of selected individuals and groups. From what I have encountered, this behaviour is neither being questioned nor stymied by the media, in order to ensure balanced reporting and socially-representative journalism. There are issues with an unpalatable lack of diversity within the priorities and topics discussed in the media, a mindset driven and nurtured by the groupthink mentality, from both mainstream and social media outlets, which selectively generate the illusion of unanimity through peer pressure, complacency, and censorship, in order to rationalise stereotyping and under-/misrepresentation. Such actions have resulted in the egregious misinterpretation/misrepresentation of important communal issues, resulting unscrupulous topic prioritisation whilst concomitantly downgrading, and ignoring, issues concerning men and boys. For domestic violence alone there are 29 different funded organisations for female victims and one catch-all organisation for men, which received <0.01% of the available funding despite the fact that almost 40% of DV cases are perpetrated on men, as reported by COSC. This discrepancy has never been highlighted by state or local media (alongside many other discrepancies in terms of the treatment of men and boys, such as education, suicide, and incarceration), and while some airtime has been used to highlight DV against men, this has been entirely limited and uses female-victim scenarios to represent the DV experience by men - in other words, poorly researched and published because they were forced into offering some balance rather than an actual interest in the plight of male victims.

It is beholden upon state journalism and its underpinning guidelines/legislation to untether from sensationalism and the clickbait wins, and to embrace the culture it is supposed to be advocating - a balanced and equitable study and reporting on social events, community influences, and socially relevant exchange. Any new or updated guidelines should reflect and require a more balanced, less nuanced, approach to coverage of all societal concerns and should actively disengage from actions which promote silencing and bullying in the face of contrary but equally as valid counter-points and opinions. These re-envisioned and textualised guidelines should be actively and properly policed and enforced by an independent governing body to ensure a more accepting, positive, and embracing society into the future.

Regards.

[REDACTED]



Record #350

Aileen Eglington



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission by Aileen Eglington, AE Consulting to The Future of Media and the challenges  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:38:54  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)

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As a communications professional, and also as someone who does a huge amount of voluntary work from a Chamber, Rural Task Force, Public Participation Network, and general volunteerism, I think that Public Service Broadcasting needs to be funded to have a broader remit in the future

- I think RTE have done a superb job to date, and particularly in the context of Covid and I believe that funding should continue
- I think we need more local funding – to link with all our disparate communities – old and new
- I think investment is needed in personnel to deliver public service radio
- I think we have enough regulation – and we cannot be in danger of putting more regulation in there – voluntary regulation has served us well up to no
- I think creativity for programming is key – and not just for Sound and Vision projects – it should be news and community talk radio in an ongoing way – harnessing local and community radio and podcasts and resources

I welcome this

**Aileen Eglington**  
MD

**AE Consulting**  
Ferndale  
Enniskerry Rd.  
Kiltarnan  
Dublin 18  
Ireland



eileen - facebbok.jpg



Company Logo - Name



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I believe that the community radio sector should have a bigger role to play in public service media. And that has been demonstrated by this Pandemic where community and dissemination of information to communities was key. Government messaging should appeal to community in a more compassionate way, celebrating the role of the citizen. However, this cannot be done without funding. Undoubtedly, RTE are superb in what they do, as can be seen at present and I see no reason why this should not be funded, however, we think that even the news function should be funded by way of personnel in community radio, to leave it less dependant on grants etc. Community groups can also be encouraged to produce more public service content and podcasts with an emphasis on language and customs, sport especially local sport and culture

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I think RTE funding must continue. But that Community Radio can play a role. Funding is key, properly allocated at national and local level. There is no space on RTE to properly communicate at local and community level. This funding can be administered by BAI or Dept. Rural Affairs, but in a less complex way, while still adhering to corporate governance. It should be about ongoing content for public service, not just project driven with Sound and Vision. That is why I think Personnel funding is key. Also in relation to the shift in advertising revenues, the bottom line is still that radio is a huge catch-all situation especially talk radio, for ROI. And that must be maintained at the highest standards.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I believe that in general Ireland's media is well governed at a voluntary level and I would be concerned about more regulatory changes. Much of broadcasting depends on volunteerism, and much is already stymied by too much corporate governance which does not distinguish between multi-national and small. I think regulation is good at present, and that it would be much better to harness goodwill, with occasional BAI checks than have it top heavy!



Record #352

Mark Cullinane



To the members of the Future of Media Commission,

I am one of the signatories of a group submission to the Commission's current public consultation, which reflected the collective work undertaken by a group of individuals who contributed to a recent Dublin Digital Radio initiative and subsequent Dublin Fringe Festival event exploring the present and future of public service broadcasting.

As an academic researcher in the field of media and communications in Ireland, I would like to contribute a further brief individual submission to the consultation that alerts the members of the Commission to some of my work on Irish public service media that I believe is relevant to the Commission's remit and consultation themes.

In particular, I would like to refer members to my doctoral dissertation which explored Raidió Teilifís Éireann's role in political mediation in the wake of the global financial crisis. The doctoral project deployed a multi-methodological approach to the topic, involving an extended period of on-site ethnographic observation of journalistic work in the RTE Newsroom, interviews with broadcasting professionals and station management, textual analyses of samples of broadcast news and current affairs output, and participant observation as a member of RTÉ's main mechanism of public participation in institutional governance, the RTÉ Audience Council.

This empirical work, whose findings have since been published in a series of peer-reviewed articles in Irish and international academic journals and which are enclosed with this submission, casts serious doubt on the adequacy of the current model of provision of public media from a range of angles. A separately enclosed opinion-editorial piece published in the Dublin Inquirer and Irish Examiner summarises some of these doubts, in particular drawing attention to what is argued to be a limited editorial adaptation to the post-2008 political, economic, cultural and technological contexts in which RTÉ operates, to the many profound impacts of the broadcaster's institutional dependencies on state and market power, and to its organisational aversion to strong forms of public inclusion and participation both in programming and institutional governance.

As we argue in our collective submission to the Commission, the limitations of the traditional model of public media provision- institutional, legal, regulatory, ethical, professional and technological- are manifold, increasingly apparent, and threaten its future viability, collectively meriting nothing less than a fundamental rethink of the roles and model of delivery of the public media enterprise. Further, today's interlinked crises of legitimacy of democratic politics and of public service media means that this task must centrally involve the wider public in processes and structures that are expansive in scope, radically inclusive, and permanent.

Yours,

Dr. Mark Cullinane

*Postdoctoral Reseacher*

*School of Applied Social Studies*

*University College Cork*

**Enclosed:**

- *'Shock to the system? Journalism in Irish public service media after the crash'* (Journal article published in the Irish Journal of Sociology, 28 (2) (2020))
- *'Public Service Austerity Broadcasts: Framing the Euro Debt Crisis'* (Journal article published in the International Journal of Communication (12) (2018))
- *'Participatory cultures and democratic legitimation in public service media: Ireland and the RTÉ Audience Council'* (Journal article published in Participations: Journal of Audience and Reception Studies, 14 (2) (2017))
- *'Weathering the Crisis? Managing Democracy at a National Broadcaster'* (Doctoral dissertation, University College Cork, 2016)
- *'RTÉ Needs to Make a Case for Public-Service Media in the 21st Century'* (Opinion piece published in the Dublin Inquirer and Irish Examiner, 2019)

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #353  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Religious Services  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:45:39

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To whom it concerns

Please continue angelus with appropriate slides.

Mass on RTE 1 not on news now. Many are unable to access that station.

Thought for the day with scripture input. It may be from readings from Mass of the day.

History of our Ancient churches, monuments etc etc.

Thanks for the opportunity to have input into your services

[REDACTED]

Sent from my Huawei phone

7

[REDACTED]  
Record #354  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** RTE - public service broadcasting  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:46:53

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I don't have a TV. I don't have a TV licence, and I should not be required by law to declare that.

I rarely listen to RTE news. If I want to know what government is saying, I read the press releases in full, rather than listening to bits of them on the news. I don't like the adversarial approach to interviewing. - I prefer inquisitorial journalism. I don't like when opinion is represented as fact.

It is often disrespectful to individuals (e.g. sensationalism in the reporting of murder cases, unnecessary intrusions into privacy, etc).

Unconscious bias seems to be a really big problem. Ireland is full of a diverse range of people, but Irish media consists mainly of white Irish people, thinking they are talking about white Irish people. If the only time I see a person with a disability, is in an item on disability, or a person of colour in an item about foreigners/asylum seekers/racism, it is not good enough. Ageism, sexism, infantilisation of young people is still evident in a lot of the reporting too.

In political reporting, conscious bias seems to be a really big problem.

RTE news is too parochial. There is more to the world than Ireland and America. We think we are the good guys, but we should think of ourselves as accountable, on the world stage, and stop embarrassing ourselves, because while the mother and baby homes may be historical, direct provision is happening today. We need to stop turning a blind eye to what we don't want to deal with, and robust journalism and reporting should be leading the charge. I don't think there is a shortage of great journalists, they are just not allowed to be great on RTE - with the passing of Robert Fisk, it is perhaps apt to make reference to the perils of 'hotel journalism'.

Sent with [ProtonMail](#) Secure Email.

7

[REDACTED]

Record #356

[REDACTED]

Submission to 'The Future of Media Commission'



8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

The following are some comments in relation to the request for submissions in relation to the above Commission.

### **Question 1: Role of Government re Public Sector Media and Content**

The principle here, as with any government intervention in the economy, should presumably be to intervene where there are identified failures in the market. There are clear market failures in some areas of the media sector to justify such intervention. Of course, this should not shield the sector from necessary change or shield some players from going out of business if needs be. There can be no justification for 'preserving' the current media landscape in a time of rapid and global disruption.

I would like to note just two of the areas where the market is failing and where I think there is a role to increase state involvement to the benefit of citizens and the country as a whole.

#### **Irish Language**

We live in a bilingual country and citizens have rights in the two languages as per the constitution. In addition, the government has a 20-year strategy for the Irish language which was adopted in 2010 and runs until 2030. This has as a central objective to increase the number of daily speakers of Irish from 83,000 to 250,000 over the life of the Strategy. The Strategy was published with all-party support.

This strategy has a specific section (6.5) in relation to 'Media and Technology'.

Over the first ten years of this strategy, there was not much progress on the implementation of this strategy. This was partly because of the deep recession and cuts to funding for many organisations. However, there have been some increases in funding in the past couple of years and a sense that the strategy is getting back on track.

As such, the recommendations of the Commission provide a key opportunity to make progress in relation to the media and technology objectives of the Strategy. In this respect, it is useful that media now falls under the same government department as the Irish language.

Drawing on the 20-Year Government Strategy, and in the context of its agreed national objective to triple the number of daily Irish speakers by 2030, specific recommendations that I would make would be as follows:

- There is poor Irish language coverage in daily, weekly and provincial newspapers. Funding should support a significant increase in this regard. All newspapers should have at least one page of Irish language content each week. Such coverage, e.g. in the national Sunday newspapers, would greatly improve visibility of the language as well as providing an enhanced service to Irish language speakers, students and people living in Gaeltacht areas.
- The above should be extended to magazines and to online publications such as Journal.ie and others.
- There is a need for a dedicated 32-county newspaper that it published once a week entirely in the Irish language. This would supplement the existing online service provided by Tuairisc.ie
- Funding should be doubled for Raidio na Gaeltachta. It offers a fantastic service for Gaeltacht areas but has been run on a shoestring for several years. A doubling of resources here would be an excellent investment. In this context, there should be enhanced reporting from all Gaeltacht areas with at least one dedicated programme each week from each Gaeltacht area. This has not been the case for some years, e.g. there is no regular programme for the Mayo Gaeltacht or Waterford Gaeltacht and this seriously damages the Irish language in these areas. Such an increase would also allow for more coverage from Dublin, more arts coverage and more documentaries.
- Funding should be increased for TG4, it is already an excellent channel but could do with increasing its Irish language programming content.
- RTE has a good strategy for the Irish language but more resources need to be put behind this to implement it. And programme makers should be more creative in this regard, e.g. why can there not be an Irish language family on the reality shows (such as Operation Transformation etc.) much more frequently, with sub-titles used. This would again greatly help to normalise the language.
- More media content on all platforms is needed in the Irish language for young people. Wherever this cohort of the population is consuming media, there should be an Irish language presence.
- The level of programming to support children and teenagers in Irish language schools is poor and, again, the state can make a big difference here.

The above are just a small number of ideas. Surveys show strong support among the public for government support for the Irish language. The above ideas, and others linked to the 20-Year Strategy, would be popular and would help achieve government goals in this area. Direct consultation with the public servants responsible for implementing the 20-Year Strategy would also be very important.

### **Ireland as an EU Member State**

There is acceptance that Ireland is overly dependent on the UK for its media, both in relation to news/current affairs and other more 'entertainment' type content.

A key strategic challenge for the country is to re-orientate itself away from the UK and towards the continent. This will involve a number of actions, including much better teaching of languages in the education system.

Media can also play an important role here and it would seem that there is a market failure in that the media are not providing content from other EU Member States and in relation to EU matters.

This is not an easy one to solve but state subsidies for correspondents in other EU capitals for both newspapers and broadcast media organisations would be a potential idea. Perhaps this could sit with an EU wide scheme of journalists doing job placements (paid) in other news organisations across the EU?

There are also many good programmes and series produced by national media organisations across the EU that could be taken by Irish organisations – perhaps the cost of doing sub-titles could be covered? For example, BBC 4 has had a number of crime series from other EU countries, could we take these and also others? Also documentaries etc.

Many of us are sick of the diet of Eastenders, Emmerdale, daytime UK programming and endless UK reality TV. I think there could be a good market to reduce Irish consumption of UK media with a concomitant increase in consumption of media from other EU Member States, especially in the context of wider government policies around reorienting our perspective more towards other EU countries.

*The above are some brief thoughts to feed into the considerations of the Commission.*



1

[REDACTED]  
Record #357  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:50:44

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I am writing to tell you how appalled I am at RTE over its blasphemous sketch recently.

I sickens me that I am forced to pay a television licence to support this left-wing, same tune always, anti-religious, anti-God, anti-Irish media outlet.

I would heartily support the defunding of RTE. Run your station from your advertisements. Not from the pockets of appalled, dissatisfied, and un-catered for, decent Irish citizens.

Yours faithfully,

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #358  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission on Media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 15:50:55

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Dear Commission,

Thank you for listening to me.

I would like to make the following points in relation to the future of the mass media in Ireland.

RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

**2.** The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

**3.** If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

Thanks again

[REDACTED]

1

[REDACTED]  
Record #359  
[REDACTED]

1 Regulation of Social Media (Reference Question 3)

Social media platforms should not accept material anonymously.

Current practice is anti-competitive. Other media are regulated and transparent ( e.g a letter for publication in a newspaper requires the sender's name and address, which may, in fact, be verified before publication) There should be a level playing pitch for all forms of media.

In terms of implementation, if on-line sellers and their banks can quickly verify whether prospective purchasers are who they say they are, and check their credit card details within moments, it should be possible for social media platforms to operate an identification system in a similar way, so that no anonymous content is added to the platform.

The elimination of anonymous content would be of further benefit to the citizen. Whilst no third party can, under GDPR, access another person's personal data without permission or authority, a citizen's good name, which may be of far more value to him/her, can be completely undermined by an anonymous, erroneous entry on a social platform

2 Media Balance (Reference Question 1)

It is difficult but necessary for public service media to achieve a balance between negative and positive content. The temptation always is to provide what the audience wants rather than what it might need. People by nature are often more exercised by the negative than the positive – figures for unemployment rather than employment, for those without homes not those in homes, those contracting Covid not those who are Covid-free.

The negative will always have a role in public service broadcasting, but where the balance is tipped too far in that direction, confrontational over constructive, as I believe it is at present, society itself becomes negative. I would suggest that a paper, referenced below, given by Dr P.J. Moriarty, a former Chairman of the ESB, gives an erudite description of this topic. Could it be that the emergence of a national "culture of blame", as identified recently by the Chief Medical Officer, is an example of this societal impact. (The recent relatively minor infraction by RTE Staff at being present together for a brief period when a colleague retired became a national issue with demands for apologies, retraining, statements from RTE etc. Is this an example of the biter being bitten? All these demands were then themselves given national air-time by the broadcaster. The broadcaster's current affairs presenters and editors had played the blame card so often in their interviews that society's reaction to the event was inevitable. What should not have been inevitable was that the demands above were given full national air-time by the broadcaster).

The fact that public service media need to maintain that balance comes at a commercial cost, but I have no expertise in how to calculate that cost (Reference Question 2).

### 3 Stádas na Gaeilge sna Meáin (Tag. Ceist a 1)

Molaim an tosaíocht ata glactha ag an gCoimisiún maidir le forbairt na meán agus tuairimi an Phobail a lorg.

Níl me ag iarraidh a bheith diúltach ná criticiúil (cháin mé cur chuige mar sin ag a 2 thuas), ach feictear dom nach bhfuil an Coimisiún féin ag tabhairt cothrom na féinne don Ghaeilge:- a) ní raibh leagan Gaeilge den fhógra in aice leis an leagan Béarla. b) ní fhaca mé leagan Gaeilge den fhógra aon áit eile agus c) ní raibh aon tagairt sa bhfógra don Ghaeilge mar mheán cumarsáide.

Is fíor go bhfuil leagan Gaeilge den suíomh idirlín féin ann agus go bhfuil tagairt don Ghaeilge sa chúigiú pointe faoi cheist a 1, áit go bhfuil si luaite i gcomhthéacs "...promoting the Irish language, sport and culture?". i.e. i measc na ndualgas eile, seachas cumarsáid, a thiteann ar an Roinn. Ach, nuair ata forbairt na meán á plé, tá difríocht bhunúsach idir ról na Gaeilge agus imeachtaí spóirt agus cultúir. Tá spóirt, cultúr agus turasóireacht ag lorg tacaíochta ó na meáin, na meáin Ghaeilge san áireamh. Déanann pointe a 5, mar atá scríofa, imeallú ar an nGaeilge mar mheán cumarsáide.

Cuireann sé sin beagán díomá orm, ach tá mé muiníneach nach mbeidh an dearcadh céanna le feiceáil i moltaí an Choimisiúin

#### Reference

Community Enterprise. Keynote address given in Tralee by Dr P J Moriarty to the Kerry Economic and Social Development Company Conference, Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> January, 1992

### 3 Status of Irish in the Media (Ref. Question 1)

I commend the priority adopted by the Commission in seeking the development of the media and the views of the public.

I do not want to be negative or critical (I criticised such an approach at 2 above), but it seems to me that the Commission itself is not doing justice to the Irish language: - a) there was no Irish version of the notice next to the English version. b) I have not seen an Irish language version of the advertisement elsewhere and c) there was no reference in the advertisement to the Irish language as a method of communication.

It is true that there is an Irish language version of the website itself and that there is a reference to the Irish language in the fifth point under question 1, where it is mentioned in the context of "... promoting the Irish language, sport and culture?" i.e. among the other duties, other than communication, that fall to the Department. However, when discussing media development, there is a fundamental difference between the role of the Irish language and sporting and cultural events. Sports, culture and tourism are seeking support from the media, including the Irish language media. Point 5, as written, marginalises Irish as a method of communication.

That disappoints me a little, but I am confident that the Commission's proposals will not reflect the same view

#### Reference

Community Enterprise. Keynote address given in Tralee by Dr P J Moriarty to the Kerry Economic and Social Development Company Conference, Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> January, 1992

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[REDACTED]

Record #363

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Feedback  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 14:54:49

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I welcome this opportunity asking for the public's opinion.

Focusing on the Abortion Referendum alone, I was very much tuned into the public media particularly on the build up to it and I believe that the media had a huge role in shaping the public's opinion on the pro-life issue. There was much more funding and time given to the pro choice views which then reflected on the result of the Referendum.

It would be great to see more people's views (both young and older involved) in particular those who are still very much involved in working in Life giving options for mothers in unwanted pregnancy situations.

Many thanks.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #366  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission to the Future of Media Commission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 14:48:07

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8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

To  
The Future of Media Commission  
Via e-mail

Dear Sir or Madam,

I wish to thank the Commission for the opportunity to make some comments on the future of media in Ireland.

I must admit that over the past number of years I have felt a significant amount of disquiet regarding the mainstream media [MSM] in Ireland and in particular with the TV and radio Broadcaster RTE as well as the, allegedly, Paper of Record, the Irish Times.

I note, with interest, the concerns expressed over the past number of years regarding the future of the Irish media, particularly in relation to the print media, but am of the opinion that the print media itself and the way in which journalists themselves operate, is the greatest threat to the survival of the print media in Ireland, and not any external factor such as the rise of social media.

The recent media campaign by RTE to promote itself as the purveyor of ‘truth’ and a bastion against fake news does not ring true when one notes the partisan and unbalanced approach to its reporting.

I could cite many examples of a lack of balance demonstrated by the media, where the general public are effectively being instructed what to think about a particular issue and a strong demonstration of what I would describe as “Group Think”, but for illustrative purposes I will mention a few.

On the international stage, the reporting by RTE on the American Presidential Election was largely “Anti Trump”. There was no reporting on the claims regarding economic success under his administration within the RTE reporting. The Washington Correspondent /Reporter in many instances demonstrated his personal antipathy towards Trump. Such personal antipathy has no place in balanced reporting. There ought to be no reason why the reporting of a matter external to Ireland cannot receive balanced and analytical reporting.

In relation to national politics, RTE clearly provides certain political parties with more coverage than their support (as measured by recent opinion polls) would warrant. For example, while Aontú currently has a similar standing in the polls as People before Profit [PbP], the latter party’s spokes person will appear numerous times on the News and in

programmes such as The Week In Politics, while an Aontú representative is seldom given an opportunity to express an opinion. It would appear that RTE gives preferential treatment to those parties which reflect the left-wing views of the journalists /broadcasting authority, over those who hold more traditional values in relation to family and society.

In relation to the current Covid health crisis, reporting by RTE has restricted itself yet again, largely to those opinions which support the current Government's and NEPHET's statements and guidelines. None, or very few of the voices which challenge this rhetoric are allowed to be heard. It is not supportive of a vibrant democracy to prevent any government from being held to account for their decisions, or for what they are doing, even in an emergency situation. It is a primary function of a public service broadcaster to hold a government to account, and/or to give media coverage to those within the national parliament who may be holding them to account. No one side of any argument has all the solutions to any particular problem and it is through such debate and dialogue that the better solutions may be reached.

A National broadcaster with a public service mandate should show 'neither fear nor favour' to any view and its editorial policies should not lean in any particular direction. A true democracy allows all voices to be heard and those with a minority view should be allowed to express their views. It could happen that those with minority views may persuade people to look at matters afresh and what was a minority view may become a majority view. The media, however, have only done this when it suited their liberal agenda. The majority view in 1983 was to insert the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment into the Constitution. However, the minority view at that time was supported by the media and over a large number of years was given an airing, which resulted in a pro-choice perspective reaching a majority position in 2018. However, this was achieved through an imbalanced prevalence of opinion pieces and articles in papers such as the Irish Times {this has been well documented, so should be easy for the Commission to confirm} and other programmes and news reports on Television. This, I feel, resulted from the dominance of the NUJ {National Union of Journalists} in both the print and broadcast media. This largely UK based union has a policy of promoting the Pro-Choice agenda, to which its members must subscribe. A Journalistic Union should encompass policies which support balanced coverage and should not take an editorial or liberal stance, to which members must subscribe. This imbalance is continuing, where pro-life supporters, who constitute approx. 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the electorate, are now being excluded from any debate and in many ways are being 'de-platformed'. This has resulted in the establishment of alternative outlets in social media such as 'Gript Media'. The lack of balance, referred to above, undermines any claim that RTE and the IT might make that they are battling 'Fake News'. While the MSM constantly warn of the difficulties with fake news on social media, currently, social media is providing people with their main source of diverse opinion. One should not underestimate the ability of people to discern fake news within social media. Many of the younger generation have been 'raised' in a technological era and have learnt to discern the fake from the real. As the old saying goes "If it's too good to be true... etc?". If it is an objective of this review to reduce the reliance on social media for alternative perspectives on news and information, then the MSM must provide the fora for balance and diverse debate, in a healthy and open fashion.

The recent debacle regarding the "God" sketch on RTE's New Year's Eve Countdown Show clearly shows a depth of feeling by the general public that RTE no longer reflects the values and standards of a significant portion of the national population. Such disquiet has resulted in calls to support the #defundRTE campaign. The fact that RTE allowed this sketch to be aired in the first place demonstrates that the Broadcasting Body has little or no regard for those who hold more traditional, religious or social values. It is unreasonable to

expect members of the public to financially support a body which does not respect, but in actual fact, disrespects their values.

Having outlined my perspective on what I believe is currently wrong with the Main Stream Media, I would hope that the Commission would recommend that significant changes be made, as I would be very supportive of ensuring that Public Service Broadcasting, in the full meaning of this term, would continue to exist in Ireland. In this regard, I would like to make a number of suggestions.

Firstly, I would not suggest that the TV licence and its fee be removed. However, the lion's share of funds, made available through the licence fee, should not automatically go to RTE. I believe that given that RTE is currently semi-commercial, it should be privatised and made fully commercial. The funding from the privatisation of RTE should be ringfenced to set up a fund from which, in addition to the TV Licence fee, a 'Public Service Obligation' style Public Service Broadcasting could be funded. On a 5-year cycle, all TV stations operating in Ireland should be given an opportunity to make a bid, in order to satisfy this 'Public Service Obligation' {PSO}.

The obligation should be broken into 3 tranches:

- a) News and Current Affairs
- b) Domestic Film or TV programme production and broadcast
- c) Irish Cultural and Irish Language programming.

There should be specifications clearly set out in relation to balance, diversity of opinion etc, which ought to be to be complied with, under the PSO contract. Funding should not be available for broadcasting outside of these three areas. The funding must be specifically used to fulfil the PSO and not applicable generally to the operations of the successful bidder.

Secondly, I believe that the Commission should recommend that the journalistic monopoly of the NUJ be broken, before any subvention is made to the print media. If the print media only reflects the editorial policies of their owners, management and journalists and does not allow, in a fair and balanced way, for a reflection of the views and opinions of the widest spectrum of opinion, there should be no obligation on the state to support the print media. Without this balance, which would support and nourish the democratic process, they are not providing a Public service, in the broadest sense.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact information]

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[REDACTED]

Record #368

[REDACTED]



This submission is based on the statement on your website that "The media reflect and promote the lives, language, art, sport, music, culture, traditions, and identities of Irish people at home and around the world". In relation to this, my submission will refer to lives, language (Irish), music, traditions, and I also have made brief comments on the need for programmes on science, game-shows, climate change, current issues and a final comment.

### **Reflect and promote the lives**

Every Saturday when I read the obituaries in "The Irish Times", I am saddened by the number of wonderful people who have died, who have lived in Ireland, and whom I would have loved to have heard speak, but never had the opportunity of hearing them interviewed. RTE seem to over-estimate the interest that people have in the lives of media stars. Apart from the Tommy Tiernan show, Irish chat shows have largely reflected issues relating to people in the entertainment world, such as soap stars, and stars of RTE programmes. I acknowledge that there have been serious interviews, but by and large, the interviewees are from the entertainment world. The celebrities seen on the Jonathon Ross show and Graham Norton shows are normally followed by an appearance on The Late Late Show. The long standing joke about guests for the Late Late show coming from the RTE canteen is not far from the truth.

There is also insufficient recognition given to the fact that Ireland is a predominantly agricultural country; and in the most recent census data, farmers comprise the second most common occupation in Ireland<sup>1</sup>. There is therefore a need for a regular in-depth programme on the problems facing farmers e.g. it costs farmers more to shear a sheep than they get for the wool - why do we not have a wool industry here? Why do we not have a sugar beet factory here? While we have economic news and information on monetary indices, every morning, there is no agricultural weather forecast specific for farmers, data necessary for the correct management of the crops from where all our food comes.

I also think that a further important role of role of public broadcasting is to promote a sense of community. However, RTE programmes in general do not reflect the lives of people living in rural areas. This is evidenced by the fact that a regional accent is rarely heard on radio or television outside a comedy or satirical context. In addition, RTE announcers on occasion struggle with the pronunciation of well-known Irish provincial towns.

*Proposal 1: That RTE would ask viewers who they would like interviewed on their chat shows*

*Proposal 2: that agriculturally based programmes are initiated and that agriculturally related weather forecasts be given on Morning Ireland*

*Proposal 3: that more programmes have a regional basis (discussed below)*

## **Irish**

I think that TG4 is an excellent station, and its varied and interesting programmes are wonderful. However, it unfortunately seems to have low audience numbers. I think that we need a new image for the Irish language. Most of the population are of an age to have overcome the negative feelings that reading “Peig” might have engendered in them at school, and it would be great to see the Irish language for what it is, a language spoken since Ireland was first inhabited. We need a new image for the Irish language and make it a language that Irish people would be proud to learn and speak.

The words in a language shape how we view the world, and our place names are a living key to our past, apart from everything else, the meaning of our place names contain a wealth of knowledge that we bypass speaking English. We can learn about the activities that were carried out in a specific place in the past from its true name. Manchan Magan’s recent book “Thirty Two words for field” eloquently portrays what a beautiful treasure we have. I do not know Manchan Magan, but I would like to propose that he be asked to host a programme on each county’s place names, and the wonderful facts about the Irish language contained in his book. This could be in conjunction with an Irish language course. Duolingo report that Irish is the most learned language on its learning platform<sup>2</sup>.

TG4 has let RTE “off the hook” in relation to its coverage of Irish language programmes. BBC now seems to have quite a number of programmes in Irish. An important role of RTE must be to reflect our national identity.

*Proposal 4: A programme on Irish place names and their real meaning*

*Proposal 5: A series of classes on the Irish language, to suit different abilities*

*Proposal 6: That any new RTE drama have Irish sub-titles*

## **Music**

There is very little opportunity for Irish people to display their talents in singing or dancing on RTE. This is evidenced by the number of Irish people entering competitions on UK

television, where they are frequently in the finals. I remember that several years ago, RTE once ran a talent show, which was won by a family of Irish traditional musicians. I do not remember hearing any more about this remarkable family. I would like to propose that RTE help us celebrate what we already have. I am very sure that a series of musical programmes from around the country featuring locally based singers and dancers, of all ages and types would be very popular.

While we see Sharon Shannon occasionally on RTE, there is not a lot of opportunity to listen to Irish traditional music on television, and there is an opportunity on television and radio to introduce listeners and viewers to Irish music, the instruments, the varied styles of playing, and also set dancing. This could possibly be undertaken in conjunction with Comhaltas Ceolteoiri Eireann.

*Proposal 7: That RTE host a series of programmes that would allow local singers and artists to display their talent*

*Proposal 8: That RTE initiate a series on Irish music in association with Comhaltas Ceolteoiri Eireann.*

## **Traditions**

I think that an important role of role of public broadcasting is to reflect on our national identity as well as to promote a sense of community. Traditions are an important way by which our culture is transmitted from generation to generation. I think that we are in danger of losing some of our traditions, e.g. butter making, bread making and thatching. We need to meet people who have these skills before it is too late.

There is also a wealth of culture in Ireland about which Irish people (and I include myself in this) know very little. However, I learned a lot when I joined the local archaeological society, and found out for example, that there are many more round towers in Ireland apart from Glendalough, and there were Ogham stones near where I live, and many monuments, all of which have a story to tell. I would like to suggest a series of programmes for each county, in association with the local archaeological and historical societies, based on what features these societies feel are important.

*Proposal 9 That RTE visit centres that care for older people around Ireland, with a view to interviewing some of the residents in order to learn about the older traditions and to get a glimpse of former ways of doing things. People living at home in these areas would also be asked.*

██████████

*Proposal: 10 That RTE undertake a series of programmes for each county, in association with the local archaeological and historical societies, based on what features these societies feel are important.*

## **Science**

I think that a science programme where viewers could send in questions which could be answered by experts would be useful. Questions such as where does the earth get the energy to keep spinning? Or is it true that swifts sleep as they fly? There could also be a forum where viewers who have invented a new device or modified an existing device could have it assessed by experts. In addition, I believe that a forum is needed in Ireland where new ideas could be discussed in a non-threatening format. And, where viewers could send in questions on the topic announced the previous week.

*Proposal11: A programme could be based on viewers science based questions which have always troubled them, and devices that they have made, and have them addressed by experts*

*Proposal12: A programme based on viewers suggestions such as community owned energy systems, basic income etc.*

## **Game shows**

Quicksilver was a very popular quiz when I was a child, and maybe it's just nostalgia but there is something very charming about television shows from a town hall! I also think that a game show where the people were recruited from varied situations such a waiting for an NCT, or in a traffic jam could be interesting!

*Proposal 13: Novel quiz and game shows with a regional basis*

## **Climate change**

It is necessary to highlight what people can do in day-to-day life to help reduce Ireland's unacceptably high carbon emissions. We need locally based food, and as far as possible, with a low amount of meat. As vegetarian diets demand less of the earth's resources and generally are associated with lower carbon emissions, I would like to propose an introductory series on vegetarian cookery with low food miles

*Proposal14: Programmes on vegetarian and seasonal produce*

## **Current issues**

██████████

I think that RTE needs a programme where people can apply to have a grievance aired, large or small, and hopefully have it addressed. For example, poor service from a mobile phone company, or larger, e.g. the situation re the Hill of Allen, half of which has been taken for gravel and sand. Looking from the top, and looking down, it is like looking at a cliff face. This was the seat of the hunter-warrior Fionn mac Cumhaill and the Fianna.

*Proposal 15: People could send in their own suggestions for discussion*

Finally, there is no medium by which listeners and viewers to RTE can express their views, positive, neutral or negative to the station. I have written to the Director-General and other departments in RTE on at least five occasions, with what I thought were good suggestions and have never had a reply. I am sure that other viewers are equally frustrated.

I wish you well with your deliberations

██████████

████████████████████ 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021

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<https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/pressreleases/2017pressreleases/presstatementcensus2016resultsprofile11-employmentoccupationsandindustry/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://extra.ie/2020/12/30/must-see/duolingo-most-learned-language-irish>

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[REDACTED]

Record #370

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Submission to the Future of Media Commission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 14:44:01

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Dear Sir ior Madame,

The rule should be: facts are sacred;opinions are optional. The media should give us ALL the facts and leave us to form our own opinions thereof. No spinning of stories. The opinions of the journalists should not be known to the reader and should not influence the journalist's presentation in any way.

As an Irish Catholic. I do not want my faith or my country (Ireland) to be belittled or insulted in any way. Equal coverage should be given to everyone. There should be no censorship of views (however wacky) - except for pornography,sectarianism, racialism, advocating hatred or violence.

Truth not political correctness should rule. In particular, pro-life stories or opinions should not be banned. And no gender ideology please.

The RTE standards of the 1960s should be the normal standard.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #371  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 14:41:35

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[REDACTED]

I would like to make the following submissions re future of media in Ireland

I think it's important to maintain a robust régime of impartiality, neutrality and objectivity when it comes to news and current affairs broadcasting. Otherwise it's basically unfair, and we may end up with divisive and partisan broadcasting as in USA. It's crucial that people have trust in media. There are measures in place already through BAI, and at very least these need to be maintained. I have found BAI to be too inclined to favour the broadcaster, almost if not entirely their default position. Badly needed is an appeals mechanism for those unhappy with a BAI decision - BAI needs to be accountable too.

In a related point there needs to be more media accountability. Apart from BAI I'd like to see each broadcaster have a weekly programme that would act as a forum to discuss the previous week's media output. It's not enough that some chat shows do this intermittently.

I would like to see broadcasters involved in more media education, so that our young people will grow up with their critical faculties engaged when it comes to their media consumption. Likewise with more school orientated education programmes - particularly lacking during Covid related restrictions. In both cases it would be crucial that such educational initiatives were free of partisan agenda driving, but remained neutral on potentially controversial issues.

Related to this media should be involved in political education, but again from a neutral point of view.

I'd like to see all radio stations playing more music produced in Ireland.

Also useful would be regular and accessible forums so that there could be ongoing discussions and consultations as this is a rapidly changing landscape.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]



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[REDACTED]

Record #372

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Newspapers Leading Articles  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 14:37:37

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[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make a submission on ***Leading Articles in Newspapers***.

In particular I wish to write about the Irish Times, as I am a daily buyer of this newspaper.

This is found on the letters to the editor page, and on the left side of the paper.

The opinions written in this section of the newspaper are not able to complain about in the letters to the editor section!

This seems unfair and ***not transparent***.

There are **no names** attached to these leading articles nor is there any ***initial of the writer***.

Perhaps, leading articles were some thing necessary in long ago days when the public needed some general guidance and advice, but nowadays this is used to cover all sorts of subjects.

For example writing about tips to help with Covid19 would be o.k.

However for example on the 21st December 2020 it was the title of the article which I thought was inappropriate.

Lessons from a righteous revolt, by its title approves to the is so called Arab uprising.

If this was true why have so many millions of Arabs been killed ,tortured and become refugees, immigrants and migrants!!

It is not possible to have a letter to the editor published in the Irish Times!!!

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]



Virus-free. [www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

[REDACTED]  
Record #374  
[REDACTED]

From: [Nollaig M](#)  
To: [nf@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:nf@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
Subject: Media Submission Ireland  
Date: Friday 8 January 2021 14:22:20

## Media submission Ireland Inbox



**Nollaig M** <[nollaigml@gmail.com](mailto:nollaigml@gmail.com)>

2:08 PM (9 minutes ago)

to info

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

Please note towards the end for personal comments.

- RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.
- The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion.
- The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.
- The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".
- In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.
- The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.
- While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own. BAI as it is now is a toothless group with no power to stand up immediately with reference to serious objections. Whereas the power to intervene with reference to the internet would probably not be as slow if somebody were standing up for life issues. With reference to Fantasy Island, which I totally object to, is there not an immediate conflict of interests visible here with reference to skits.

As you will be covering all kinds of media my proposal is that a new and independent body with no conflicts of interests should be set up to adjudicate issues. The less red tape there is the better. Those who bring forward complaints should also have access to an appeal if not satisfied. It would be prudent to carefully list out what is deemed as 'hate speech', excluding from this list the Religious beliefs of all concerned and their Sacred Books. I would strongly advise that the Bible should be specifically off your list of media control. The Bible has a life of its own and is not for you to tamper with. The amnesia besetting this country Ireland, historically, culturally and spiritually, is unbelievable - e.g. Penal Law Ireland of suffering years. What we have now are skits and mockery of our Christian beliefs by our own people, who have decided that there is no God. What a surprise you are in for. Just as the sun is in the sky God is real and He loves each one of us, and you included, so much so that He sent His only Son through the Blessed Virgin Mary and RTE skits it! How offensive can we become. Your media control has to cover mockery of all religious beliefs Christian, Islam and Judaism. Develop a Respect Charter.

With thanks. God Bless.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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[REDACTED]

Record #375

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Respect for Christian and Catholic Values  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 14:22:05

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Dear Sir / Madam,

I would like your Commission to promote a respect for Christian values in general and Catholic values in particular.

The appalling presentation on RTE's New Year's Eve programme, that traduced God in the most offensive of manners, is another example of how much of the Irish media continuously pours contempt on values that are cherished by Catholics.

Most of the media in Ireland have engaged in a form of ideological colonisation that requires allegiance to secular values alone. People of religious faith are frequently excluded, marginalised and silenced from many forms of discourse.

It is time for your Commission to act and promote a greater sense of tolerance towards Catholic values. The unfortunate, incorrect and deeply insulting caricature of Catholic values generated across many media platforms in Ireland must not only be challenged by your Commission, but ended.

Yours respectfully,

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Record #376

[REDACTED]

**From:** [Sorcha Ni Riada](#)  
**To:** [eolas@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:eolas@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Aighneachtaí  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 14:21:58

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A Chairde

Tá cúpla line faoi chursaí iriseoireachta a sheoladh agam chuaibh mar go bhfuil breis is fiche bliain caite agam a treabhadh sa ghort san agus cúpla smaoineamh agam faoi dá bharr san !

Tá sé soléir do chách go bhfuil dushláin mhóra a baint le cursaí iriseoireachta fé láthair agus ana dheacracht ag iriseoirí poist a bhaint amach atá seasamhach agus a bhfuil tuarastal mhaith a baint leo. Dóibh siúd a bhfuil an t-ádh leotha a leithéid a bhaint amach tá brú as cuimsitheach ortha ní h-amháin scéalta crúinn eiseach a sholatháir dá gcuid fostoirí ach tá dualgas ortha leis ábhar a sholathár do na meáin shóisialta. Tá an nua theicneolaíocht taréis cur leis an ualach oibre ar iriseoirí atá anois ag deanamh obair iriseoireachta, ceamradoireacht, ag taifead agus ag eagarthoireacht ar fad iad féin rud a chuireann leis an mbrú. Cialíonn an brú breise agus easpa seasmhacht agus maoiniú ó thaobh fostaíochta nach bhfuil morán a leanúint leis an céird agus tá sé sontasach go bhfuil go leor a fágaint iriseoireacht le dul ag obair in earnáil eile . Creidim go bhfuil gá le maoiniú mar is ceart a dheanamh ar an earnáil – tuigim go bhfuil deacracht maoiniú a dheanamh ar ghnóanna trachtála ach bhféidir go bhfeadfaí córas a bhunú ina bhfuil faoiseamh cánach le baint amach do ghnóanna atá a cur abhár seirbhíse poiblí ar fáil. Anuas arsin d'fheadfaí maoiniú dhíreach a chuir ar fáil d'iriseoirí atá a cur abhár seirbhíse poiblí ar fáil.

Tá lucht na Nuachtáin go h-áirithe buailte go h-olc dá bharr seo le fostoirí a thabhairt tuarastal níos isle le h-ualach oibre níos mó do na h-iriseoirí atá fós ag obair dóibh. Tá sé íorónta go ndeirtear go bhfuil titim ar dhiolachán nuachtáin mar go bhfuil daoine ag aimsiú an Nuacht ar line. Is beag iris atá bunaithe ar line amháin a bhfuil a gcuid foinsí Nuachta fein acu agus nach bhfuil a brath ar a gcuid “Nuacht” a fháil ó sholatheoirí aitheanta cosúil le RTE, Irish Independent, Irish Times nó Irish Examiner. Nár chomhair go mbeadh dualgas do shaipeas éigin ann d’éinne a chuireann ábhar ar líne na foinsí a ainmiú agus an t-aitheantas ceart a thabhairt dóibh? Anuas ar sin sílim gur chomhair don AE agus an rialtas rialacháin a thabhairt isteach le go mbeadh sé do dualgas ar an comhlachtaí móra cosúil le Facebook agus Twitter maoirsiú mar is ceart a dheanamh ar abhár atá a fhoilsiú ag daoine ar a gcuid leathnaigh – tá dulagaisí ar na meán gan rudaí

nach bhfuil fíor a fhoilsiú ach níl aon fhreagracht á ghlacadh ag na comhlachtaí móra teicneolaíochtaí má dheanann a gcuid usaideoirí amhlaidh – ní dheanann sé seo ciall.

Tá dushláin ar leith a baint le h-obair na h-iriseoireachta i ngaolainn.

Tá an baol ann toisc go bhfuil tionchar chomh mór sin ag earnaíl na h-iriseoireachta i mbéarla ná beadh sa tseirbhís i nGaeilge ach seirbhís aistriucháin. Tá sé tabhtach maoiniú mar is ceart a dheanamh ar an earnaíl i nGaeilge le gur féidir le h-iriseoirí a gcuid scéalta féin a thochailt agus a fhorbairt agus a chuir faoi bhráid an tsaoil.

Má tá an teanga le forbairt tá sé tabhtach go mbeadh sé soléir don bpobal go bhfuil saineolaithe líofa i nGaeilge le labhairt agus scríobh faoi chursaí sláinte, eolaíocht, innealtoireacht, gnó agus ar uile. Tá gá le na h-achmhainní a chuir ar fáil len é seo a dheimhniú. Tá ana obair déanta ag TG4 san earnaíl seo agus gan amhras san obair a bhfuil baint agam féin leis o thaobh Nuacht RTE agus TG4. Ach sílim gur chomhair go mbeadh láithreach níos mó ag an nGaeilge ins na h-irisí agus eagrachtaí trachtála leis agus gur chomhair maoiniú a chuir ar fáil le gur féidir é seo a bhaint amach.

Is ar bhonn pearsanta atáim a cur na smaointí seo chun cinn.

Gúim gach ráth ar an obair!

Mise le Meas

Sorcha Ní Riada

Comhfhreagraí Polaitíochta Nuacht RTE agus TG4



[REDACTED]

Record #377

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 14:16:06

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Dear Commission Members,

Please, please, please can you restore balance to what we refer to as mainstream media, but which has unfortunately become an unrelentless propaganda machine which pushes a neo-marxist agenda to the detriment of our citizens.

Whatever happened to reporting facts in a neutral and unbiased manner? Why do we hear only one selective narrative and not the full story? Why do a select few get to decide what the masses should be told?

This alone is very worrying, but when it is coupled with ongoing denigration of, and antagonism towards, one particular religion and its followers, it is wholly unacceptable. Steps must be made to eradicate every type of censorship or bullying. Maintaining the status quo would only allow these abuses to continue.

I can no longer stomach watching Irish tv or reading Irish newspapers. As a faithful Catholic I can take no more insults.

Please find below a copy of an email that I sent to the Complaints Department of RTE recently.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Record #378

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 14:15:45

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Please ensure that media in future is True, balanced, sensor ship where necessary for the sake of decency and respect. It should be honest, give the facts, be a call to true journalism and challenge the givens of government and the big corporations so as to be a good source of information for all citizens.

Prevent the use of media to influence the masses and to warp the facts as has become the norm now.

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[REDACTED]

Record #379

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 14:08:22

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There are a range of issues which must be addressed in order to maintain independent journalism and nurture a healthy public media service.

Modern public service media is fundamentally different to all others before. While those which came before were equally as vulnerable to despotism, they were limited by human resources. Now technology, via A.I. algorithms, has enabled a centralised control system like never before, and as the public service media transfer more and more material to digital platforms, this centralised control exponentially favours the despotic influence – if it is allowed to.

Modern public service media does a great deal more than just inform or reflect public debate. In recent decades, it would be more accurate to say that it controls and guides public debate. National broadcasters, National Newspapers, and online media outlets have a large presence on social media platforms, where opinion is commonly presented as news and there is undeniable promotion or downplay of various topics and discussions as it suits the digital hosts.

There is also clearly a relationship between sensationalism and revenue, and an increasing tendency to sensationalise any story in order to garnish clicks, tweets or paper sales. Breaking news, immediate coverage, and rolling updates mean that little time is given to pause, think or investigate. This does not serve the public well. It creates an environment where public opinion, fear, outrage and sometimes panic lurches from one issue to another. Increasingly, journalistic endeavour, even at the level of individual journalists, is concerned primarily with creating, directing and guiding public opinion, rather than reflecting it or informing it.

There is a very real emphasis and leaning towards limiting public debate, particularly by large, established public media outlets, who appear more concerned with reinforcing their authority rather than any genuine concern for truth or public good. There is a legitimate concern that, over time, only large public media will remain, which almost guarantees loss of public interest and harm to the public good.

The use of “fake news” labels and the inevitable censoring and side-lining will have the opposite effect to that desired, and give greater credibility to so-called “fake-news” because of the perception that there must be a reason why it is being censored. Yuri Bezmenov made the point that fake-news does not in itself seek to be believed as an item or piece of news, but as a concept in the mind of the public so that nothing is believed. It only exists to discredit everything else, with resultant public vulnerability to coercion and manipulation.

Using the concept of “fake news” to limit public discussions will only serve to reduce public confidence in the public media because they will be perceived as removing competition. Constant accusations of fake-news will only serve to bring all of journalism into disrepute, where the public, exhausted and demoralised, will not reject just the fake-news but all news. This is already happening and must not be allowed to continue. Free and open debate of all opinions and views on all platform and all media must be allowed.

At some point “government figures” became synonymous with “facts”. Simply reporting what the government says is superfluous. If journalists do not check and stand over their findings on behalf of the public then they are simply unnecessary. Outside of government reporting this

side-step is prevalent across almost all reporting. There is a public perception (certainly encouraged by public service media) that the content has been checked, but this is very rarely the case. Currently, there is almost no incentive to fully check and investigate as there is no way to enforce accountability for lack of due diligence.

Of particular interest here is when the truth becomes distorted by omission. This is a rhetorical device which needs to be driven from news and current affairs, across all public service media. There is a requirement for opinion and news to be clearly signalled and separated, but this is very rarely the case. Even when there is clear signalling and separation, a mechanism is needed to identify this form of misrepresentation and prevent or rectify it. Such a mechanism is very important for non-news media, including the arts, indispensable for political debate and absolutely essential for news media. Again, this form of deceit should have accountability attached, even if it is as little as a correction and apology. Deceit by omission causes a great deal of damage to social cohesion, and generates fear and resentment in equal measure.. It is on a par with telling a untruth.

In relation to journalistic independence, there are serious concerns about the loss of distinction between the government and public service media, particularly the national broadcaster. Funding must not come without accountability. The public are turning away from the TV licence because of the low quality of service, not simply because of alternative sources.

Funding comes with caveats, conditions and provisos, which tend to involve "inclusivity" and "diversity". Unfortunately, these policies tend to work in the opposite direction. "Diversity" assumes a commonality amongst all persons of a defined group. It assumes that these individuals are incapable of the imagination necessary to see themselves in particular roles. It also assumes that an individual can act as a representative of a group, with the implicit assertion that these people may somehow be considered all the same. There is an assertion that persons from that group are incapable of achievement and require additional supports. There is the direct assertion that our society is made up of self-interested groups, which denies the possibility of common culture, demands further fracture and encourages tokenism. It presupposes an offensive undertone of racism while simultaneously accusing it without evidence. People are people and there is much greater diversity to be found within groups than between them. It is self-evident that the concept of "diversity" as currently understood, and implemented, is a bad idea.

"Inclusivity", in the sense that provision is made for people with physical, mental, social or economic disability is perfectly laudable. However, as a means of improving quality of output, the concept of "inclusivity" as currently understood and implemented is not desirable. Commonly, lower standards are accepted under the banner of "inclusivity", and lower standards are expected. This is observable across public service media, and the Arts in particular. People who are disadvantaged in life are capable of very great things, however that disadvantage is perceived, particularly by the individual. The Arts particularly suffer from this, as with "diversity" above. Art, whether literary, theatrical, visual, cinematic or comedic is at once an exploration of something unique which is expanded to the universal and is quite wonderful. "Inclusivity" and "diversity" destroy this beautiful symmetry by encouraging art with no universal appeal. In fact it takes the universal and makes it exclusive to the individual. For most people, their attributes which place them in a group - as these concepts insist, whether that is their physicality, their ethnicity, their sexuality, their social status or gender - has always and inevitable been the least interesting thing about them. "Inclusivity" and "Diversity" seek to make that the most and only important thing about them.

## Recommendations

1. Stop promoting the concept of “fake-news” as it will only serve to make all news fake-news
2. Make broadcasters, particularly in news and current affairs, accountable for misrepresentation. Ideally, if conditions of contract for anyone involved in media could include accountability for misrepresentation, it would go some way to encourage integrity.
3. Revise the BAI structure so that it can better act for the public good. There needs to be some accountability by which the Authority or individuals can be assessed.
4. BAI guidelines should be edited to expand upon misrepresentation by omission, treating it the same as misinformation.
5. Remove or redefine the provisions for inclusivity and diversity for funding, and guidelines for all broadcasters and the BAI. Begin promoting the redefined provisions as soon as possible.
6. Update the broadcasting act to firm up the requirements, understanding and definition of editorial control.
7. Update the broadcasting act to treat misrepresentation by omission the same as misinformation.



8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

## Response to questions raised by the Future of Media Commission on the Public consultation website

### Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?

- How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?
  - *The government has no role in wider media. It should not (by definition) be involved with or have any direct, coercive or guiding control over an independent public service media*
- What can be learned from the evolution of public service media over the last decade?
  - The independence of journalism in the public sector has been lost, along with

public confidence. The BAI has been ineffective in maintaining standards, particularly with regard to public services. The BAI do not appear answerable to anyone.

- What systems may be required to support and sustain public service content, e.g. high quality, independent journalism, in an increasingly competitive and consolidated market?
  - *Free market systems*
- How might public service media be more effective in promoting the Irish language, sport and culture?
  - *Avoid the current two-tier funding system. Irish language and “Irish-interest” programming has been ghettoised and ring-fenced into an ever decreasing, more specialised audience, lacking general wider appeal.*
- How might public service media better respond to the needs and expectations of the public?
  - *Have a clear system or procedure of accountability – not just for image, but genuine accountability.*
- What can we learn from other jurisdictions?
  - *We can learn from their mistakes. They have not listened to public complaints ignore petitions, have no accountability and do not value impartiality. “Inform, educate and entertain” has become distorted and meaningless as a guide.*

## **Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

- What is the best model for future funding of public service media in Ireland? What approach best supports independent editorial oversight while achieving value for money and delivering on public service aims?
  - *Accountability. Misinformation or misrepresentation should result in dismissal. Any expression of political, social, cultural or religious opinion should result in dismissal. Once public confidence returns, funding will follow. As it stands, the licence fee model will only make things worse.*
- What opportunities exist to develop and implement business model and organisational changes within the public service broadcasters (RTÉ and TG4)?
  - *I have no intimate knowledge of the business or organisation of RTE or TG4. None that I know of.*
- How might content commissioning, including by RTÉ, TG4 and the BAI Sound and Vision scheme, be adjusted/improved/reformed to better achieve public service aims?

- *Qualification and assessment of BAI sound and vision programs have mandatory “social inclusion” and “diversity” criteria. Diversity here includes gender, in addition to the supplementary gender equality criteria. Similar assessment is implicit and explicit in RTE and TG4 programming. This may seem self-evident to the commission and the BAI, but it is not at all self-evident to the general public. This does not produce better programming, services or quality. I have grown very tired of it (as have many people). It creates self-selective bias and tends to result in sub-standard output.*
- How should public funding or tax reliefs be apportioned to Public Service Content providers?
  - *Public funding Flat rate, with accountability for expression of opinion. Again, any publicly funded provider signs up to the strictest criteria.*
- What does the shift in advertising revenues towards big tech firms mean for the future of print, online and broadcast media?
  - *This is a huge question! There should be no overlap between publicly funded content and commercially funded content. If publicly funded, then absolutely controlled without expression of opinion of any kind. The Public broadcasters were once a mouth-piece for government, hence the BAI – but it would seem that this has made things worse as the BAI are even less answerable, cannot be voted out, and have a jaundiced interpretation of the broadcasting act.*
- What role is there for alternative funding models for Public Service Content providers – voluntary, cooperative, crowdsourcing, subscription?
  - *See above. Get the house in order first, then ask for money and resources. Otherwise, it is foreseeable that there will be no Public National Broadcaster, and there will only be the influence of very powerful commercial interests.*

### **Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

- What regulatory changes at EU or global level might impact on the governance of public service media in the period ahead?
  - *The EU should have no influence whatsoever on national broadcasting.*
- What challenges are posed to a vibrant, independent public service media by increasing consolidation / declining plurality of ownership in the Irish market?
  - *Is there declining plurality of ownership in the Irish Market? Depends on your definition. To what are you referring, precisely? What does “vibrant, independent public service media” mean?*
- Are current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media adequate?
  - *No. The broadcasting act is being preferentially interpreted and enforced by the*

*BAI. The BAI is acting in its own interest, rather than in the interest of the public. We have the unfortunate situation where there is no one watching the watcher. Over the course of the past 2 decades, through selective enforcement and interpretation, the BAI (staff/board) has come to see itself as somehow "anointed" to gently guide and influence public opinion from the commanding heights. This is a real problem, particularly as it is being done with the best of intentions.*

[REDACTED]  
Record #380  
[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION TO THE FUTURE OF THE MEDIA COMMISSION

by

Dr. Brendan K. O'ROURKE

&

Dr. Joseph K. FITZGERALD

Dr. Brendan K. O'Rourke is a Senior Lecturer at Technological University Dublin, where he focuses on learning in the area of discourses of the economy, in particular examining enterprise, policy and public discourses on the economy. His scholarly work has been widely published as chapters in edited volumes, encyclopedia / handbook entries and in over 20 peer-reviewed academic journals such as the Critical Discourse Studies, Politics and Social Semiotics. More information on his work is available on [www.brendankorourke.com](http://www.brendankorourke.com) . Dr. Joseph K. FitzGerald lectures in international strategy at Technological University Dublin and has published on topics such as how young men consume the media and on how economics experts gain legitimacy in news interviews. Both authors are happy to acknowledge their authorship of this submission of their own views and for the above personal details to be publicly available

### Submission to The Future of Media Commission

The media is in crisis. Many aspects of this crisis are widely acknowledged including a decline in importance of reliable and relied on institutions such that public discourse now takes place in 'a dynamic, changeable, and barely controllable system of interacting forces' (Bruns 2018, p 342). This is related to technological developments which, from the business models adopted. Instead of advertising supporting of public interested media, social media now supports the commodification and sale of behavioural manipulation by tech giants to the highest bidder (Zuboff, 2017). These technologies tend to facilitate context-collapse undermining cues that allow for discerning trustworthiness (Davis and Jurgenson, 2014), and aid in the creation of filter bubbles, echo chambers and dehumanization of interaction. Deprofessionalization and hectic work schedules, making it increasingly hard for journalists to remain critical and learn lessons from systemic biases elucidated by research (Casey, 2019; Graham & Silke, 2017; Mercille, 2015; O'Rourke & Hogan, 2013). These problems, and other often-discussed one, have created a crisis in media and in public service media in particular. They form an important context for the commission considerations, for the importance of its considerations and for the suggestions provided in this submission.

An often ignored and underestimated problem for the media is the long-term trend of increasing specialization and its acceleration to hyper-specialization (Milgram, 2015). The degree of specialization is now so great that the idea of a public discourse in which individuals can make their own independent assessments - without specialists' support -is shrinking, and a great endarkenment beckons (Milgram, 2015). The media has a key function in facilitating public discourse among increasingly distanced specialists (O'Rourke, 2021). While increasing education levels, especially if broad, can help, it also means journalists now face diversely

critical audiences with high expectations and busy lives. Most believe the media to be neither competent or ethical, with growing inequality corroding trust across the Western world including Ireland (Edelman, 2020). This hyperspecialization adds to the crises of media beset by the more acknowledged problems of a disconnection of media. It stresses the splintering of trust and trustworthiness the linking of which is so vital (O'Neill, 2018) and which must be addressed if a broken media system is to be repaired.

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role be in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

**1.1 How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government needs to

1. Fund public service media as a universal basic service.
2. Ensure that public service media organization are more independent of government and commercial interests.
3. Facilitate high involvement of the public in public service media organization.
4. Devise structures for democratic bottom-up governance of public service media
5. Support journalism as a profession
6. Support research on media
7. Promote cooperation with international and EU authorities in the regulation of media.

## **1.2 What can be learned from the evolution of public service media over the last decade?**

### **Public Service Media is needed as a universal basic service**

Public service media is in deep trouble and it is clear that market-based solutions are on their own not only inadequate but can be inherently injurious to public service content (Zuboff, 2015). As the rise of fake news, voter manipulation, economic misinformation and the popularity of COVID-19 falsehoods has shown this crisis of public media is causing tremendous harm to society, and urgently needs to be addressed.

These lessons imply a need to treat public service media as an essential universal basic service need. Unfortunately, this necessitates public funding and state action, with all the difficulty that implies, if society is avoid increasing costs of the ongoing media crisis

### **Need for greater independence of public service media organizations from both government and commercial interest**

In addressing the crisis in public service media, the state must recognize the state too lacks the trust of the public and public service media content seen to be influenced directly by the state is not likely to increase public confidence in the media in the West. Public Service media organisations with greater independence are more used by the public (Kennedy & Prat, 2019). However, the state can support and facilitate public service media organizations independent from government (see sections below for specific suggestions).

### **Need for a high-public involvement in public service media organization**

It is clear that media organizations need to embrace the greater involvement of their publics if the value of new technology is to be appropriately (Silva & Sanseverino, 2020). This is even more vital for a public media service as it needs some degree of active citizenship to maintain both content and credibility.

### **Need for a democratic bottom-up governance of public service media organization**

Ireland's model of public services media governance, in common with the UK, has relied heavily on central government appointees who for the term of their appointment are required to act independently of government. This has worked surprisingly well but is unsuitable for a world in which populists have leveraged establishment connections to reduce the trust of the public in the media, where knowledge is so complex and distributed and where those who feel failed most by establishment are also most alienated from establishment-run media. Some other countries like the Netherlands have been able, for historical reasons, to develop public service media models based on more bottom-up civil society institutions which have been widely trusted. Germany and some other countries have been able to leverage both their more polycentric state structures and strong trusted social partnership models to ensure accountable government structures for public service media. Ireland does not have these resources and so must chart a new course – a state-facilitated but independent democratic bottom-up governance structure for its public service media.

### **Need for support of journalism as a profession**

As has been acknowledged above, international experience has pointed to the need for greater involvement of the public in media, expert skills are needed to facilitate such involvement up to and including citizen journalism. The profession of journalism provides some protection against commercial pressures (Christin, 2020) and to provide skills and commitment for a critical approach necessary to insure inclusivity, awareness of the need for the diversity and provide a trusted public media service.

### **Need for support of research on the media**

The massive rate of change in even predictable technological affordances (Kelly, 2016), in forces of sociological change (Millgram, 2015) and in business models (Silva & Sanseverino, 2020) are such that the media landscape is in vital need of further research.

We have learned for example, from international experience that those with less education are being reached less by public service media news organizations across Europe (Schulz, Levy & Nielsen, 2019). Research in this area seems urgently needed to ascertain if public service media in Ireland is failing to reach similar segments of the population and develop further policy options to overcome this, assuming Ireland follows other countries pattern in this area. It is clear there is a growing social divide in being served by trusted media (Edelman, 2020).

If society is not to be repeatedly ambushed in ways that have been hinted at by shocks such as the Cambridge Analytical scandal, the radicalization achieved by various terrorist groups thorough social media and the costs of COVID conspiracy theories, then research is desperately needed. It is clear that given the nature of the most profitable business models (Graham, 2017; Zuboff, 2015) that it would be silly to expect commercially driven companies to provide the bulk of funding for such critical research and the state must take the lead in doing so.

### **Need for supranational regulation of media.**

Ireland's economic dependence on technological firms and its economic openness makes obvious the need for Ireland to push for stronger and international accepted regulation of media companies. While national media remain important and need to be understood in their own terms, many studies make clear the increasing power of international media players (Shimpach,

2019). Perhaps the difficulty of the UK's parliament in being able to question Mark Zuckerberg shows most concisely the need for a supranational approach.

### **1.3 What systems may be required to support and sustain public service content, e.g. high quality, independent journalism, in an increasingly competitive and consolidated market?**

RTÉ is to be commended for its openness relative to the BBC. For example, complete programs of *Morning Ireland* are available online for five years after broadcast compared to say the very limited access of the BBC Radio 4's Today program. This good practice needs to be extended, deepened and supported if RTÉ is going to continue to play a pivotal role in the national conversation. To that end the following moves towards further data openness should be considered:

1. Full free of charge online availability of RTÉ archive for personal and research use.
2. A platform by which members and researchers can create links, transcripts and commentary to the archive.

### **1.4 How might public service media be more effective in promoting the Irish language, sport and culture?**

These matters fall outside the expertise of this submission.

### **1.5 How might public service media better respond to the needs and expectations of the public?**

Both a higher involvement of the public in the organization of public services media and great bottom-up democratic control would facilitate this, as would greater support for research on the media. Public Service media role in providing business knowledge to Irish organizations is one area that needs to be further explored.

## **1.6 What can we learn from other jurisdictions?**

Such lessons are incorporated into the remarks in other sections of this report.

### **Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

#### **2.1 What is the best model for future funding of public service media in Ireland? What approach best supports independent editorial oversight while achieving value for money and delivering on public service aims?**

While unpalatable, it is clear that public service media as a universal, diverse and inclusive essential service that is trusted and trustworthy can only be provided in the current circumstance and for the foreseeable, future by state funds. This represents an increased burden on the state and public funds and needs to be recognized and championed as such. The societal costs of pretending that such a universal basic service is not necessary are great.

#### **2.2. How should public funding or tax reliefs be apportioned to Public Service Content providers?**

Direct Public funding should be apportioned by a Public Media Services Authority (see Section 3.3. below) and only be provided for public media services purpose if content is freely available to the Irish public for individual and research use.

Tax reliefs should only be provided for particular media content, and judged primarily on its value for the development of Irish media industry capacity. Tax relief for media projects should subject recipients to transparency requirements that allow profiling of subsidies to public accountability.

### **2.3 What does the shift in advertising revenues towards big tech firms mean for the future of print, online and broadcast media?**

The shift in advertising revenue means that public services media now, and for the foreseeable future needs to be financed from the public purse. Avoiding this unpleasant truth will lead to higher costs in terms of societal damage.

### **2.4 What role is there for alternative funding models for Public Service Content providers – voluntary, cooperative, crowdsourcing, subscription?**

A subscription-based funding model has the advantage of creating a deeper relationship between media and its audiences. However, a pure market-based subscription model is fundamentally damaging to addressing the inequality of access and trust in public service media, and so unable to bring the nation together as public service media should. A subscription-model can work if a subscription to and membership public service media service is provided to the public as a universal basic service. This universal essential service could be funded by a licence fee, as a specific item in the taxation/welfare or through general taxation.

Voluntary support, whether through philanthropy, crowding-funding for public service media should be confined to specific public media content so that that relationships between funding and content is transparent.

Cooperative public service media in terms of pre-existing civil society groups or specially formed groups should be encouraged but monitored in terms of diversity and dominance of such co-operatives.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The governance arrangements of RTÉ should be altered so that a 12 member board

- i. Includes six representatives elected directly from the public it aims to serve. In the short-term this might be from an electorate comprised of licence-holders but in the longer term should be an electorate dominated by resident adult citizens of the state.
- ii. Increase the elected representatives elected from RTÉ's workforce to two, with RTÉ allocating, without further organizational incumbrances, at least 50% of the elected representatives RTÉ workloads.
- iii. Include the Director-General of RTÉ as an ex-officio member
- iv. Include three expert board members, at least one of whom is resident outside the state should be appointed by the other members of the board.
- v. Elects from its own membership- excluding the three RTÉ members- its own chairperson.
- vi. Election of board members should be organized to insure overlapping service between renewable service periods of three years.

Given that the board members should be obliged to act in the interest of public service media, and will have rare knowledge and expertise in this function the board meeting without its RTÉ Director-General and without its RTÉ elected representatives -should constitute the state's Public Services Media Authority with ultimate control of how public grants for public services media content are allocated. The Public Services Media Authority may well delegate all or part of its authority to pre-existing agencies or develop new implementation bodies for its grant giving activities.

### **3.1 What regulatory changes at EU or global level might impact on the governance of public service media in the period ahead?<sup>1</sup>**

Rather than address this specifically as a separate matter such implications as this submission addresses have been dealt with throughout.

### **3.2 What challenges are posed to a vibrant, independent public service media by increasing consolidation / declining plurality of ownership in the Irish market?**

Competition and diversity in Irish media are matters of concern and should be addressed (Flynn, 2017), as indeed are issues of competition and fair competition at the global level. However, the media crisis has been seen as a failure of the market, requiring active state publicly funded initiatives rather than mere market failures that can and should be addressed by better market regulation.

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### **3.3 Are current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media adequate?**

Again, further improvement in regulation and controls are needed but a focus on such controls, particularly, if based on an imaginary of purely market consistent solutions, underestimates the problem. The media crisis demands a strong public purpose led initiative that establishes public media service as a universal basic service.

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[REDACTED]  
Record #381  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Funding Media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 14:01:39

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland.

As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax (TV license) to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming government "broadcast tax" designed to cover RTE's losses.

It's been suggested also, that failing print media should be supported with taxpayer's money.

We do not believe that the argument that 'fake news exists', can be an acceptable rationale for the tax payer forced to fund media outlets that cannot support themselves and ones that do not adequately or in a balanced way, present the views held by many people in Ireland.

In relation to the pandemic (with no precedent in modern Ireland) , the media (RTE in particular) have a crucial role to play in informing its customers with non-fake news and helping them to retain hope and avoid desperation. Informing does not mean expressing opinions, albeit surreptitiously. The role of investigative journalism is not to trick public representatives with a collection of statistics/data, regurgitated at a later date, making them look uninformed and leading to loss of public support in our administration. This is irresponsible behaviour in our opinion and is not supporting our collective fight against Covid 19.

We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our traditional values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs; and in particular the catholic religion but not other faith based groups.

The controversy continued with the New Years Eve skit on God raping and impregnating The Blessed Mother Mary. Initially RTE refused to take down the clip claiming this scandalous offence was acceptable to broadcast. This decision was made on the threadbare grounds that it's "satire and freedom of speech".

As we all know, there is no way RTE would attempt this with another religion or grouping.

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless, as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI), is biased against catholic beliefs, as to make confidence in the system impossible.

The BAI has been funding the offensive 'Fantasy Island'. Pitched as a "project" it is funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the sacred Eucharist as "magic bread".

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice their faith, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality

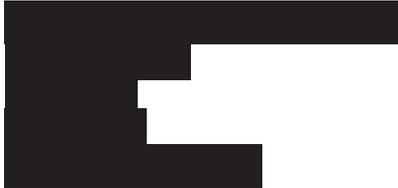
values and their own guidelines to "not deliberately provoke offence".

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax.

Review funding of the BAI and consider its membership, ensuring no discrimination against any one faith based group.

We wish you well in your endeavours.

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

[REDACTED]

Record #382

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of media commission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 13:54:08

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To Whom It may Concern,

I believe that the Irish media should remain a public body and under no circumstances should it be privatised or receive private input from private investors. We are fortunate that we are in a position to receive independent news and not have to wonder if the news is influenced by private investors.. I watch more of the Irish channels as we have important programmes that support our language, culture and local news. This is important for our heritage and our identity.

In regards to funding I believe that we should look for public voluntary contributions or increase public contributions but feel we need to not look towards private funding so as to ensure an independent media platform. There is enough of private media merging together around the world that it is more important than ever we remain independent and publicly funded.

I would like to see some changes. I believe salaries of top earners should be re-evaluated. We are a small nation and their salaries are quite extravagant for us to sustain. I would also like to see the news now channel used in a better manner than seeing reruns of the same thing throughout the day. We could use the channel to give more information and explanations in the different bills and issues affecting our society. For example trade deals have been passed and negotiated and there has been no mention of this on the news either in radio or television.

Perhaps a better system of being able to watch Irish tv channels in a more accessible way would be better. We need to install sky or another satellite system to enjoy our tv which is why people have a problem with having to pay the tv licence. This is a major problem that needs to be addressed.

Regards

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

7

[REDACTED]

Record #384

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 13:39:36

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RTE and all the Irish Media should not receive any money or support of any kind from the government or the Irish people. RTE and the Irish Times et al are anti Catholic bigots. At every opportunity they mock and deride my most cherished beliefs.

They peddle the globalist/liberal agenda and never report anything which does not fit in with their agenda. Christians are the most persecuted group of people in the world today. This is a fact. When have the Irish Times or RTE ever reported on this issue????

The only Irish media outlet which I would trust is GRIPT. At least they try to report the news with no bias.

Is Mise Le Meas,

Isolde Lynch.

[REDACTED]

Record #385

[REDACTED]

## **Future of Irish Media**

**08 Jan 2021**



Please find below my views in relation to various areas of Irish Media.

### **(1) International News**

With the exception of a heavy focus on affairs in the USA (e.g. extensive coverage of the presidential elections), there is very little international news. It's like watching news networks in the USA and Australia, countries that are insular and only focus on what's happening in their own country.

If there is anything with an international aspect, it's predominantly US news, then UK and Australia. There is very little about the rest of the world unless there is a terrorist attack and then it's a brief report and not much else. Also, it seems to be there's little interest in a foreign country unless there is a significant Irish presence there, otherwise the country seems to not be important enough to report on.

Also, given the large number of non-Irish nationals, who now call Ireland their home, there seems little in the way of representation for news from their countries e.g. Poland and Brazil. Surely, better information would assist with integration.

Rarely is there follow up on previous news stories, e.g. what's happening in Syria and why has it been forgotten?

I think the news and media outlets should be seeking more 'interesting' news. There's very little interesting news.

There should be an attempt to always have a good news story. News isn't news, just because it's bad. Surely across Ireland and the world there's at least one really good or super amazing thing happening every day. This should be mandatory, else the news is just an imbalanced view of the world.

Lastly, the news is very much 'of the moment'. Often (and this is a problem not just in Ireland), the report jumps in to what has happened, but very rarely gives context and some background to why it's happened. I.e. Iraq invaded Kuwait, why? Well back in 1945 the UN took most of their shipping route. I'm not saying that's historically or politically correct, but there's usually a reason someone or some country does something, and this is important. Context should not be omitted. It actually is more reassuring to know that a terrorist has bombed somewhere because their whole family was killed in an unlawful war than to think of them as a random lunatic. As little as just showing a map of the region and explaining how it relates would be so much better than just sound bites.

### **Interviewers on TV and Radio**

I've noticed frequently, there's a lack of independence and objectivity. I've heard radio guests be invited on to a show and because they speak against the status quo, they are ridiculed. One would hope we've come a long way since the interview of Annie Murphy on The Late Late Show, but alas, it

seems that some journalists and interviewers are not independent and do not care to surface both sides of a discussion and allow people to make up their own mind. Most recently (22 Oct 2020) on the Radio 1 Claire Byrne show, I was appalled at how a guest who came on to say a debate was needed re lockdowns as a result covid, was repeatedly told by the presenter what his opinion was. The guest remarked time and again that he did not have the answers and what he wanted was a debate, but the presenter kept putting words into his mouth. It was really difficult to listen to the presenter not listening to their guest. Her tone was so unbalanced and biased. I texted the show after to complain.

### **The North**

Whilst talking about bias, there is an overwhelming prejudice of a number of reporters and journalists to Sinn Féin. For the record I've no political allegiance here. I do note that largely the Sinn Féin party members do tend to be well educated and well read and often have very valid points. But in spite of them being the most popular choice in the last election, there appears to be 100 year old historical divide that tends to colour interviewers narrative...which is ironic when both of the main political parties stemmed from the IRA.

### **Diversity**

Or the astronomical lack of diversity! Diversity and representation: Is there a single Radio 1 presenter that is non Irish? Where is diversity seen on Irish TV in terms of presenters? Disabled, non-Irish, non-heterosexual. Presenters of news and current affairs programs don't look too diverse.

This is actually a problem across a lot of Irish media not just News and Current affairs. Look at the advertising by Irish companies, white couples with two kids over and over again...it's embarrassing how Aryan it is.

### **TV Licence**

Why are people made pay a TV licence – the concept is outdated? It's been clear for almost ten years that *if* the quality of TV is good enough, people will pay for it. They should not have to pay for it and then hope for the best. Especially when the national channels also have advertising revenue.

RTE should, at this stage - after many years of state and public support - be in a position to run as a commercial entity, paying their own bills. All their assets have been bought and paid for by the public and state, they have a clear advantage over all other channels, so they should be left to producing quality TV that people choose to pay for – the proverbial carrot rather than stick.

For anyone who doesn't have a TV licence, they get a draconian worded letter, threatening to take them court - not if they have a TV without a licence - but if they don't even return their form. To be honest, it's disgraceful that that letter has been authorised for sending to people who choose to not have a licence either for financial reasons or because they feel the quality of the TV service is so appalling poor. Shame on whoever signed that off.

### **Inappropriate Content**

The coverage of the Elaine O'Hara murder by Architect Graham Dwyer led me to stop watching and listening to the news for over two years. The murder in itself was gruesome, but such was the reporting with every minute detail broadcast to the national that it left me feeling physically repulsed at the news outlets. Yes, this was indeed a horrible murder but there are ways to convey information without the necessity to provide every piece of information. It was wholly inappropriate and unnecessary sharing that level of detail to the whole nation, and worse was this this often happened on the early evening news. I recall listeners being told that the following item was not suitable for children, indeed it wasn't suitable for anyone. If it's not suitable for children then it shouldn't be aired at that time. What if a parent is absent from the room when the warning comes on, only to come back in 15 mins later and have had their child or teenager hearing that information? I could not fathom how it was found to be in any way acceptable to broadcast and it just seemed gratuitous on the part of the broadcasters, it shows really poor judgement.

This is not an isolated incidence. Regularly on morning radio shows (I'm not sure why it's so prevalent particularly on morning shows), the presenters swear and curse. And why do the networks think it's ok at 8am in the morning when people have their kids in the car to have endless double entendres and innuendos, making thinly veiled sexual references, continuously? There's one of the stations (I think it's 2fm) where this used to go on all the time. Base humour that is totally unnecessary and crude first thing in the morning. It's embarrassing to listen to grown up presenters chuckling amongst themselves like pre pubescent kids.

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[REDACTED]  
Record #388  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 13:19:27

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The media at the moment seems to be run by people with a liberal agenda. People with other views are not allowed to air them e.g.during the abortion referendum. The ' No' voters did not get a fair hearing. Maria Steen blocked from speaking etc. etc  
The news item regarding the presenters who were involved in the 'goodbye' party , was 'binned' very quickly. Had this been about other people ,it would have dragged on and on depending on the amount of other news available.

The blasphemous 'satire' depicted on New Year's Eve was nothing short of evil. I do not want our taxes going to pay for having Almighty God depicted in such a manner. How dare the media ridicule our God. Shame on you.

Also the language being used---- swearing , the Holy Name etc etc -- are not acceptable and should not be allowed on the media --radio and tv. Lets have some respect. This type of lingo is not heard on the BBC or Sky or lots of other channels. It is not 'cool' if that is the purpose. It is degrading.

I would have to say that standards have plummeted during this past 4 or 5 years. There was a professionalism then that is sadly lacking now. The media should be neutral on issues and not biased as they are.

LETS HOPE THERE WILL BE LOTS OF IMPROVEMENTS AND A CHANGE FOR THE BETTER. A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE FED UP PAYING FOR RADIO AND TV THAT DO NOT SHOW RESPECT FOR THEIR FEELINGS.

Thank you [REDACTED]

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartne.

[REDACTED]  
Record #390  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Stop Biased Media promoting Government wishes  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 12:54:37

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This was most clearly on display during the Abortion referendum, there was far more coverage on RTE and the National newspapers of people who were pro abortion and the Consultant the the majority of coverage was given was pro-abortion. Despite there being many pro-life consultants there was very little coverage given.

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

[REDACTED]  
Record #394  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission to consultation re Media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 12:36:18

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Dear Sir or Madam,

The following is my submission in relation to the consultation process concerning future funding of media in Ireland. The current proposal effectively means that RTE will convert the existing TV license charge into an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It has also been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the existence of so called fake news can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way portray the views of many people in Ireland.

I propose that the BAI funding be limited to mere broadcasting policing duties, and that funding for other activities be stopped, and its membership be reviewed. There is a need for new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one section of society or another, particularly where religion is concerned. Eg it cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

I strongly object to any change in the manner in which RTE and the current media is funded: All funding should come from users of their services, just like any other part of our economy.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



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Record #395

Michael Foley, Patrick Smyth



# Submission to Future of Media Commission

Michael Foley, Patrick Smyth – January, 2021

A discussion of the future of the news media cannot confine itself to the economics of the industry but must also address the regulation of media content.

We are aware that the Commission might view much of this submission as pertaining to the Department of Justice and not within the terms of the Commission. However, we would maintain that it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate any consideration of the health of journalism and the media that supports it from the legal and regulatory systems. We are also of the view that it is important that journalism, on whatever platform, be treated separately from other media activity because of its unique role in the democratic life of the country. Ideally we would like to see all journalism coming under the same voluntary regulatory regime as a recognition of how demarcations have been blurred and mostly disappeared.

We do not propose to deal with the need for public financial support for the news industry but would emphasise our strong support for the urgent case being made by others in this respect.

With the development of online media and explosion of social media the media landscape has been transformed, and the old distinctions between its various platforms has become impossible to maintain.

While newspapers are becoming broadcasters, producing videos and podcasts, broadcasters are using text-based journalism increasingly online in blogs and other formats. In between there is the growing number of online-only publications that are neither newspapers nor broadcasters.

Furthermore it is impossible to maintain the insistence, still proclaimed by social media organisations, that they are not “publishers” with the same ethical, and legal obligations to consumers as print publishers.

To address these and related new realities this Commission is charged to come up with proposals on the future of newsgathering in a “platform agnostic fashion” – that must mean an approach that does not privilege one type of media over another, and which applies common standards to necessary restrictions on freedom of speech and frameworks for regulation.

We are concerned here with the institutional/legal challenge to both delivering and policing regulation, and to redress for, individuals maltreated by the press where appropriate - whether through the courts, a new media council, and through the existing Press Council or by the BAI’s Compliance Committee.

The publication in December of the provisions of the Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill mark an important and welcome attempt to bridge a regulatory void inhabited by the online platforms. Importantly it establishes a form of “parity of esteem” - the principle that platforms are not merely hosts to all comers but responsible morally and legally for the

content that is uploaded to their sites, just as newspapers are held liable for harmful content they may host.

The prospect of legislation has already led to platforms hiring significant numbers of content moderators and showing a greater willingness to enforce “community standards” by taking down many millions of pieces of harmful content. There is more to be done – the EU Commission monitoring of “takedown” of notified harmful content has led it to the view that relying on voluntary codes of conduct is inadequate, and its new Digital Services Act proposal goes some way down the compulsory enforcement route of the Irish Act. The latter, importantly, provides for fines at a sufficiently dissuasive level on those who fail to act promptly on such material.

The proposed transformation of the Broadcasting Authority into a Media Commission with responsibility for extending its remit to online platforms should bring a welcome consistency to the regulatory field. But journalists remain wary of the degree of ministerial control of the membership of the commission and its implications for the real autonomy of newsgathering.

We also welcome the restraint manifest in the legislation when it comes to defining proscribed “harmful content”.

Beyond prohibited illegal content, such as child abuse material, material promoting violence or terrorism or content containing incitement to hatred, the Commission will confine itself additionally to policing cyberbullying and material encouraging or promoting eating disorders, self-harm or suicide.

While it might be politically popular to prohibit some or all of the full list of possible bans also considered - promotion of nutritional deprivation or eating disorders, homophobia, promotion of anti-scientific views, alcohol marketing, defamatory comments, disinformation, intimidation, extremism, violent content, promotion of female genital mutilation – to have done so could have involved serious erosion of free speech.

That right implies the uncomfortable right to publish reprehensible or offensive material. And while some of these potentially ban-able acts, such as intimidation, may well already be covered by the proposed bans on incitement, subjectivity in defining offences makes more general and wider prohibitions either impossible or inevitably oppressive.

In this context we are opposed to suggestions made recently, for example, that proscriptions of genocide denial should be considered. And we view with unease attempts to broaden the definition of anti-Semitism to include statements of support for movements for boycott and divestment. Such “objectionable” views must remain publishable, although organisations may wish to make their expression unacceptable internally.

In the age of disinformation the challenge of confronting false news and lies in the online world, the best defence, does not lie with legislative bans, but with newspapers that uphold journalistic high standards – it is ultimately their USP, and will be their saving in a market awash with fake news.

The legislative framers of the Bill also make clear that they view certain categories of unacceptable speech as being dealt with elsewhere and beyond the practical remit of such a Media Commission – defamatory comments, protecting consumers from misleading ads, and breaches of data protection.

Beyond a passing reference to the promised reform of the Defamation Act, however, the failure to advert to how inadequately defamation is being dealt with, is disappointing.

In this context we would recall and reiterate the arguments made in many submissions in 2016 on the review of Defamation Act, even then well beyond its statute- expired review

date. This delay needs urgently to be remedied and we appeal to the Commission to urge the expediting of this work.

The Irish defamation regime remains one of the most oppressive and chilling to journalism in Europe, as acknowledged by the European Court of Human Rights in 2017 and the European Commission in 2019. It is a major threat to the economic survival of individual titles and to the future of a vibrant news industry. High damages for defamation pushed Ireland's press freedom ranking down to 13th out of 180 countries in the 2020 World Press Freedom Index, from 15th in 2019.

We support the submissions by Newsbrands, the Irish Times Group, and others for the introduction of a "serious harm" threshold for the bringing of a defamation action - the UK Act provides in section 1 that a "statement is not defamatory unless its publication has caused or is likely to cause serious harm to the reputation of the claimant".

We would like to see the setting of a ceiling on awards in defamation cases, so general damages in defamation could not exceed the highest allowable award in a personal injuries action - judge-made case law in the UK has set an effective cap of £240,000 on awards. And the abolition of the presumption of falsity so that to be defamatory, a matter should be required to be untrue.

In reforming the Defamation Act aspects of the provisions for the establishment of a Press Council/ Ombudsman need to be tackled.

The PC was established to provide a simple and cheap means of redress for readers for whom litigation was, and remains, a prohibitive lottery. It was set up following the 2003 report of the government's legal advisory group on defamation, which also recommended reform of the 1961 Defamation Act.

Newspapers, who have viewed the council as a cheap alternative to facing costly litigation in the courts, view its role with mixed feelings – unable to satisfy those wishing to get financial compensation for the wrong done to them by the press, the PC has failed to stem court litigation and the huge costs to newspapers associated with it.

But the PC has provided redress for many readers who simply want their story put right, and journalists regard the council's work, not as an alternative to legal remedies, but as an important expression of their ethical obligation to do right by readers.

The new Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill provides no alternative cheap or informal means of redress or relief for defamation complaints in online platforms. It explicitly rejects the idea of a role for the Media Council in defamation.

The Press Council, or a similar model, could provide that alternative for the online platforms. The incentivising of participation in the Council, by complainants and complained-of alike, through its system of voluntary self-regulation can be a means of bringing such forms of redress and correction to the currently unregulated online world.

As a first step that can be done by strengthening and making more explicit the Section 26 requirement that courts "shall ... take into account" Press Council membership in determining "fair and reasonable" publication. And specifically in assessing and reducing awards against publications/platforms that can demonstrate compliance with and commitment to PC standards.

We would also urge the Commission to consider recommending that the PC should have the power to make moderate awards to plaintiffs through fines on offending publications/sites as an alternative to and precluding court action. Even a ceiling for awards set at the level of €2,000 would provide an incentive for many otherwise contemplating court action.

An unintentional ambiguity in the Act about whether all online news sites may join the PC, or only those that are offshoots of print publications, also needs to be addressed. This would safeguard the position of the online sites already affiliated and offer the online platforms the opportunity to join the PC system.

Currently the Act provides (Section 44 (4)) that “The owner of any periodical in circulation in the State or part of the State shall be entitled to be a member of the Press Council.” And it defines “periodical” (Part 1 Section 2 – Definitions) as meaning “any newspaper, magazine, journal or other publication that is printed, published or issued, or that circulates, in the State at regular or substantially regular intervals and includes any version thereof published on the internet or by other electronic means ...”

The “any version thereof” definition does not appear to include in its scope the many stand-alone news websites such as The Journal.ie, social media news aggregating sites like Google, or perhaps even the majority of newspaper websites which now publish considerable unique, previously unpublished, content.

The Press Council, and the protections that it affords, should be open to all news publications or platforms in print or online and even television and other broadcast journalism. The extension of its remit to potential defamation in online platforms would contribute to building a “platform agnostic” framework of media regulation while providing a new simple and cheap means of redress for ordinary readers that obviated the need for litigation.

Michael Foley is Professor Emeritus at TU Dublin and a former media correspondent at The Irish Times.

Patrick Smyth is an assistant editor in the Irish Times and a former member of the Press Council.

Both have served as officers in the National Union of Journalists.

January 2021

[REDACTED]

Record #396

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 12:40:58

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Hi There.

I noticed this online and would like to add a quick note.

Irish media has now clearly moved from a conservative agenda (90's and earlier) to a completely liberalised one, over the last 2 decades.

Neither is correct or right. We should strive for balance.

As a centrist, I'd love to know that the information I consume is objective. Alas, that is far from the case.

We see that continually now in the news that we are fed, be it on politics (national and international), the 8th Amendment campaign, public figures, and other important subjects.

The media is simply going unchecked.

A little balance is not a lot to ask for.

It'll actually help both sides: - a big swing left or right with media has been proven to sow seeds for a movement against it, and its agenda. Just look at the US right now.....

Anyhow, that's my '2 cents'.

--

Regards,

[REDACTED]

7

[REDACTED]

Record #398

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 12:06:58

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Report the Truth on all subjects and Issues, without Political, Social, or Bias Influence.  
Follow your God given Conscience and always report the facts . Truth and the love of the  
Truth ,will set us all free .

7

[REDACTED]

Record #399

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** CONTRIBUTION  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 11:51:48

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Dear Madam/ Sir,

I am compelled to write by reason of:

- a. The way religion was addressed by the print media during the Referendum for Repeal of the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment: It was taken as an assumption that anyone with a view informed by their religious belief was excluded from public dialog and debate. A practicing Catholic had to begin every contribution by saying “ Yes, I am a Catholic, but...”. In order to be permitted to articulate their views freely, they had to disavow any influence of their deeply held beliefs. A pluralist society should be strong enough to be able to debate and accept the views of all, including those who practice their religious faith and view life from the perspective of their faith. Indeed it might be said that the drafters of the Constitution and those who laid the foundations for the European Community were of such a cohort. I am not sure what the experience of a practicing member of the Church of Ireland was, or a follower of Islam, but I suspect it was very much the same.
- b. The recent sketch on RTE with Aonghus McGrianna.
- c. Perhaps more significantly, the apology which initially issued from RTE in relation to this sketch which implied that the reaction was irrational. This apology was made with the benefit of reflection and no doubt with editorial and management input. The further fact that there was an editorial- level decision made by RTE to keep the sketch on RTE Player even after it was clear that a large number of licence payers were deeply offended, confirmed that the view of anyone is a practicing Christian, is not considered relevant or of any importance.

If one view is excluded by a consensus within the media, then there is a problem.

With thanks,

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]  
Record #400  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 11:50:34

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To whom it concerns

My main point is in relation to RTE as the national broadcaster and to who I am obliged to pay a licence fee.

RTE do not represent my core values and are actually antagonistic and biased against them

This has been shown in their biased coverage of the marriage equality and Abortion referenda where it was patently clear they were pushing a yes vote on both.

More recently we see the blasphemous anti Catholic anti Christian so called skit on New year Eve with a pathetic apology and only when pushed the removal of same off the player.

Their journalists if they can be called that are way over paid and all sing from the same left orientated secular hymn sheet and are never sanctioned even when they offend in a most grotesque way as they did on New year Eve or by having a non social distancing party while they bleat out to us plebs stay safe and within yourv5km

. There should be no.licence fee and it is unconstitutional for people with my value system to be coerced to pay.

My last point is look at how much time left politicians like people before profit get on the airwaves compared to Aontu which have a higher mandate from the public. Sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #403

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Public Consultation.  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 11:40:05

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To the Commission

Re. The Public discussion on the future of media funding in Ireland.

There is some justification for state support of direct Irish culture but after that no. Just no!!!

State sponsored media is or will be very quickly a byword for state controlled media.

If a media outfit goes against the govt line watch how quickly they would lose their state funding.

Local and national media will just have to survive in the real 21st century. If they don't it is because they have failed to adapt to the market and they will be replaced.

In an era where paid for streaming services are the norm surely this is the model RTE should follow. RTE sport, RTE news, RTE entertainment could easily be sold in the market as streaming services and possibly make more money than they currently do.

The media industry has always been in constant flux ever since Guttenberg's printing press. For the government to sponsor media so as to save a model of media delivery that has been on the wane for 20 years is a very suspect thing.

I have to ask what is the real motive behind this state sponsored support of the media?

What does the government not like about the direction that media is going in?

Sincerely Yours

[REDACTED]

11



[Redacted]

Record #404

[Redacted]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 11:40:00

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Hi,

I am very disappointed with the media coverage in Ireland over a wide range of issues for example the pro-life view is missing by and large. Very little reaches the news regarding babies not getting pain relief before they are aborted or nothing is being said about how, if they do survive, they are left to die, nothing is being said about the women dying from home abortions. And during the 8th amendment referendum RTE had to be bullied into producing balanced coverage because they were so apparently supporting the pro-choice stance.

No meaningful debate is made about the gap in gender pay.

I do not believe that I am getting a balanced reporting of the news. We are being sold on a vaccine now, the supposed magic bullet to end COVID-19 but where is the discussion about bringing in the testing to see if we have the antibodies already? We were told again and again at the beginning of last year, that people were dying from COVID, numbers on the news every night. Then months after being fed all this fake news, they say sorry, and now, people are dying with COVID, rather than from COVID. There's a big difference. No wonder, I don't know what to believe. There is never a mention in any news reports about the derivative from the kidney cells of an aborted foetus in the 1970s being used in a majority of the vaccines that are offered today, even before COVID.

When they discuss cervical cancer and being vaccinated against it, why is there NEVER any mention of amount of sexual partners being a risk factor?

In the absence of balanced reporting is it any wonder that people look elsewhere to help fill in the gaps?

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

1

[REDACTED]

Record #405

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Irish public media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 11:34:21

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Point 1...In a nation which prides itself on communication, the public media provide rather a lot of it. Day and night and rather more than some other nations.

Point 2....Apparently a survey of audience opinion undertaken some time ago, indicated that a majority wanted to see a sharp reduction in broadcasting hours. But no action has been taken. Running such a large broadcasting service is expensive.

3. Taking radio as a whole, the ratio of hard news to comment and opinion seems rather low but this is more true of independent private stations.

4. RTE radio appears to cater to and to cultivate the biases that are generally popular rather than present for examination less common views. Thus a conservative opinion is nearly always classified as right wing but opinions at the opposite end of the political are rarely called left wing or extreme left.

5. Are RTE journalists qualified? Do they have recognised international qualifications?

6. A significant number of on air presenters seem to be amateurs, with unusual east coast pronunciation (Co-irk,; an anincement abite the Red Ky Rinedebite)

Quite a few presenters are nervous, find it a challenge to get fluently to the end of a sentence, have unsuitable voices for broadcasting

7. Gender balance.... There don't seem to be many up and coming men. Is there perhaps discrimination against men?

8. What I notice about those appearing on on radio news programmes is the substantial number of non-Irish accents.

A sign of the times, the globalisation of communications and business? Quite normal in an open economy?

So would you expect to see that trend on European media? Lots of Swiss on French media, Italian staff on Swiss radio stations, German nationals holding state jobs in Poland, Bulgarians on Greek media. I don't think so. Listening to Irish radio stations over a representative time period, you might be forgiven for thinking you were listening in Manchester or Birmingham.

9. Little is known among the general public about RTE's complaints procedure or how many complaints have been upheld with what results.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #406

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Future Media Commission Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 11:30:51

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

- RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.
- The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing [REDACTED] is [REDACTED] the way they would attempt this with another religion ([REDACTED]).
- The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.
- The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".
- In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.
- The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.
- While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide

new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]  
To: [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
Subject: RTE Funding  
Date: Friday 8 January 2021 11:10:24

---

Dear [REDACTED],

[REDACTED],

VERY URGENT

This text request came earlier from [REDACTED], Ballyfermot Pro-Life Group.

Dear all  
----- Forwarded messag

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland.

As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax (that is the TV license) to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming government "broadcast tax" designed to cover RTEs losses.

It's been suggested also, that failing print media should be supported with taxpayer's money.

I do not believe that the argument that 'fake news exists', can be an acceptable rationale for the tax payer forced to fund media outlets that cannot support themselves; and ones that do not adequately or in a balanced way, present the views held by many people in Ireland.

We are being forced to pay taxes toward programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our traditional values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs; and in particular the catholic religion, but not other faith based groups.

For example the failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally, especially in Nigeria.

The controversy continued with the New Years Eve skit on God raping and impregnating The Blessed Mother Mary. Initially RTE refused to take down the clip claiming this scandalous offence was acceptable to broadcast. This decision was made on the threadbare grounds that it's "satire and freedom of speech".

They prove themselves discriminatory, as all know that there is no earthly way RTE would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]).

Instead they select Catholicism for a public kicking.

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless, as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible.

In October RTE unveiled another unacceptable attack programme.

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland as you know has been funding the offensive 'Fantasy Island'; which is tries to be a funny adult cartoon.

At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest,

Fr. Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days.

He is evilly portrayed as the devil or a vampire, who curses, blasphemes, and tries to extort money;

Advertising "All sinners welcome for a fee" and he uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a sacred host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and the profane quip made that "it's Jesus". That the hosts are being used by the priest to manufacture and sell crisps using "a black magic catholic guilt trip spell".

In one closing scene the priest is shown cleaning a mountain of excrement.

In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest".

Pitched as a "project" it is funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the sacred Eucharist as "magic bread".

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice their faith, this does not exempt RTE or the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to "not deliberately provoke offence". It is clearly false.

It's an open question as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax.

Stop funding the BAI and review its membership.

Provide new oversight of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, to prevent them discriminatong against any one faith based group.

It cannot be allowed to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the deeply offensive skit,

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #408

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submissions  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 11:06:00

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To the Commission

While I have congratulated RTE in the past for good programming, for example: 'What's the Meaning of Life' and 'Would you Believe', in more recent years I have been saddened by its mocking attitude towards Catholic priests which offends all Catholics.

Therefore, I no longer favour funding of RTE and BAI from central taxation, for it includes my money being used to promote mockery of Jesus Christ, whom I admire and try to imitate, and the vast majority of honest Catholic priests who serve their parishioners as best they can and to whom I am exceedingly grateful.

As love starts with prayer, I pray for the Director of RTE and those who work in RTE, the Director of BAI and its workers - may God protect them from harm, bless them with good health of body, mind and spirit, and inspire them to choose and promote all that is good, wholesome and noble.

My very best wishes go to members of the Commission for good health in 2021

Thank you,  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #409

[REDACTED]



# Aighneacht don Choimisiún um Todhchaí na Meán

I dtosach ba mhaith liom na pointí ginearálta seo a leanas a dhéanamh i dtaobh tábhacht Raidió na Gaeltachta:

1. Sna ceantair Ghaeltachta ina bhfuil an Ghaeilge fós in úsáid, sé Raidió na Gaeltachta an meán cumarsáide is tábhachtaí a dhéanann freastal ar an bpobal i dteanga an phobail. Tá dílseacht láidir do RnaG ag an gcuid sin de phobal na Gaeltachta, a bhfuil Gaeilge á úsáid acu mar ghnáth theanga laethúil. D'éirigh le RnaG dílseacht an phobail a fháil i dtosach nuair a bunaíodh Raidió na Gaeltachta i 1972, trí seirbhís áitiúil a chur ar fáil go príomha. Coinníodh an dílseacht sin leis na cláracha áitiúla a chraoltar: nuacht áitiúil, scéalta áitiúla spóirt, cúrsaí reatha áitiúla.

2. Go teoiriciúil deirtear gur raidió náisiúnta atá i Raidió na Gaeltachta ach go praiticiúil sé an seirbhís áitiúil a thugtar do phobal labhartha na Gaeilge sa nGaeltacht, an seirbhís poiblí is tábhachtaí a chuireann an stáisiún ar fáil. Níor cheart in ann athraithe beag is fiú a dhéanamh den seirbhís sin.

3. Taobh amuigh den sheirbhís nuachta, siad na cláracha is tábhachtaí a chraoltar ar

RnaG im thuairimse ná na irischláir a chraoltar ar maidin: Iris Aniar ó Chasla; Barrscéalta ó Na Doirí Beaga agus An Saol ó Dheas, chomh maith leis an gclúdach a dhéantar sna cláracha spóirt ag an deireadh seachtaine ar chluichí ina mbíonn foirne Gaeltachta páirteach. Is ceart na cláracha sin a aithint mar chuid tábhachtach den seirbhís poiblí a chuireann RnaG ar fáil dá phobal éisteachta.

4. Chomh maith leis an seirbhís áitiúil freastalaíonn RnaG chomh maith ar phobal na Gaeilge ar fud na tíre, ó thuaidh is ó dheas, agus tríd an idirlíon ar phobal na Gaeilge go hidirnáisiúnta.

5. De bharr Raidió na Gaeltachta chuir na Gaeltachtaí éagsúla aithne ar a chéile agus ní bhíonn mórán deacrachtaí a thuilleadh ag daoine óna Gaeltachtaí éagsúla canúintí a chéile a thuiscint.

6. Tá todhchaí na Gaeilge sa gcuid den Ghaeltachta ina bhfuil sí fós in úsáid ag braith cuid mhaith ar an bhféiniúlacht Ghaeltachta a chothaíonn RnaG, thar aon meán eile agus is ceart a thábhacht mar mheán a aithint i ré an phleanáil teanga.

### **Moltaí i dtaobh RnaG:**

1. Go mbeadh níos mó comhoibriú idir Nuacht TG4 agus seirbhís nuachta RnaG, ag baint úsáid as seirbhísí a chéile, idir tuairisceoirí agus áiseanna.

2. Go mbeadh fordheontas curtha ar fáil ón lár-chiste do RTÉ le RnaG a reáchtáil agus a fhorbairt.

3. Go mbreathnófaí ar RnaG mar áis trína bhféadfaí ceol dúchasach na hÉireann a chur ar fáil do lucht éisteachta idirnáisiúnta, go speisialta san oíche, nuair a bheadh lucht éisteachta idirnáisiúnta le fáil.

4. Go mbreathnófaí ar an bpolasaí ceoil an stáisiúin, le é a fheabhsú agus athbhreithniú a dhéanamh i dtaobh amhráin i mBéarla a chosc roimh 9pm. Ina áit mholfaí polasaí dearfach a úsáid faoi sciar áirithe de na hamhráin a bheith i nGaeilge. Faoi láthair th'éis a 10pm le linn na seachtaine craoltar clár ceoil chomhaimseartha gan aon amhrán Gaeilge air ó thús go deireadh. Téann sé seo in aghaidh nádúr RnaG agus ní léir go bhfuil ag éirí leis an gclár mórán de lucht éisteachta a mhealladh.
5. Go ndéanfaí cláracha do dhéagóirí a fhorbairt curtha i láthair ag daoine óga. Bealach a bheadh anseo le daoine óga a oiliúint.
6. Go mbeadh RnaG níos oscailte do léiritheoirí neamhspleácha, a chuirfeadh cláracha ar fáil, agus go mbeadh rochtain ag na léiritheoirí neamhspleácha ar áiseanna RnaG le cláracha a dhéanamh.
7. Go ndéanfadh RnaG clár nuachta náisiúnta agus idirnáisiúnta do fhoghlaimoirí a chraoladh san oíche, a bheadh léite go mall agus go soiléir. Is seirbhís é seo a chuirtear ar fáil sa Ghearmáin do dhaoine atá ag iarraidh tIocht isteach ar an dteanga a thuiscint. Bheadh bunús na scéalta cheana féin ag daoine ar aon chaoi agus chabhródh sé leo focal agus téarmaíocht nua a fhoghlaim, a bheadh fuaimnithe i gceart.
8. Go ndéanfaí suirbhé rialta ar éisteoirí RnaG sa Ghaeltacht le fáil amach faoin próifíl an lucht éisteachta ar bhonn rialta agus céard iad na cláracha lena bhfuil siad ag éisteacht.

Críoch

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #410  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Input to public consultation  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 10:48:33

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Broad area of input;

Focus on the climate emergency, role in reporting the facts, debunking the myths and calling out the deniers, use of fact checking.

Marketing and advertising (bans and health warnings)

In the same way that restrictions or bans have been brought in for cigarettes and alcohol, consideration should be given to adding a requirement for health warning on fossil fuel advertising flagging associated impacts of global warming, increasing CO2 levels, impact on air quality and health etc.

Sufficient air time.

Adequate funding to ensure coverage of what are essentially becoming existential threats to humanity and other species. Focus on education of society, awareness raising, profile organisations (ngos) that can help at community level. Bringing the actions required by the government climate action plan to life in a clear, engaging and meaningful way.

Similar to HSE advertising during the pandemic, this is about putting on the green jersey for Ireland Inc, pulling together to do the right thing.

What is balance

If the broad view is that 97% of science agrees the climate science is both true and happening, media exposure should reflect this and not take a 50/50 air time exposure to alternative science or I accurate or non fact based arguments, it's not about creating group think, it's about giving away to science and fact.

Educational programming

More education focused programming around science, nature and humanities role in protecting nature and solving anthropogenic problems.

Less use of social media extracts in main stream news reporting, unless accompanied by fact checks- one of the things that adds fuel to the fire on some nonsense on social media is that it makes its way into the main stream media. This is one way fake becomes fact for many.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #411  
[REDACTED]



## Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?

A long tradition of public service broadcasting is one common trait in Nordic countries, with all rights granted through legislation and accompanying agreements, with a commitment to national culture and language through a broad range of programmes made available on several platforms. The key component is editorial freedom: Nordic countries tolerate no interference from the State. In Ireland, with regards to public service broadcasting, the BBC has long been the paragon par excellence. Why is this? Its reputation in the UK and Ireland around the world is based upon its fundamental values of editorial integrity, independence and impartiality. How can RTE, for example, guarantee editorial integrity, independence and impartiality when Irish defamation laws continue to exert chilling (and sobering) effect on its role as the public's watchdog and its ability to investigate and reveal matters of public interest. However, it is obvious that in a rapidly changing media landscape, public service broadcasters need to adapt if they are to sustain the public service which they provide, and legislation and regulation by the Irish government will need to evolve – with a sense of vision - to ensure a regulatory framework which is fit for purpose. But in the not too distant past, it was a good bet that hell would freeze over first.

## Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?

The funding of public service broadcasting is also an ongoing issue in Scandinavia. The traditional and current financing system (like Ireland) via television licenses is quite common but there have been innovations. Denmark has a household fee on any equipment capable of receiving programming (which inspired Pat Rabbitte when he was Minister for Communications), while Iceland replaced the license fee payment with an individual media fee (tax) in 2009. Finland's has had a new income-linked tax since 2013. In Sweden, the financing question is the subject of an ongoing government commission on public service.

Further afield, in Australia, there are two public service broadcasting organizations--the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), both modelled on the BBC, so they both operate television and radio networks. They are currently in the process of redefining their roles in the new multichannel broadcasting environment while responding to political pressures to become more commercially oriented. This process of change is causing difficulties and uncertainty, particularly for the ABC.

At home, there has been a marked decline in the number of independent production companies working, for example, in the genre of arts, because of financial precarity: companies cannot survive on shrinking budgets. On a lighter though no less serious note, a recent RTE programme which came in under the umbrella of culture, *Deirdre O'Kane Talks Funny*, featured a cast of guests who all worked in the past with the host on RTE. Is it asking too much for RTE in the future, instead of relying on, ahem, dynastic serendipity – nepotism seems a tad extreme - to source future talent and new ideas from further afield i.e., beyond relatives and friends and beyond independent companies exclusively owned by relatives, friends or former staff. The biggest casualty of, and challenge, for RTE programming is not diversity or imagination but innovation. However, shrinking budgets remains the enemy of innovation and the death knell for the independent sector.

## Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?

It's a fact of life that in the news media, more consolidation means less journalists. This is the way of the modern age. In America, the largest 25 companies in 2018 accounted for nearly one-third of all newspapers, up from 20 % since 2004. The philosophy of the purchasers of newspapers in Ireland, for example, is determined by expectations about return on investment. I worked for a profitable family-owned newspaper in the South East, founded in 1902. It was sold to a large media group in 2011 and in 2017, following cuts to staffing, it

folded overnight. Which brings me to the question of an independent public service media in Ireland. Trees have been felled defending it but for my tuppence worth an absence of independent media – whether it is print or broadcast – hinders the democratic choice, and what are we as a country and a people if we are not free to choose, if our choices are compromised because we are ill informed. The *raison d'être* behind public funding for public service media is not rocket science: serving the public interest, more important than ever in the era of social media, whose function is not the dissemination of the truth, as we saw with the assault by mobs on the US Capitol in January 2021. Here was a prime example of public service media broadcasting shedding light on a moment of hate kindled by social media, which operates to no regulatory framework and is - the antithesis of journalism - unaccountable. When a growing number of Trump officials resigned after the attack on the Capitol, the BBC commented that 'resigning in protest from a job that ends in less than two weeks is not much of a profile in courage.' That quality of analysis is always worth paying for.



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #412

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Cc:** [Protocol Division](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Future funding of Media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 10:45:14

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I am forwarding my email below as [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie) has an out of office suggesting I do so.

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday 8 January 2021 10:32  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie) <[info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)>  
**Subject:** Future funding of Media in Ireland

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland.

As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax (that is the TV license) to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming government "broadcast tax" designed to cover RTEs losses.

It's been suggested also, that failing print media should be supported with taxpayer's money.

I do not believe that the argument that 'fake news exists', can be an acceptable rationale for the tax payer forced to fund media outlets that cannot support themselves; and ones that do not adequately or in a balanced way, present the views held by many people in Ireland.

We are being forced to pay taxes toward programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our traditional values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs; and in particular the catholic religion, but not other faith based groups.

For example the failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally, especially in Nigeria.

The controversy continued with the New Years Eve skit on God raping and impregnating The Blessed Mother Mary. Initially RTE refused to take down the clip claiming this scandalous offence was acceptable to broadcast. This decision was made on the threadbare grounds that it's "satire and freedom of speech".

They prove themselves discriminatory, as all know that there is no earthly way RTE would attempt this with another religion ([REDACTED]).

Instead they select Catholicism for a public kicking.

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless, as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible.

In October RTE unveiled another unacceptable attack programme.

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland as you know has been funding the offensive 'Fantasy Island'; which is tries to be a funny adult cartoon.

At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest,

Fr. Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days.

He is evilly portrayed as the devil or a vampire, who curses, blasphemes, and tries to extort money;

Advertising "All sinners welcome for a fee" and he uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a sacred host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and the profane quip made that "it's Jesus". That the hosts are being used by the priest to manufacture and sell crisps using "a black magic catholic guilt trip spell".

In one closing scene the priest is shown cleaning a mountain of excrement.

In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest".

Pitched as a "project" it is funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the sacred Eucharist as "magic bread".

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice their faith, this does not exempt RTE or the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to "not deliberately provoke offence". It is clearly false.

It's an open question as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax.

Stop funding the BAI and review its membership.

Provide new oversight of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, to prevent them discriminatong against any one faith based group.

It cannot be allowed to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the deeply offensive skit,

Yours faithfully,



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Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

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1

Record #413

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Objection to use of taxpayers money to fund corrupt media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 10:42:31

---

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland.

As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax (that is the TV license) to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming government "broadcast tax" designed to cover RTEs losses.

It's been suggested also, that failing print media should be supported with taxpayer's money.

I do not believe that the argument that 'fake news exists', can be an acceptable rationale for the tax payer forced to fund media outlets that cannot support themselves; and ones that do not adequately or in a balanced way, present the views held by many people in Ireland.

We are being forced to pay taxes toward programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our traditional values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs; and in particular the catholic religion, but not other faith based groups.

For example the failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally, especially in Nigeria.

The controversy continued with the New Years Eve skit on God raping and impregnating The Blessed Mother Mary. Initially RTE refused to take down the clip claiming this scandalous offence was acceptable to broadcast. This decision was made on the threadbare grounds that it's "satire and freedom of speech".

They prove themselves discriminatory, as all know that there is no earthly way RTE would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

Instead they select Catholicism for a public kicking.

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless, as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible.

In October RTE unveiled another unacceptable attack programme.

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland as you know has been funding the offensive 'Fantasy Island'; which is tries to be a funny adult cartoon.

At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest,

Fr. Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days.

He is evily portrayed as the devil or a vampire, who curses, blasphemes, and tries to extort money;

Advertising "All sinners welcome for a fee" and he uses black magic in every episode "to

drag people back to Church”.

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a sacred host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and the profane quip made that "it's Jesus". That the hosts are being used by the priest to manufacture and sell crisps using "a black magic catholic guilt trip spell".

In one closing scene the priest is shown cleaning a mountain of excrement.

In another, the heroine Ciara says: “your cheating days are done, priest”.

Pitched as a "project" it is funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the sacred Eucharist as "magic bread".

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice their faith, this does not exempt RTE or the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to "not deliberately provoke offence". It is clearly false.

It's an open question as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidising them through a national tax.

Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. I do not wish for my taxes to be used to fund a corrupt media.

Please provide new oversight of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, to prevent them discriminating against any one faith based group.

It cannot be allowed to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the deeply offensive skit.

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

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[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #414

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 10:38:24

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To whom it may concern. It is my opinion that the media in Ireland is totally one sided. People generally wish to hear all sides of a story in particular pro life views and opinions and most definitely views on c 19. I would like to see scientists, doctors etc with opposing views given an opportunity to speak.

This definitely is not happening.

I and many many others do not watch RTE and all the newspapers are left on the shelves in the shops. Truth is a 'second class citizen' in my opinion.

There are so many gifted writers and journalists frozen out because they dare to speak their truth.

Many Irish people are waking up to this.

I very rarely 'complain' about things but I am certainly taking this opportunity to air what's on my mind.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Kind regards [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #415  
[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future funding of Media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 10:33:35

---

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland.

As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax (that is the TV license) to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming government "broadcast tax" designed to cover RTEs losses.

It's been suggested also, that failing print media should be supported with taxpayer's money.

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In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a sacred host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and the profane quip made that "it's Jesus". That the hosts are being used by the priest to manufacture and sell crisps using "a black magic catholic guilt trip spell".

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Stop funding the BAI and review its membership.

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It cannot be allowed to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the deeply offensive skit,

Yours faithfully,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

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Record #416

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Defund RTE  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 10:27:54

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland.

As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax (that is the TV license) to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming government "broadcast tax" designed to cover RTEs losses.

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We are being forced to pay taxes toward programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our traditional values as Christians / conservatives.

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For example the failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally, especially in Nigeria.

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They prove themselves discriminatory, as all know that there is no earthly way RTE would attempt this with another religion ([REDACTED]).

Instead they select Catholicism for a public kicking.

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Fr. Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days.

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Advertising "All sinners welcome for a fee" and he uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a sacred host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and the profane quip made that "it's Jesus". That the hosts are being used by the priest to manufacture and sell crisps using "a black magic catholic guilt trip spell".

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It's an open question as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So I propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax.

Stop funding the BAI and review its membership.

Provide new oversight of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, to prevent them discriminating against any one faith based group.

It cannot be allowed to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the deeply offensive skit,

Yours faithfully,

██████████

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #417  
[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission on funding of media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 10:24:14

---

Dear Sir / Madam

"This is the news..."

"This is the BBC..."

"This is RTE News..."

The above openings used to mean something.  
What we fund when pay taxes for a state broadcaster is to have something neutral, representative, reliable as a source for our news.

Over recent years, ironically at the same time as the licence fee has come under scrutiny, RTE has ceased to have that aura.

Rather than being the place to switch the dial for informed debate & reliable news somewhere between Newstalk's obvious leaning to the left & local radio's insular focus, RTE appears to have clear, sometimes interfering bias on divisive issues of all sorts - including elections & referendums - and has completely lost my trust as a go-to place for impartiality.

Sean Gallagher's treatment in a final live Presidential debate is a case in point. More recently, the 'God sketch' on New Year's Eve, especially the arrogance and disregard to keep the sketch on a taxpayer funded Player AFTER huge numbers had complained!

These are shocking abuses of position for political & anti-Catholic purposes that have no place on state funded programmes.

Having worked in advertising & TV for many years I now lecture occasionally on the area. My view is that taxpayers need and deserve a trusted, respectful state broadcaster more than ever.

The Covid pandemic illustrates that perfectly.

The passing of Gay Byrne, Marian Finucane & other 'gods' of the first golden 30 years of RTE show what RTE meant to people. News was news. Entertainment was Entertainment. Journalism was Journalism. And it generally worked very well at a high level.

So scrap any licence fee unless it gives us what it's for:

a) News that's reliable, intelligent, respectful.& unbiased.  
b) Broadcaster salaries that reflect the fact we are no longer in a golden era, where Communications graduates are ten-a-penny and frequently lacking in wisdom, nuance or pretence-of-impartiality...for every Keelin Stanley there's a thousand homogenous, 'so-so' people on air.

The highest salaries of RTE broadcasters is a hot topic because it's universally derided & grates with the public; the optics are terrible and the amounts paid are obscene and insulting in an era where RTE no longer commands the aura of an appropriate broadcaster.

c) a state broadcaster that competes fairly rather than being propped up with advertising to steamroll independent and local competitors. Hats off to TV3, Newstalk and especially local media for competing so well in the face of this grossly unfair funding model.

If RTE cannot merit the licence fee by being respectful in its content and salary structure then I don't believe there should be one.

But as it stands now, I believe the licence fee should be divided by an independent body

between all media according to performance & behaviour criteria.

Kind Regards



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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #418

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 10:22:43

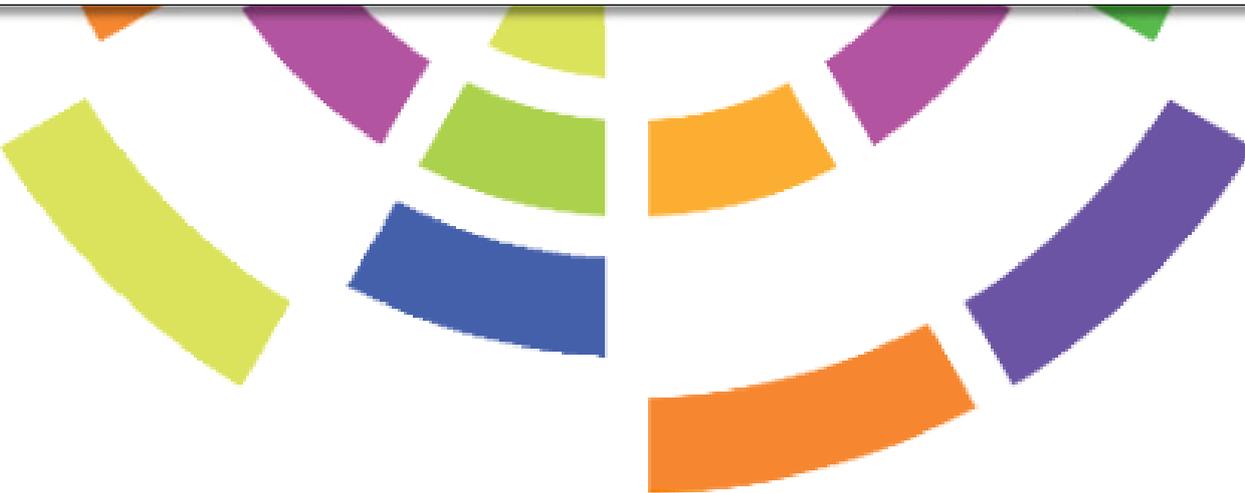
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To whom it may concern. It is with total shock, sadness and disbelief that I witnessed the programme on NY eve. What a blasphemous presentation. I object strongly to this unacceptable production. [REDACTED].



Record #420

Helen McDonald



**From:** [Helen McDonald](#)  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of Media Commission public consultation submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 10:19:35

---

To whom it may concern,

I would like to see more coverage of climate change and biodiversity loss at a local, national and global level.

Including:

On trend, engaging and interesting education articles and or investigations around recycling facilities, capacities and practises in Ireland and how this fits into a global context. Also, how we can improve our recycling practises to stop the contamination of recycling facilities. Education pieces of plastic and how to go about a zero waste approach to consumption.

Coverage of habitat loss and destruction on the island of Ireland and how this affects our eco systems and in turn ourselves and our future.

To counter this the projects, activism and work of the many organisations and in particular student groups working to combat the negative impacts of climate and change in a balanced and fair context.

The impacts of global corporations and how this fits into an Irish context. Tax havens etc. How climate change affects developing nations more than in the "West" and how Ireland's emissions and activities contributing to climate degradation fit into this picture.

Finally, the controversial nature of hare coursing and how protected animals are used in this cruel and damaging "sport".

Thank you for the opportunity to give my opinion.

Helen McDonald.

I give my permission for my name and submission to be made public.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #421

[REDACTED]



From [REDACTED]  
To info@futureofmediacommission.ie  
<info@futureofmediacommission.ie>  
Date 2021-01-08 10:08



67% 22:01



"Hi,

*I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut from any means possible.*

*Freedom of expressing any point of view have to respected.*

*If you don't agree with what other people say, it ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling.*

*A free society is build strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP.*

*The people is smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them.*

*Freedom has to be the Centre of a society. Otherwise everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling.*

*Free speech, freedom, liberty.*

*Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those*

*pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble.*

*And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not.*

*So, start acting like a civil reasonable person and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view."*

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

[REDACTED]  
Record #422  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Re Future of Radio  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 10:05:06

---

Dear Friends,

I hope Radio Maria Ireland gets a full licence to broadcast this year,

please God

sincerely,

Paul

ps I think honesty is important in the media

and as St paul says

"speak the truth in kindness"

--

[REDACTED]



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Record #423



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of Media Funding in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 10:03:48

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8 January 2021

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point. The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED].

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemers, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

1

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Record #424

From: [REDACTED]  
To: [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
Subject: Fwd: New Year's Eve "Comedy" sketch  
Date: Friday 8 January 2021 09:54:48

---

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]  
Date: Thu, 7 Jan 2021 at 23:10  
Subject: New Year's Eve 'Comedy' sketch  
To: <[info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)>

*Dear Sir/Madam*

*As a taxpayer, I am tired of being obliged to fund RTE's blatantly anti Catholic offerings. I cite the latest aforementioned sketch in particular. There is not a hope in the world, that you would get away with such treatment of the faith of Muslims or Jews, many of whom now reside in our country. As a minority, they must be protected- say the politically correct. But all faiths must be respected not some of a select minority.*

*Why should I or any other Catholic pay you to be insulted, sometimes on a daily basis? I refer to other 'shows' such as 'Fantasy Island'. The latter is clearly designed to offend and denigrate the faith of a large number of Irish people. It also preaches lies, affecting the views of all citizens, particularly the young who have had to endure RTE's steady drip drip effect all their young lives. They have been deprived of the true facts of Catholicism. Precious little time is allocated to balanced programmes on the Catholic faith.*

*We hear little of the hospitals, homes and schools set up for the poor by religious orders. If mentioned at all, they are portrayed as backward, antideluvian and a bad influence on our lives. Remember, the State did not provide these institutions.*

*Many false myths surrounding the Tuam Babies Home are still being circulated, despite efforts of a local man in Tuam to address the true situation. Perhaps you are beginning to understand why a new Media platform has been set up. Yes, it is called Gript-if you have not already heard. They will tell the truth, palatable or otherwise. Theyb are already gaining significant public attention.*

*Where are your 'in house' creative geniuses? You must be 'hard up' for genuine and well thought out ideas for entertainment Taking cheap and easy mindless shots at Catholicism is lazy journalism, and you know it..*

*Over the years I have listened to 'debates' on RTE. Well, these were 'debates like no others' I have even heard! You see, a debate in RTE (when a contentious issue is on the agenda) means one person for the (conservative) motion and three against, plus one biased chairman, usually [REDACTED] as it often was at the time.*

*We need a BAI that actually works. We can do without lip service organisations. First the BAI needs to be disbanded and reorganised with new members who have to be accountable to an outside body without an agenda-if this indeed is possible.*

*Yours Sincerely*



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Record #425

Margaret Hickey



From: [REDACTED]  
To: [info@raluandofmedia.commission.ie](mailto:info@raluandofmedia.commission.ie)  
Subject: protest at RTE and BAI bias in programme making. The illegitimacy of any public funding to RTE  
Date: Friday 8 January 2021 09:38:34

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## The 'NYE Countdown' apology from RTE is a 'sham'

Posted by [Margaret Hickey](#) | Jan 3, 2021 | [Comment Ireland](#)

The 'NYE Countdown' apology from RTE is a 'sham'



**According to an RTE puff piece about its adult, animated satire series, Fantasy Ireland, we Irish 'can laugh at ourselves' and poke fun at 'our sacred cows'. 'No topic is off limits'.** Yeah, right as we are wont to say down in Cork. The only thing that is the stuff of fantasy here is the jaw dropping delusion and self-congratulation of RTE. One thing that is not fantasy however is the hard cash that the government expropriates from its citizens for productions like Fantasy Ireland. Its targets are stereotypes from Old Ireland like the grasping, authoritarian priest, Fr Murphy, its main villain and his retinue of 'Shams'. Now if RTE had run this series back in the day when the Irish Church was in its pomp and in need of a check or two from the pens of satirists, this effort could at least claim to legitimately target 'sacred cows'.

Today's 'sacred cows' are decidedly secular. Like cows of all breeds, they tend to herd. These days you find them grazing in large, separate bunches on the fat uplands of taxpayers' largesse. They are known as expert advisory groups, NGOs of every stripe that cross the leftyliberal spectrum. They proliferate, overlapping each other in all kinds of fascinating ways. They get money from central government and local government and money circulates between them as well as they continue to viralise and mutate. It's a merry go round of public money to fund, and arguably fabricate, fashionable causes. the perfect stuff of satire one might think. But like the Church in days of old, they are ring-fenced by virtuous mission statements. Real satire is relevant and topical and it requires courage and, in RTE's case, biting the hand that feeds it. Much easier to go after safer targets especially when they are decidedly out of favour with Official Ireland.

The latest, tasteless and crass skit on the mystery at the core of Christian belief, the Incarnation, on New Year's Eve Countdown show, should not become a distraction from the core issues with RTE, notably its systemic ideological buy-in and our obligation to extravagantly fund it. Frankly, I don't give a toss who RTE ridicules or what they consider

worthy of air time or who they chose to invite onto discussion panels. If there is a market for their brand of comment and entertainment then let their market pay for it. I consider it a fundamental violation of my rights to be forced to stump up for what I consider mediocrity, banality and the sheer brain numbing drivel of much hyped offerings from Fantasy Ireland to Normal People to NYE Countdown. Sure there is some good investigative journalism from time to time like the exposés about abuse in nursing homes and creches. However, I can access such content on other media outlets as well. And there is simply not nearly enough good content to justify a 160euro licence for many of us.

I can see the objection coming. We need professional, informed and objective coverage of important national news stories, something only public broadcasting can be trusted to provide. We may need it indeed but we won't get it because it does not exist. Bias is in our DNA. We see things according to our experience, our values, our cultural milieu. We also see things according to whether we accept or reject the prevailing zeitgeist. Commercial considerations, and RTE depends on advertising too, adds its own dollop of bias to the mix. Very often in history the dissenters were a fringe who would ultimately be absorbed or otherwise quelled by the emerging hegemony of opinion. That is not how it is now. The divisions convulsing the democratically constituted world today are much more evenly balanced. Those who have managed to take control of the levers of power will be hard put to keep their course when half the ship is mutinous and increasingly militant. The less they accommodate dissenting voices, the fiercer the push back.

There is no point in pretending that the bias gene can be eliminated. Even in academic research there is a very frank acknowledgement that bias plays a part and that scholarship cannot be neutral, either ideologically or otherwise. One might accept that to be true in the field of social and liberal studies but no less a person than biologist Richard Dawkins assures us that even in the sphere of medical research, 'the subjective bias of the experimenter' is a very real factor that needs to be neutralised by 'perfected safeguards' and 'double blind control tests'.

When it comes to selecting news stories, choosing which ones need in-depth discussion, lining up a panel and the questions they will be asked, there are as yet no anti-bias safeguards, perfected or otherwise. If Micheal Martin, who wants to ensure quality journalism is supported in both broadcasting and print media, has any ideas, he has yet to share them. He says that journalism is under threat from many 'forces' but it is clear that it is the dominance of social media and its dissemination of 'fake news' that concerns him. Incidentally, it is social media not RTE who is showing the disturbing unrest in Blanchardstown following the killing of a knife wielding assailant by Gardai. Apparently, there is nothing 'fake' about filtering and curating such news stories for Micheal Martin because it protects the government from uncomfortable questions. It does not appear to occur to the Taoiseach that the lack of support for Irish journalism, whether of the print or broadcast variety, has a lot more to do with its perceived agenda pursuing bias and its dismal mediocrity?

I and others on this platform have already listed instance after instance of RTE bias so I will reference only one here because of the cavalier attitude to public money it displays. The story of the sacking of Kevin Myers, a journalist who by anyone's reckoning is 'independent', from the Sunday Times led RTE's news bulletins for a full 24 hours, giving enough scope to one of their broadcasters to defame the vilified journalist. When RTE recklessly gambled public money defending and losing the ensuing case brought by Myers, the apology which was a condition of the very considerable settlement, was buried inside a single news bulletin at 8.50am on a Friday morning. If Michael Martin doesn't think that is good journalism and good ethics he has yet to say so. If he thinks it was not what the licence fee was intended for, he has yet to say so. By contrast and significantly, RTE has little or nothing to say about the jailing of young Chinese journalist, Zhang Zhan, for exposing the scale of covid in Wuhan. Who decided this is not a story of interest especially at this time? Cui bono?

Martin's proposal to share the licence fee with private news platforms might sound reassuring. I am not okay paying a licence fee that predominantly benefits content I consider ill-informed, poorly researched and biased. I would prefer to choose my own outlets for news and comment. It would cost me far less. And I don't want the matter of who gets what decided by a so-called Citizens' Assembly. Democracy is imperfect but an elected assembly like Dail Eireann with all its limitations comes closer to the ideal of 'government of the people, by the people' than a random assembly who have never stood for any public office and are led by selected experts to largely pre-set conclusions that are then foisted on the rest of us, not as government diktat, needless to say, but as something we actually came up with ourselves. Infantilizing and marginalizing us under cover of staged, show-cased consultation. And we pay for the 'sham' into the bargain.

And the most fantastical thing of all about 'Fantasy Ireland' is that the BAI part funds it. The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland who adjudicate complaints and, on very rare occasions, issue admonishments. Real Ireland is stranger than any fantasy.

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Record #426

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Funding of Media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 09:31:26

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

- RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.
- The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED].
- The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.
- The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".
- In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.
- The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.
- While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #427  
[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** No  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 08:51:07

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Hi,

*I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut by any means possible. Freedom of expressing any point of view have to respected. If you don't agree with what other people say, it ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling. A free society is build strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP. The people is smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them. Freedom must be the Centre of a society. Otherwise, everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling. Free speech, freedom, liberty. Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble. And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not. So, start acting like civil reasonable persons and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view*

[REDACTED]

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[Redacted]

Record #428

[Redacted]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 07:30:12

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A Chara,

Strongly suggest that the media in Ireland concentrates regularly and often on:

- The attitude of walking blinkered down the liberal road of change, without proper examination of the ensuing consequences and without giving equal voice to all community opinions,
- Our pride in our culture and traditions, not just merely the very correct examination of our sport, dance, literature etc., but to promote a genuine respect for the marvellous generations that preceded us in a balanced manner and include the extremely positive contribution of education, church, community organisations etc. and the very real positively effective values underpinning their actions.
- Always be aware of the unfair trap of judging the past by today's rules and values,
- View our modern development and progress in its big picture reality and honestly examine the facts of crime, lack of trust, drug/alcohol abuse, teenage abortion, crime etc. in its context of direct comparison and contrast to the values of former generations,
- To expose the prevalence of verbal, emotional, psychological abuse equally with physical, sexual abuse,
- while continuing to campaign on the solution for women's issues to also give equal coverage to men's issues such as men's health issues, workplace injuries and deaths, false rape allegations, child custody, misandry, lack of paternal choice etc. And see the above as not anti woman, but as issues which uniquely or disproportionately affect men,
- to not fall into the trap of over correction of social, educational, workplace etc. issues, thus denying the rights of many sections of society.
- Mainly media should be driven by a respect for Human Rights, Civil Rights, Equality and Rule of Law.



Record #429



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 06:03:35

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1. The government should support public service media by using TV licence funding equally across all public providers.
2. It clearly shows that RTE is biased in its broadcasting as certain journalists are members of political parties or have very close family ties to them or they go on to work for these parties. Thus, a public declaration should be signed by these journalists about their political affiliations.
3. Eradicate the TV licence funding and collect a small fee from the cable providers.
4. All journalists should be fluent in Irish. There should be dedicated time on Public service media for Irish lessons for all levels.
5. Be more transparent. Get all sides to a story and stop following the government line.
6. Listen to the people.
7. Once your report is complete. It should also be sent to the 'Citizens Forum'.
8. Put it to the people by way of referendum. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-43278646>
9. Funding: Pay per view for certain documentaries etc.
10. More independence on Media boards.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #430

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED] Loy  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** RTE Funding  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 05:24:11

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Stop funding RTE's programs which denigrate the religious beliefs of Christians. The Irish Republic came into being as result of the Christian beliefs and practices of Christianity and the worship of God most high.

Why is it found necessary to make fun of God and His representatives in our country which was once hailed as the land of Saints and Scholars, I believe if this type of behaviour does not cease and desist, God Himself will bring down upon our heads a suitable and just punishment with such finality this country shall never recover from. I further wish you to understand that whilst I am not a very religious person, I hold God and the sacrifice of His Son Jesus for us all, I hold the greatest of respect for Our Creator and would advise you to do the same by stopping funding to programs which hold people's freedom's and religious beliefs with such disdain that it seems to me to border upon hatred of Christian beliefs. Please stop allowing God to be mocked.

Yours sincerely [REDACTED]

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Record #431

**From:** |  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Closing date for submissions to the media commission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 01:45:21

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Dear members of the Commission.

I only heard tonight of this particular Commission via a friend's forwarded message on What's App. So I wonder how well the notification requesting public submissions was circulated.

In view of the National emergency that has preoccupied the Nation I consider that it is not in the Public's interest to continue with the closing date of January 8th, today.

The focus of the general population is survival in the face of a life threatening Pandemic in this time.

I do not consider that it is in our national interest to rush through changes to media operations without a substantial input from citizens of this country. There should be a submission percentage set and if you don't get this percentage your deliberations should be postponed until the time when there is a public appetite for participation.

I say this particularly in light of the historic, sabre rattling, abusive, degenerative, discriminatory, vitriolic, ruthless attempts to destroy the Christian faith in this country.

Yes we have had clerical abuse but the reporting is too heavily weighted on negative events of religious orders. There is no acknowledgement of the rich legacy of their selfless medical and educational care they gave to Irish people and those in the developing countries.

I note you have a new member from the Tuam area. I myself wonder why the little babies are not being exhumed and given a proper burial.

Why is there a delay?

Is it because there has been false reporting about this sad affair.?

As someone in my early 60s I've lived with the good and the bad regarding Religious orders. I've had my own personal sorrow in relation to a relative and mother and baby home.

I have nursed with religious and non religious and I can tell you the meanness of human nature is most certainly to be found right across the spectrum of humanity.

Therefore it sickens me to read or hear journalists who are barely out of nappies, who look through the prism of history through the rose tinted glasses of vicarious experience via their selective history education, who have been named the snowflakes of society, denigrate and deconstruct an entire historical part of our history when there was no social policy and no social welfare and when religious orders provided the only welfare to the many in need.

Look at what happened to the Archbishop in Australia. How he was hounded, ridiculed, with his character being assassinated by priest haters in the media. Having nursed in Melbourne I was shocked to my core at the absolute hatred of this man for no good reason only that he was a Catholic bishop.

Unbelievably his good name was cleared because thanks be to God the truth came out.

Ireland is going down the same road with an attitude that lies etc don't matter if you have a popular agenda to pull down a section of society that the media have made popular to hate. It is another form of hate culture. Professional ethics don't seem to apply.

I don't agree with everything that the Catholic Church holds in its dogma and have felt offended by some of its language

Only recently I shot off an email to a particular parish where I had listened to 2 priests read Bible passages describing women as barren and where one priest added his own happiness worth by introducing the word sterile. In an era where infertility is on the rise and not just with women.

So I don't hold anyone up on a pedestal. However what has been happening in the media is

the slow erosion of a belief system that has comforted so many in their hour of crisis. I and my nurse colleagues are saddened and angered by what is happening. We are the ones who accompany those who are on their final journey. We have witnessed the value of having a belief system whether it be Christian or Buddhist etc

Why destroy our historic belief system that for all its failings has carried us through centuries of suppression, domination, war, famine etc

I'm writing this late at night so please forgive my ramblings.

My main point is that I think the closing date for submissions should be extended.

When people are in crisis mode writing or even considering putting in a submission about the media is not high on their priority list. However the recent outcry at the distasteful so called satiric sketch as delivered by a historically well reputed Journalist and news reader shows that we the Irish citizens will not stand idly by and be insulted and denigrated for what we hold dear.

I know your focus will be on many issues such as funding I.e TV licenses or taxes. If a tax is to be brought in then our media needs to be accountable to the citizens of this country.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Record #432

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 01:38:53

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point. The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #433  
[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** My Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 01:24:30

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Good evening.

I wish to submit two points:

1. I personally object to the strong anti-Israeli bias of the Irish media -  
For instance, a terrorist attack in Israel is reported along the lines of “Israeli soldiers killed two Palestinians...”,  
Rather than “Following an attack on Israeli civilians ( or soldiers) by two Palestinians, in which the Israelis were killed, (or severely injured), Israeli soldiers responded and the attackers were killed”.

Or - “Following the discovery of a ‘terror tunnel’ being constructed under Israeli territory/Israeli city of ..... , which had the purpose of attacking Israeli civilians/soldiers, two Palestinians were killed as Israeli soldiers defended/protected the community”.

The reporting bias always is on Israelis as the aggressors, rather than the actual situation - the aim of Hamas is to eliminate the state of Israel -  
“From the River to the sea” means eliminating all the Jews.

Having lived and worked in Israel, and being of Jewish descent, I strongly object to such bias in reporting.

2. As a retired General Practitioner here in Ireland, I feel that the media emphasis is against the Foetus in the reporting of the question of abortion.  
The suffering of the foetus is not given emphasis, especially in late abortion.  
The foetus has a nervous system, therefore feels pain.  
Why should there be a difference in attitude between humans before and after birth?  
When I was a Non-consultant Hospital Doctor, I assisted in many births, and I can assure you that foetuses are much more than cell collections, they are human beings and they feel pain like any of us.  
Such taking of life should not be sanitized, for whatever reason.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #434

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 01:11:05

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To whom it may concern,

I have probably left this too late. I'm not sure whether or not there is a template for this submission for which I am meant to email. But considering the submission is due tomorrow, I will just jot down a few points in the hope that you might consider accepting them in lieu of aforementioned.

It's been obvious to me for a very long time that RTE is simply incapable of reporting news in a balanced way. All news is filtered through a progressive, anti Christian lens to such a degree that one can only regard it as politically relevant disinformation.

I'm not in position to talk about some of the execrable programmes , cheap, vulgar and profane, that the public is served on a daily bases; I haven't watched the channel for many years now. But I'm reliably informed that one in particular, Fantasy Island, is grossly offensive to those of us still professing the Catholic faith.

I truly resent having to support, by my taxes, a public service broadcaster in which I have trust and who, as far as I'm concerned, has nothing but disrespect for the religion and culture I hold dear. I believe that the best interests of the Irish people would be served by defunding RTE.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #435

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future funding of media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 01:09:36

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I write regarding the future funding of media in Ireland.

I believe that the TV license is to be expanded into a broadcast tax to cover RTÉ's losses. Further Michaél Martin and others have suggested that declining print media should be supported with tax payers money.

Media has reached a low nadir and is very unbalanced.

Presently we pay the licence fee (tax) towards programs that deliberately mock our Christian beliefs.

The Late Late show has mocked the sacrament of confession and had guests referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

Prime Time defamed Fr. Kevin Reynolds alleging that he had sexually abused a teenage girl in Kenya in 1982, fathered a child by her and abandoned the child. False claims repeated on Morning Ireland. RTÉ - "the truth matters" ?

RTÉ (deliberately?) ignores the persecution of Christians worldwide. Where is truth hidden ?

The belatedly improved apology from RTÉ regarding the controversy over the New Year's Eve clip on God raping the Virgin Mary is yet another example. This disrespect is not meted to other religions.

The BAI is similarly biased against Catholicism so as to make confidence in the complaints system meaningless.

It funds 'Fantasy Island' an apparently "humorous" adult cartoon. It is stated at the start of each episode that an evil priest is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as a vampire, blaspheming, cursing, trying to extort money. How humorous .... how brave .... and funded by the impartial BAI.

How does the BAI adjudicate on religious insensitivity when it behaves similarly ?

RTÉ and the BAI should adhere to their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence.

Rather than subsidising the media through a national tax it should actually be defunded and let the outlets stand on their own merits.

Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #436  
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]  
To: [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
Date: Friday 8 January 2021 00:47:45

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Dear all

----- Forwarded message -----

Date for submissions on the Future of Media in Ireland is TOMORROW Friday 8th January.

You can email your submission to [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie).

Below and attached is a letter which you can either cut and paste and send signing your own name at the bottom or you can use as a template to write your own letter.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED].

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under

the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

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Record #437

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of Media Commission submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 00:45:54

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

- RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.
- The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED].
- The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.
- The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".
- In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.
- The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.
- While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It

cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

A solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #438

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** The the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland - future funding of media in Ireland.  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 00:34:19

---

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland.

As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax (that is the TV license) to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming government "broadcast tax" designed to cover RTEs losses.

It's been suggested also, that failing print media should be supported with taxpayer's money.

I do not believe that the argument that 'fake news exists', can be an acceptable rationale for the tax payer forced to fund media outlets that cannot support themselves; and ones that do not adequately or in a balanced way, present the views held by many people in Ireland.

We are being forced to pay taxes toward programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our traditional values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs; and in particular the catholic religion, but not other faith based groups.

For example the failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally, especially in Nigeria.

The controversy continued with the New Years Eve skit on God raping and impregnating The Blessed Mother Mary. Initially RTE refused to take down the clip claiming this scandalous offence was acceptable to broadcast. This decision was made on the threadbare grounds that it's "satire and freedom of speech".

They prove themselves discriminatory, as all know that there is no earthly way RTE would attempt this with [REDACTED].

Instead they select Catholicism for a public kicking.

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless, as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible.

In October RTE unveiled another unacceptable attack programme.

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland as you know has been funding the offensive 'Fantasy Island'; which is tries to be a funny adult cartoon.

At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest,

Fr. Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days.

He is evilly portrayed as the devil or a vampire, who curses, blasphemes, and tries to extort money;

Advertising "All sinners welcome for a fee" and he uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a sacred host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and the profane quip made that "it's Jesus". That the hosts are being used by the priest to manufacture and sell crisps using "a black magic catholic guilt trip spell".

In one closing scene the priest is shown cleaning a mountain of excrement.

In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest".

Pitched as a "project" it is funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the sacred Eucharist as "magic bread".

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice their faith, this does not exempt RTE or the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to "not deliberately provoke offence". It is clearly false.

It's an open question as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax.

Stop funding the BAI and review its membership.

Provide new oversight of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, to prevent them discriminatong against any one faith based group.

It cannot be allowed to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the deeply offensive skit,

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #439

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future Funding of Media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 00:25:32

---

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is now the TV license, to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax which is designed to cover RTE's losses.

It's been suggested also that failing print media could be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payers funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs, and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria which may be at risk of genocide, is another case in point.

The controversy has continued over the outrageous skit on God raping and impregnating Our Lady, in part due to the stubborn refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's just satire and an expression of freedom of speech.

This despite everyone knowing, that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

Furthermore, the mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear useless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against Catholic beliefs in particular, as to make confidence in the system impossible and any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know, has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell to trick people back to Church.

In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". All pitched as a project to and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, plenty of people still do. In any case, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation if not one of the anti discrimination grounds.

So we propose defunding of biased individual media outlets (rather than our subsidizing them through a national household tax) that happily break their own regulations and I would say, the law, as long as its about Christians and Catholics in particular.

If you the Commission on the future of the media, propose to advise further funding to RTE and similar outlets then you are furthering the discriminatory practices outlined above. Please stop funding RTE or other media outlets through a coercive license or tax which guarantees a conflict of interest in journalistic independence when the government of the day part pays journalists' salaries. Enough journalists have joined government ranks as it is. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI (and in turn of RTE) so as to not engage in discrimination against just one faith based group. The BAI cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #440  
[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 00:09:56

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Hello,

My main concerns with public service media are as follows:

That conservative voices are respected and fairly represented, in a time when media seems largely to favour liberal minded and leftist world views and belief systems.

That my Catholic beliefs are respected, and on panel shows, other media etc. that well-informed non-dissident, non-controversial Catholic voices provide the Catholic input, and are given fair time and space.

That journalism is truly fair and free of spin or bias. That it be less 'tabloid' and sensationalist, and more factual and well-researched. Good reporting over populist sound bytes.

To avoid a group think mentality that would, for example, assume that a liberal worldview is held by all. To understand that many hold, for example, abortion, homosexual acts, contraception, extra-marital sex, etc, to be wrong, and to have that worldview respected.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide feedback.

Regards and God bless,

[REDACTED]

Sent using the free mail.com iPhone App

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #442

[REDACTED]



Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTE's losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers' money. I do not believe either that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid-air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #443  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** With this email I make my humble submission to "The Future of Journalism Commission".  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 19:39:32

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Hello,

With this email I make my humble submission to "The Future of Media Commission".

My main plea is that RTE news/current affairs staff show due respect to the Irish people in authority that they interview, chase the truth first, forget about the "trophy hunt" the latter might be good for ratings, but not necessarily good journalism.

I speak in respect of RTE only because this media organisation is funded by the tax payer and therefore should hold to a different standard than an organisation based only on viewer/listener numbers.

Can I pose the following questions, and I will give my opinion. This is my humble and best is my best effort to get my view across in this submission.

Please assume I am speaking of both RTE TV and Radio unless I state different, also I speak only in respect of what I class as news/current affairs programmes, unless stated different

1. Why are so many of the interviewers very antagonistic towards our elected representatives (particularly government politicians) and experts (e.g. NPHE members)?  
TMD view - See examples below, generally RTE interviewers seems hell bent on, a) getting a "story" even if the truth gets in the way (e.g. nobody can choose perfect response to this virus - fact, yet interviewers hunt for someone to blame), b) not letting the interviewee have the last word, c) showing that they will not be outplayed in a battle of the debaters, d) getting some admission/promise or soundbite that is later trotted out for the purpose of criticising government past, present or future.

A due respect at the core of an interview would allow robust and unflinching interview without descent to badgering and just plain bad manners.

I believe RTE choose this type of interviewer to anchor shows as a matter of some policy or habit, I suppose an overall chase for ratings above all else - my view

2. Why do RTE claim (in recent enough ad campaign) to have news output you can trust, when they don't even define what are their news programmes.

TMD view - If RTE claim to be unbiased and trustworthy news source, they should also state clearly which programmes they refer to, and none of these programmes should contain input from texters or messagers to programmes, the latter being exactly what RTE claim to be above. They are media, please hold them to account on this point.

3. Why do RTE follow the gutter press lead in reporting harrowing or deeply personal material as a matter of course.

TMD view - Take the case of a girl raped and killed in the east of the country by two young boys, the memory of that girl was likewise violated every time the intricate detail of the attack on her was reported, while of course naming her, and not the perpetrators - sickening to the core, what is the point? Public interest? I do not want to contribute anything to an organisation that is so so callous. There are numerous examples of similar murder, rape, sexual assault crimes where the reporting goes into a level of detail that would fit perfectly within UK red top newspapers, we are not the UK, we are Ireland, and our standards in terms of the care for people's feelings is much higher

There are good examples every day unfortunately of bad mannered and self serving

journalism, Katie Hannon interviewing Professor Phillip Nolan on Sat 2nd Jan on Radio 1, Phillip Boucher Hayes interviewing Minister Charlie McConalogue on New year's Eve, Claire Byrne interviewing Leo Varadkar on RTE TV after second upsurge in virus number first question about how angry everyone will be, all these interview examples show smart able journalists who are first trying to blame, blame, blame and interrupt interrupt interrupt all the while missing the point that most citizens and their dogs know - people can stop the spreading of this disease, the virus is the enemy, not the politicians and medics, the latter are not criminals who are up to no good - due respect at the very least sadly missing.

I want to praise RTE in coverage of many topics. My submission is to ask RTE to make clear what is their news output and to keep the standard of that above ratings and sensation chasing journalism.

Thanks and kind regards

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #444  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission.  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 19:43:31

---

Dear sirs,

1. Programming is continually attacking the church on the past. Don't blame the children for the sins of the past.

The church now is always under attack this was and is an agenda to promote abortion at 9 months.

To promote euthanasia as a normal solution.

To promote the individual rather than care of society.

[REDACTED]

The media should get rid of moany [REDACTED]  
And put some uplifting news stories.

There are some good documentaries ,  
Financial programmes needed to show the scams and good practice.

There's no investigation on the performance of the health system.  
Examples.

How many people have had the virus and recovered.

What is the success rate of people on ventilators ?

In a London hospital 60 patients on ventilator only one recovered..

Yes we do not want fake news.

We want a media to investigate real stories , not golf gate false.

Why is complimentary medicine not used in Ireland? Because consultants don't want it.  
Example. The herb milk thistle is known to help the liver but it is not used in the liver hospital.

Echinacea was used to treat TB but it's not being promoted to fight the virus even though it's available in every chemist shops.

We expect the media to hold up society and Government standards but it must raise and hold its own standards.

Thanks,

Regards

[REDACTED].

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Record #446



From: [REDACTED]  
To: [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
Date: Thursday 7 January 2021 19:54:42

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is now the TV license, to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax which is designed to cover RTE's losses.

It's been suggested also that failing print media could be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payers funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria which may be at risk of genocide is another case in point.

The controversy has continued over the outrageous skit on God raping and impregnating Our Lady, in part due to the stubborn refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's just satire and an expression of freedom of speech.

This despite everyone knowing, that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

Furthermore, the mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear useless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs in particular, as to make confidence in the system impossible and any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know, has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell to trick people back to Church.

In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". All pitched as a project to and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults do not practice, plenty of people still do. In any case, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation if not one of the anti discrimination grounds.

So we propose defunding of biased individual media outlets ( rather than our subsidizing them through a national household tax ) that happily break their own regulations and I would say, the law, as long as its about Christians and Catholics in particular.

If you the Commission on the future of the media, propose to advise further funding to RTE and similar outlets then you are furthering the discriminatory practices outlined above. Stop funding RTE or other media outlets through a coercive license or tax which guarantees a conflict of interest in journalistic independence when the government of the day part pays journalists' salaries. Enough journalists have joined government ranks as it is. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI (and in turn of RTE) so as to not engage in discrimination against just one faith based group. The BAI cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

██████████.

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[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #447

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** How might public service media better respond to the needs and expectations of the public?  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 19:59:38

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To whom it may concern,

It is my belief that there is a large segment of the public who are dis-enfranchised in the current public media broadcasting outlets e.g. RTE

RTE at present is catering for those who are Left of Centre and Liberal in their outlook. It is my belief that they are very wary of the Government because it is the paymaster of RTE.

If you come from a conservative background and have any religious leanings you will not get a job in RTE as an interviewer or have your views adequately discussed in RTE. The Conservative Party in England are also looking at the BBC because they are more on the Left in their reporting, content and interviewing of individuals on BBC Radio4.

Can I give an example:

Sadly there were a couple of female broadcasters who passed away recently. Both were very good broadcasters. They were described as having a Feminist background. Now to me that means they were on the Left of Centre. I have no problem with that for balance I have not seen or heard from any female Broadcaster who says she is a Non- Feminist or is on the Right of Centre in her viewpoints. Would she get a job in RTE if she /he openly advertised these views? I doubt it.

I am paraphrasing here for Ryan Turbridy interview on RTE with Mary Robinson in Dec 2020

He opened the interview by saying to Mary Robinson in effect that wasn't it great that we have the two Referendums on Same-Sex Marriage and Repeal the Eight passed ?

I was one of the 700,000 people who pay their license fee and who was against these Referendums. He is entitled to his view. My point is would any current interviewer in RTE say that they disagree with these Referendums being passed.... and still hold on to their jobs.

The point I am trying to make here is that there is no visibility of any Interviewer having a so- called Right or Right of centre viewpoint.

RTE is being diverse as regards Race and Gender which is a good thing but is DEFINITELY NOT diverse when it comes to having employees from a non-liberal, Left point of view.

Another current example is the Waterford Whispers New Year's Eve program which in effect depicted God as a Rapist ?

Now how could anyone on an Editorial team allow such a sketch to be broadcasted on the major station on RTE without someone raising a flag that this could be offensive to a lot of people with a religious belief. What it points to me is there are very few if any people who take religious beliefs seriously when it comes to programming in RTE from the top down.

Yours,

[REDACTED]

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Record #448

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Catholics and the Church of Jesus Christ.  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 20:01:04

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Hi my name is [REDACTED] practicing Catholic..

## Journalism Truth

What I find wrong with journalism today is that it seems they work on the narrative, belief, propaganda:- gulty until proven innocent, one way journalism without balance. RTE and their political programs including newspapers like the Irish Times, have fostered all the above mentioned.

I am a Catholic and going forward before commenting on any Catholic/Church subject whether presenter or journalist, I would like to see the following criteria introduced by answering the following questions

1. What is the Church in their opinion?
2. Who do people adore when they go to Church?
3. Who created the Church?
4. What are the Sacraments of the Church and their significant meaning
5. Are you a believer and practicing Catholic?
6. Do you know the love of God?
7. Do you believe in God?
8. Do you stand by the Pope and his guidance by the Holy Spirit from God?
9. Why should I pay my TV licence? I dont like the Irish Times so dont buy their papers or support their facebook page, so why should I buy an RTE TV licence for slander against Catholics, their beliefs, their foundations? National broadcaster you have proven not to be.

If people/journalists/TV presenters/programs are unable to answer the following, then they have no right to comment on the subject of Church, religion, their belief and what they stand for. Afterall that would be like asking a white person what its like to be black. This is the problem with our media today, selling their own propaganda without knowing the actual facts and creating hate and division. Give balance and let people make up their own mind, one for, one against, a debate with respect.

This is all I want to say and hope you will reflect on the above questions.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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Record #449

Dear Sir or Madam,

This pre typed letter explains fully how I feel regarding RTE and the existing media outlets.

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

████████████████████  
████████████████████

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #450  
[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:Info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 20:07:44

---

Dear Sir/madam

As the future of media is the topic I feel it links with the future of generations as such is our children. I have seen in recent years that the content of advertising, news items and advertised shows have definitely infringed on children's right of a carefree and innocent childhood that every child should have a right to. Most ads, news items and advertised adult shows which are on in the mornings and day time tv and radio carry a lot of sexual, violence and innuendo can you imagine a child listening to all of this day in day out. Smoking became illegal because of its bad passive effect on others in the same way children are passively soaking in parent and guardians bad media content that is damaging their outlook on life in a very negative way. We don't need every detail of sexual assaults on the news nor do we need shows that have adult humor shown during the day and violent crimes and a diet of depressing stories please take our children into your consideration

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Record #451

## Submission to the public consultation of the Media Commission on the nature, future and funding of Public Service Media in Ireland by

Roger Childs, Senior Production Executive, RTÉ TV, Commissioning Editor of RTÉ Religious Content and TV licence payer.

Perhaps the simplest way to gauge the value of Ireland's public service media is to imagine life without them, since it is not at all a given that they will continue to exist. Many countries have no such thing. The USA relies on voluntary donations to fund PBS and NPR, with both the public and the Government accepting that other media, whether subscription- or advertiser-funded should be driven primarily by commercial interests. After all, those commercial platforms are also "public service media" since, without a public, they lose their revenue and fold.

So, why not simply let the markets fund and dictate the nature of Irish public service media, too? What would we lose, if they did?

### 1. Trust

A glance at US news coverage during the latest elections has shown how far media platforms are now in the pocket of commercial and political interests. Once you move into the sphere of online and social media coverage, US culture is awash with distorted, misleading and fake news and analysis. Whom can you trust to tell you the truth and hold political and business leaders to account?

By contrast, audience research shows extraordinarily high levels of public trust in Ireland's public service media providers, particularly RTÉ. While not immune to criticism – and the national broadcaster should certainly be accountable to its audiences, to the law and to the editorial codes laid down by the regulator – it is clear that the vast majority of Irish people continue to turn to RTÉ first to hear clear, impartial coverage and analysis of News and Current Affairs; for freely accessible coverage of significant national and international sporting events; and for a rich matrix of other content – Entertainment; Music & Arts; Irish Language Content; Children's Programmes; Religious Content; Drama; Comedy; History, Science and other Specialist and Factual content.

### 2. A national media to reflect and nurture national culture

RTÉ exists to celebrate, interrogate and explain the unique culture of Ireland and to reflect it back to itself; to foster and inform vigorous national conversations and debates; to document and enrich Irish lives.

While other Irish and international media players may also provide media content that is valuable and enriching, including all the genres listed above, their *raison d'être*, in every case, is either the promotion of interests or the pursuit of profit. No other Irish media organisation, besides RTÉ, TG4 and, in Northern Ireland, BBCNI, has hardwired into it the principles of truth, impartiality, fairness and public service before profit. And were the PSMs to cease to exist, none of their commercial competitors would take up that role.

### 3. Ownership

Part of the reason for the unique relationship between RTÉ and the Irish public is that RTÉ is owned and funded by the people of Ireland entirely to serve them. It has no other function and should be scrapped, if it ever strays from that remit. The public is all too aware of this. For some, ownership is a whip hand. Many complaints are accompanied by a threat not to pay the licence fee or a disgruntlement about having to do so. That is totally understandable, even healthy. It is accountability in its purest form and is a daily reminder to the management, staff and content creators of RTÉ and the independent companies it commissions about who pays for their wages and content.

So, what if the TV licence fee didn't exist?

Well, in a way, we are already seeing that hypothetical being played out, because the TV licence fee has not been reviewed in 13 years, which, in effect, has meant a significant reduction in potential operating revenue at a time when changing public media consumption and long overdue infrastructure renewal has placed unprecedented demands on RTÉ finances.

Added to that, the current leaky TV licence fee collection system, combined with the growing number of people who can legitimately claim exemption from the licence fee because they consume media via devices other than a television, means that the present TV licence fee funding model is in urgent need of repair and renewal.

At the same time, RTÉ has experienced a massive reduction in commercial revenue, because there are ever more media players competing for slices of the same pie. A great deal of that revenue now goes to global giants, such as Facebook, Google, Youtube and Sky, which pay virtually no tax in Ireland and make very little effort to reflect the indigenous culture. Liberty-owned Virgin and other Communicorp-owned stations are based in Ireland, but their primary motive is profit, not public service.

What about a subscription model, like that of the PBS network in the USA, or even that of Netflix, Apple, Disney+ and other players? Many Irish people have already shown they are willing to subscribe to bundles and channels beyond the services that are freely available. Could Ireland not simply replace the licence fee with a voluntary subscription?

Having begun my career with WNET/Channel 13, the PBS flagship station in New York, I know that PBS's existence is never less than precarious and also depends on a well established American media culture where donation – including tax-exempt corporate giving on a giant scale – is ingrained. Even then, every show lives under the threat of imminent cancellation. Most PBS output is actually cheaply acquired “quality” content, or co-commissioned drama, such as the Masterpiece Theatre strand, which the network co-commissions with the BBC and other partners. PBS itself produces next to nothing.

Ireland simply doesn't have the demographic scale, the wealth and the donor culture to sustain a national Public Service Media provider generating the volume of multi-platform, multi-genre content it currently does just through voluntary subscriptions...

And if you're talking "involuntary subscriptions", you're really talking about a licence fee.

There has been speculation in the media that, if Revenue.ie were to collect the licence fee, the current high default rate could be drastically reduced. This would be a mistake. Although some people already regard the licence fee as a tax, it is important to the editorial independence of RTÉ that its collection has nothing to do with Government, since any greater level of dependency would weaken the organisation's ability to hold politicians to account, for fear of retributive cuts in funding. We have already seen examples of this in recent years in the UK, where, at the time of Charter Renewal, senior politicians all the way to Downing Street, questioned the need to fund publicly an organisation that regularly questions their actions and highlights their failures.

This thinly veiled threat has also been seen in several other European countries, including Austria, Greece and Switzerland, where serious political attempts have been made to pull the financial plug on national PSMs. Thankfully, wherever they have had the chance to do so, the public has rebelled, with the Swiss, for instance, voting by a significant majority to keep the licence fee and the Greeks protesting vigorously about the sudden closure of the national broadcaster.

So, if not the taxman, who would collect the licence fee?

Italy may provide the most efficacious example. Having suffered from default rates even worse than Ireland, the licence fee system was fixed by incorporating collection into utilities bills. Anyone who receives electricity pays a media charge. If you don't, instead of being threatened with a fine or imprisonment, you risk being cut off. Instantly, the default rate was reduced to a fraction of its previous level, but the revenue remained ring-fenced from political siphoning or pressure. The winner was not RAI, but the public, who now have, in RAI, a more robustly funded, independent PSM.

Note that I referred to a Media Charge, not a TV Licence Fee. That is vital. While linear television and radio remain key elements of our media culture, drawing people together for shared experiences like the Taoiseach's COVID addresses or *The Late Late Toy Show*, there has been a seismic cultural shift in our media consumption towards OTT / on-demand usage. Younger people, in particular, consume news, comedy, entertainment and online content on the go via their phones, laptops and tablets. The idea of making a nightly date with a newscaster for half an hour or an hour is totally foreign to them and, from *Normal People* to *Young Offenders*, they watch RTÉ content in their own time and way. Children are even more set in this habit of consuming media "the Martini way" – any time, any place, anywhere. Although they recognise brands and platforms, schedules and channels are virtually meaningless to them. RTÉ and the Media Commission should not try to change these behaviours, but rather to meet the public service media needs of these audiences in the ways that best suit them.

It is noticeable that the BBC's decision to scrap BBC3 (its edgy, youth-orientated channel) as a terrestrial channel and to publish its content entirely online on the i-Player, did not have the disastrous effect on audiences that some predicted. Instead, the channel has prospered. Much of its more widely accessible content still gets a subsequent terrestrial airing on BBC1 or 2, but the target audience watches content,

when they want, how they want. Now, the BBC has announced that it will scrap all TV Channel Controllers roles, in order to concentrate on content, rather than on the channel or platform where that content is watched. Schedules and channel identities are becoming increasingly irrelevant to audiences, but the importance of quality public service across all genres remains undiminished.

RTÉ has already gone some way towards this, inventing an umbrella role of Director of Audiences, Channels and Marketing and another of Director of Content, in place of the previous Channel Controller roles, in order to try to deliver the right content in the right way and on the right media platform to all audiences. However, all those on-demand services must be paid for, and anyone who has sat through the ads that precede and interrupt so much RTÉ Player content knows that those ads are more likely to drive viewers away, especially for short-form clips, which are amongst the most watched by younger audiences.

The RTÉ Player requires serious investment, in order to offer a better user-experience, if RTÉ is to attract audiences – especially younger viewers – to its non-linear services in the volume required to justify a universal media charge. The Media Commission offers an unmissable opportunity to put in place the necessary funding to equip RTÉ to serve all audiences with the high quality content they deserve in ways they can, or choose to, access it.

I should, perhaps, have stated earlier a vested and particular interest in expressing my views. I am employed as Senior Production Executive of RTÉ Television and the Commissioning Editor of RTÉ Religious Content, across all platforms. I previously worked in the UK for the BBC (TV and Radio), for Channel 4 and, in the USA, for WNET/Channel 13, New York, the flagship of the PBS archipelago. In my current role, I work closely with other European Public Service Media organisations and with the European Arts & Culture channel, ARTE, so I have a reasonably good grasp of public service media provision and how it is funded in several different contexts.

I wish to make a special plea for the safeguarding of Religious content as a key component of public service media in Ireland.

For all the reasons outlined above, Religious Programmes have, since I joined RTÉ in 2007, experienced a succession of funding cuts, to the extent that the organisation is now in danger of being unable to fulfil adequately the public service demands of the public it exists to serve.

Religious Programmes have been a key element of Irish public service broadcasting from the very beginning and are specifically identified in the Broadcasting Act (2009) as a vital element of RTÉ's public service remit:

Part 7, Section 114, (3a): Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1), **RTÉ shall ensure that the programme schedules of the broadcasting services** referred to in that subsection— (a) provide a comprehensive range of programmes in the Irish and English languages that reflect the cultural diversity of the whole island of Ireland and **include programmes that entertain, inform and educate, provide coverage of sporting, religious and cultural activities and cater for the**

**expectations of the community generally as well as members of the community with special or minority interests** and which, in every case, respect human dignity,

Objectives of Authority. 25.— (1): The Authority and the statutory committees, in performing their functions, shall endeavour to ensure— (a) that the number and categories of broadcasting services made available in the State by virtue of this Act best **serve the needs of the people of the island of Ireland, bearing in mind their languages and traditions and their religious, ethical and cultural diversity.**

By the time of my appointment, Religious Programmes at RTÉ had, broadly speaking, been reduced to mean simply Christian worship on TV and Radio, aimed primarily at those who are too elderly or infirm to get to church. Valuable though that service is, I made re-calibrating that definition of Religious Programmes a condition of accepting the job.

In a rapidly changing culture, where 1 person in every 9 now was born outside Ireland and where seismic shifts are going on in public morality and personal religious beliefs and practice, it is vital that RTÉ Religious Programmes offer a vibrant, rigorous and creative forum for reflecting Ireland's present unprecedented levels of diversity, disaffection and doubt, as well as that other "d" word, devotion. They also perform an important function in building mutual understanding between people of different faiths, including people of no faith, and in fostering conversations about the contribution religion has made, and continues to make, to the history, culture and values of Ireland.

The recalibration worked. Over the last decade, RTÉ Religious Programmes have earned their place in the peak-time schedules with high quality documentaries, discussions, debates and interview series. Besides *Would You Believe?*, Gay Byrne's (now Joe Duffy's) series *The Meaning of Life* and Mary McAleese's series *All Walks of Life*, have become mainstream hits with their simple formats for interviewing public figures about their lives, beliefs and values.

Multi award-winning documentaries have examined everything from the place of Islam in Irish society to the last days of Jesus and charted Ireland's changing attitudes to death, the family, education, marriage, abortion, the Church and even faith itself. They dealt with scandals of clerical abuse and mother and baby homes, but also demonstrated how, for some, faith remains a valuable enrichment of individual and communal lives. On radio and television, our content has rigorously and creatively documented what religion can do *for* people, but also *to* them. In the process, RTÉ has become a world leader, our content selling, and winning awards, in America, the UK, continental Europe and Australia.

In the meantime, RTÉ hasn't forgotten its other mandate, to offer spiritual and pastoral support to vulnerable and elderly people. Besides the weekly Masses and Services on RTÉ TV and Radio, RTÉ has, since the start of the COVID pandemic, offered additional religious content: daily weekday Masses delivered in partnership with a webstreaming service via the RTÉ News Channel; additional Protestant Services; coverage of major minority faith festivals in ways that make them accessible to mainstream audiences, including short-form documentaries and spectacular live outside broadcast coverage of Eid Prayers from the pitch at Croke Park.

All this content has generated enthusiastic audience feedback, including sacks of very touching letters from elderly folk, saying how, during a time of extreme COVID-related anxiety and isolation, RTÉ's religious content has been a lifeline to them.

Minority faith communities and individuals, who previously felt that RTÉ was a closed shop to them, interested only in secular or indigenous Irish Christian culture, now regularly engage with strands such as *The Leap of Faith* (Radio 1) or *With You In Spirit* (RTÉ News Channel), in the process building respect and understanding between people of many faiths and none.

All this has been achieved against a backdrop of relentless funding cuts. Having already pared production costs back to the bone, RTÉ Religious Programmes were, before the COVID pandemic struck, facing massive further reductions in funding. Those cannot be achieved without sacrificing vital elements of the organisation's religious output.

The organisation has now reached a point where mature coverage of religious affairs - which have been, and remain, a key dimension of our nation's history, culture and values - is no longer possible without a secure, on-going commitment to proper funding.

More than that, what is required is an unequivocal statement in the report of the Media Commission of the continuing importance of this genre.

It is all too easy to become convinced, in the midst of increasingly secular popular culture, that religion is now a matter for the private sphere and no longer part of the central remit of a national PSM provider. Some will point to a decline in church-going as proof that that aspect of our culture is now no longer a required part of RTÉ's public service output. Others will point to the proliferation of online religious platforms, offering worship in any denomination and language imaginable, as proof that these audience needs can now be met elsewhere. Neither assertion stands up to scrutiny.

Firstly, as has been demonstrated by the significant daily audiences for additional religious content on the News Channel during the pandemic (27% share among over 55s; ten times the usual terrestrial channel audience and more viewers watching Mass on the RTÉ News Channel than RTÉ One at that time of day), not everyone has either the broadband, the devices or the know-how to access religious content in the digital sphere. They therefore depend on RTÉ to meet their religious needs.

Secondly, unscientific observations about secularising trends need to be benchmarked against more reliable data, such as the census figures, where 90% of the population voluntarily identified with a religious faith community, over 80% of them Christian; 68% of those consulted in an exit poll during the Presidential election thought that RTÉ should retain the Angelus as a daily broadcast on TV and Radio; nearly 5000 people complained to RTÉ about a comedy sketch on New Year's Eve, which depicted God as a rapist.

Religious belief and practice in Ireland is undoubtedly changing, but that makes it all the more important that there is properly funded, informed, balanced and religiously

literate coverage of the subject, not just by RTÉ's Religious Programmes Department, but by News & Current Affairs and Children's Programmes. If RTÉ does not provide this coverage, no one else will do so, and certainly, no one else can be relied upon to provide Christian and minority faith worship programmes, free to air, on linear television and radio.

In 2008, the RTÉ Religious Department commissioned 14 TV outside broadcasts and produced 6 more in-house, plus 60 religious radio OBs, to reflect and share the worship of churches and denominations nationwide in all their diversity, alongside studio-based worship broadcasts. In 2021, it is likely that RTÉ will offer just two outside broadcast on TV or radio, including for the major feast days of Christmas, Easter and St Patrick's Day.

Where, in 2007, RTÉ broadcast 10.5 hours of religious documentaries on TV, in 2021, it is likely that that figure will be just 3 hours. That is quite simply inadequate to reflect, interrogate, celebrate and explain the role of religion and spirituality in the history and cultural life of Ireland, especially at a time of shifting values and beliefs.

Again, the Media Commission offers a unique opportunity to ensure that properly funded religious content – multi-genre, multi-faith and multi-media – is safeguarded as a key component of public service media in Ireland, not for my sake or the sake of RTÉ, but for the sake of the people we serve and the society we exist to reflect, document and enrich.

Roger Childs  


[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #453

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Blasphemy  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 20:18:15

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I wish to protest in the strongest way possible my disgust & offence at the way RTE has Blasphemed against God Our Father .& the Blessed Virgin Mary It is an utter disgrace,& it highlights your contempt for the Christian Faith.

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that from now on this household will cease to view RTE ever again.

Yours Sincerely.

[REDACTED]

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Record #454  
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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of Media Commission  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 20:19:59

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Public Service Broadcasting has never been as important and will only increase in importance in the immediate, medium and long term future.

## **RTE**

The body which regards itself as the premier Public Service Broadcaster in Ireland.

I feel there are two issues:

1. The financial model under which it operates serves to ultimately undermine confidence in the concept of Public Service Broadcasting just as we need it most.

RTE generates income from various streams, Licence Fee, Advertising, Programme Sponsorship, Paid for Content Online & Sponsored Programming. This particular melting pot of finance runs significant risk of undermining the quality of Public Service.

To illustrate my point take the example of the principle that a lobbying group such as the IUA (Irish Universities Association) funded indirectly by the state itself can in partnership with a media outlet, in this case RTE, create advertorial type content such as the recently broadcast *My Uni Life* and wrap it in the cloak of public service broadcasting. The airing of this television series can also be used to sell primetime advertising. Each element of this process to me feels wrong and manipulates viewers.

2. There will be a difficult issue for the future in pursuing a hybrid broadcasting model of entertainment and public service. It is difficult to justify public resourcing for content such as RTE's *Dancing with the Stars* or indeed *2FM* radio from the perspective of what I believe Public Service Broadcasting to be. This content has been produced successfully by the commercial sector for a long time. I appreciate the counter argument that programming such as this can be regarded as public service.

The delivery of media content through whatever medium is becoming more and more focused, of course we run the risk of echo chambers but in the interests of quality analysis and proper investigation perhaps we should strive to focus more exclusively on a definition of public service broadcasting.

From both a funding and programming perspective consideration should be given to breaking up RTE into two independent units, Entertainment & Public Service.

## **ONLINE**

The delivery of information to the public is moving more and more to an online environment. The platform and the actors (those in charge of delivery) is (and are) becoming more Wild West in nature. It is insidious and dangerous when the only business model for an online success is to behave in a parasitic manner to achieve behemoth status. It is very difficult to see how the concept of Public Service Broadcasting can be delivered through the prism of online when the core business model of establishment and maintaining status when it comes to the major Internet companies often contradicts and at

its worst excesses totally overshadows and wilfully undermines the delivery of Public Service Broadcasting. Internet companies have become too large and wield a lot of power with to date, no responsibility

At the very least a brand new fit for purpose online regulatory regime with responsibility as its cornerstone should be initiated. At this point, in light of the intrinsic capital value and revenue generating abilities of major internet publishing platforms/companies a specific digital tax should be introduced, a portion of its proceeds should go to enhancing through whatever medium the concept of Public Service Broadcasting.

### **Journalism**

Our journalism whether in print, broadcast or online form is moving more and more towards an opinion foundation and away from an analysis one. This generates heat rather than light and will position us so that we no longer value or appreciate the presentation of facts in front of us in helping making an informed decision. Investigative journalism has stood us well in Ireland at various junctures but it can also drift . It seems a career in analytical and to a lesser extent investigative journalism is at best becoming more and more peripatetic, at worst totally unsustainable.

Journalism education needs attention and indeed funding. Fellowships for young journalists and most especially young female journalists need to be introduced. These fellowships could allay some of the pressures associated with modern life. There are some good examples with respect to fellowships for young women in STEM

### **Community Media**

There is a national resource which is evolving, that is the Community Radio sector. There is no reason why the principle whereby the Skibereen Eagle felt confident about keeping an eye on the Tsars of Russia cannot be updated for this century. Local communities themselves should be encouraged to have the ability to parse, analyse and present on information whether local or global.

I thank the Commission for allowing the opportunity to modestly feed into their deliberations

Regards



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Record #455

From: [REDACTED]  
To: [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
Date: Thursday 7 January 2021 20:21:26

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is now the TV license, to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax which is designed to cover RTE's losses.

It's been suggested also that failing print media could be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payers funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria which may be at risk of genocide is another case in point.

The controversy has continued over the outrageous skit on God raping and impregnating Our Lady, in part due to the stubborn refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's just satire and an expression of freedom of speech.

This despite everyone knowing, that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

Furthermore, the mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear useless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs in particular, as to make confidence in the system impossible and any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know, has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell to trick people back to Church.

In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". All pitched as a project to and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, plenty of people still do. In any case, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation if not one of the anti discrimination grounds.

So we propose defunding of biased individual media outlets ( rather than our subsidizing them through a national household tax ) that happily break their own regulations and I would say, the law, as long as its about Christians and Catholics in particular.

If you the Commission on the future of the media, propose to advise further funding to RTE and similar outlets then you are furthering the discriminatory practices outlined above. Stop funding RTE or other media outlets through a coercive license or tax which guarantees a conflict of interest in journalistic independence when the government of the day part pays journalists' salaries. Enough journalists have joined government ranks as it is. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI (and in turn of RTE) so as to not engage in discrimination against just one faith based group. The BAI cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

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Record #456

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** The Future of Media in Ireland  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 20:23:22

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Hi there,

I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut by any means possible. Freedom of expressing any point of view have to respected. If you don't agree with what other people say, it ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling. A free society is build strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP. The people is smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them. Freedom must be the Centre of a society. Otherwise, everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling. Free speech, freedom, liberty. Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble. And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not. So, start acting like civil reasonable persons and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with YOUR point of view.

Kind Regards,

[REDACTED]

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[Redacted]

Record #457

[Redacted]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Balance reporting  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 20:36:10

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As a retired teacher (71) from a wide extended family I can recall accounts of great social discrimination going back to the 1930s. My parent's work experience made them strong Trade Unionists. Disdain for the I.S.P.C.C was evident when my father, who organised church collections for charitable, tried to find collectors for that charity. Memories of the 'Cruelty Man' were still fresh.

Young journalists need to go to the historical sources to broaden their knowledge of conditions in the first half of 20th century Ireland which, two generations on, still affect aspiration and life chances of poorer families. Much valuable journalistic work can be done to support vulnerable men, women and children. Sometimes articles are lazy reiterations of tired political and religious cliches. Group think can disregard facts although there is an abundance of accessible information .

Media debate is essential but unless based on facts it can become mere propaganda. Democracy is fragile.

A free and honest media is its best guardian.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #458  
[REDACTED]

**From:** ■  
**To:** [Info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:Info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future Funding of media in Ireland  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 20:43:01

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is now the TV license, to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax which is designed to cover RTE's losses.

It's been suggested also that failing print media could be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payers funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria which may be at risk of genocide is another case in point.

The controversy has continued over the outrageous skit on God raping and impregnating Our Lady, in part due to the stubborn refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's just satire and an expression of freedom of speech.

This despite everyone knowing, that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

Furthermore, the mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear useless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs in particular, as to make confidence in the system impossible and any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know, has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell to trick people back to Church.

In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". All pitched as a project to and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, plenty of people still do. In any case, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation if not one of the anti discrimination grounds.

So we propose defunding of biased individual media outlets ( rather than our subsidizing them through a national household tax ) that happily break their own regulations and I would say, the law, as long as its about Christians and Catholics in particular.

If you the Commission on the future of the media, propose to advise further funding to RTE and similar outlets then you are furthering the discriminatory practices outlined above. Stop funding RTE or other media outlets through a coercive license or tax which guarantees a conflict of interest in journalistic independence when the government of the day part pays journalists' salaries. Enough journalists have joined government ranks as it is. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI (and in turn of RTE) so as to not engage in discrimination against just one faith based group. The BAI cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

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Record #459

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Media Standards  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 20:45:24

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Highest standards are required in all media communications which must be Informed, Objective, Respectful, Fair and Balanced. Currently this is not so.

Frequently information is not checked out as was evident recently when a Carlow school got unfair negative publicity because of the challenging behaviour of a sole student and her mother. The article was based on some comment on social media which was totally unbalanced and was published without being checked. Teachers and Principals can do without such interference when busy implementing and complying with school policy..

Far too often information given is very biased. Prominence is given only to one side of the story, frequently favouring leftist views. This was so obvious in print media, especially in The Irish Independent, on RTE radio and TV. leading up to voting in the Amendment. Very large Pro Life Rallies were ignored or given very limited coverage while the small number of ' hecklers' who turned up were given enhanced publicity. Collusion between Politicians and the Media for a 'Yes 'vote, false information, scaremongering, accompanied by repeated, and ongoing propaganda, most likely influenced the outcome.

Media must not intrude and cause further hurt in reporting on family tragedies. Family grief and privacy must be respected. Sensationalism which is solely to increase profit margins and has no benefit for the common good must be avoided.

Religions of all peoples must be respected. Quite often my Catholic Faith is treated with such negative bias. Shortcomings are always highlighted but rarely balanced with reference to the enormous contributions made, both in Ireland and throughout the world in such areas as Education, Medicine, Food Programmes, Sanitisation and Housing. Recently we had the distressing and hurtful New Years 'joke', RTE tried to defend it, refused to remove it until finally the pressure forced them to withdraw and apologise. Such behaviour from our National Broadcaster!

Points made here are done with full sincerity and hopefully will be treated as such by recipients.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #460

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Values of RTE media  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 20:45:54

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I do not care much anymore about standards in RTE.

They lost my attention along time ago. For ten years i had no TV and was quiet happy with that.

Can't stand your comments insulting people and their believes-

It's The Mother of God who makes men new and who brings people to Jesus.

We have no right to Judge people, but what your doing is making a mockery of God in they eyes of people so they no longer believe in him who was sent from above.

Heaven Is somthing we all long for, this life is passing.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]

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Record #461

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** RTE  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 20:57:17

---

Dear Sirs

I have concerns regarding RTE especially with regards to their respect for the Catholic religion in particular. Despite their recent apology and promise to remove the recent so called comedy sketch, this is not the 1st time they have produced such offensive material. Earlier in the year they also produced a "sketch" of puppets dancing which they played during the Angelus and which I had emailed them about (as I'm sure many others did). It was also very disrespectful.

Personally I am for "Freedom of Speech" but blatant deliberate disrespect and lies about any religion is not right.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

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Record #462

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future Media Commission  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 21:09:38

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Sir/Madam

My concern is that our future media coverage would be fair inclusive and balanced. The columnists and editors of our papers and other news media so often push their own agenda. This was never more true than during the referendum on the 8th Amendment.

Please insure that Pro-life is dealt with in a fair and balanced way and this includes the Assisted Suicide Bill which is being ushered through, while Covid is taking all of our attention.

All I ask for is Fair and Balanced reporting, We are not getting this at present.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #463  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of media in Ireland  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 21:37:08

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As the son of Irish Immigrants to Scotland I feel that the media in Ireland does not give a fair and balanced view of the people, the media do not give give a fair report on the subject of abortion  
Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #464  
[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of our media  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 21:39:47

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To whom it may concern,

I rarely watch RTE any more due to the one sidedness.

It would be so nice if we were just given “ news” and not opinion and speculation about what might or might not happen in the future.

Would it be possible to hear of what’s going on in other parts of the world such as Christian persecution.

I felt very strongly having heard what RTE had on New Year’s Eve that I no longer wish to support this anti Christian station by paying a TV license.

Journalists need to be impartial and accurate.

Promoting abortion as a woman’s choice leading to years of guilt is not something I can condone.

Thank God for Internet and alternative viewing for those of us, with all our imperfections, who still have some kind of a moral compass.

Blessings and love to you all,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #465

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of media in Ireland  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 21:55:17

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Dear Sir or Madam,

This is my submission.

In my opinion, the future of media in Ireland should not include any further funding to RTE and they should have to compete in the media market in the same way as other stations such as Virgin TV. They have very few home produced programmes and even from amongst those they do produce the quality is poor. The occasional exceptions to this still does not merit the funding they receive.

RTE as a national broad caster in receipt of funding from the public and State do not provide value for money. They are in financial difficulty but continue to pay over the top fees to presenters and journalists who are not worth the fees they are being paid. In recent times debates regarding the eight amendment were most definitely one sided with listeners and viewers left in no doubt as to the opinion of the presenter who in my opinion should always remain objective.

They have had to apologise to Declan Ganley for the scandalous way they portrayed him in a television program. This is not the first time that RTE has done something like this. They show lack of judgement and shoddy reporting.

It offends me that I have to pay for the crap they produce. I would rather give my money to someone else than continue to fund a station that does not offer anything to me as a paying viewer.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

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Record #466

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Cc:** [tounsillo](mailto:tounsillo)  
**Subject:** Funding of Media in Ireland  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 21:58:13

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

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Record #467

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future funding of media in Ireland  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 22:05:24

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,



[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #468  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 22:11:46

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Hello

I only became aware of this commission and the closing date for submissions this evening. Hence this a short spontaneous submission.

In the future:

There should be some better way of informing the general public that these type of commissions are under way.

1.

I do not feel that RTE represents a large minority of the Irish population.

2. RTE will not have a future if it persists with its use of 'Disparagement humour'.

This is any attempt to amuse

through the denigration of a social group or its representatives – basically anything that makes a punchline out of a marginalized group. In this case of RTE this is more often than not the Catholic Church and /or those in the population with Christian beliefs.

Disparagement humour is paradoxical:

It simultaneously communicates two conflicting messages.

One is an explicit hostile or prejudiced message.

But delivered alongside is a second implicit message that "it doesn't count as hostility or prejudice

because I didn't mean it — it's just a joke.

RTE, by disguising expressions of prejudice to the Catholic Church (and/or those with religious beliefs)

in a cloak of fun and frivolity, hopes that its disparagement humour, will appear harmless and trivial.

However, a large and growing body of psychology research suggests just the opposite – that disparagement humour can foster discrimination against targeted groups.

RTE has a social responsibility to avoid discrimination and to avoid actions that lead to discrimination.

3. Balanced reporting is a must to ensure a future for any media outlet.

In the future the Pro Live position must be articulated fairly on all media platforms.

It must be possible for all viewpoints to be articulated on all topics. People must not be fearful of being hassled, spoken over, belittled etc.

Balance of views is a must.

This will be particularly important in relation to the Dying with Dignity Bill currently being considered by the Committee on Justice.

4. World events have often demonstrated how fragile the protection of human dignity is. We are still a long way from the establishment of a global human rights culture: an environment within which the respect for human identity and diversity are self-evident matters. Essential to the effort to create such a culture are the media as they relate to the defence of human rights at various levels. The media must give a voice to human rights for all especially those who wish to protect their right to freedom of conscience, religion and thought. The media must respect the human dignity of those who may be in a minority position. In a functioning democracy minorities have rights.

**Yours sincerely,**

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the sender's name and signature.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #469

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission on the future of media in Ireland  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 22:23:57

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point. The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

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[REDACTED]

Record #470

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future Funding of Media in Ireland  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 21:51:31

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,



[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

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Record #471

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To: info@futureofmediacommission.ie

07/01/2021

Dear Future of Media Commission,

I do not believe that fake news can be a rationale for the tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians.

. RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular Catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. (I think this has subsequently been taken down) This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED] I emailed RTE as below:**

[REDACTED]



- The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against Catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.
- The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".
- In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.
- The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.
- While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So I propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours sincerely



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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #472

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of the Irish Language  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 22:31:20

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A Cháirde,

I have confined my submission to the amount of time given to Irish Language Broadcasting in Ireland. A recent Coimisinéir Teanga Report indicates that less than one per cent of broadcast time is given by RTE to the Irish language broadcasting. If this is the state broadcasting position on the first official language, it is beyond question that the amount of broadcast time given by the commercial and community media sector to Irish language broadcasting is perhaps nearer to .01 percent.

I know that the local station Radio Kerry is listened to by approx 85,000 people on a daily basis. This amounts to about 60 per cent of the population of Co Kerry, a very good result for a local radio station. Radio Kerry had one weekly programme on a Sunday evening in Irish, which may now be discontinued. This means that thousands of people in Kerry never hear a word of Irish spoken on their local radio station. Irish, being the native language of the people of the Corcha Dhuibhne Gaeltacht and others who chose to use it, is treated like a foreign language on Radio Kerry. Some people might say that if you want to hear Irish on the radio, you can listen to Radio na Gaeltachta thus contributing to the ghettoisation and the marginalisation of the language.

The state cannot rely on the schools alone to promote the use of Irish on a daily basis. Most people listen to different radio stations or watch some television each day. It is imperative that if the state wishes the first official language to survive as a spoken language it should encourage by its laws and financial resources the use of Irish in everyday communication by the people. This is where local, community and national media should play a major role. It is a fact that only one person fluent in Irish was employed by the State out of five hundred appointments in the last three years.

A certain amount of time or number of programmes should be given over each day to Irish language broadcasting. This could be done in an informal way and is currently being done by the likes of John Creedon and by Fiachna Ó Braonáin who continuously use Irish in their radio programmes. They should be applauded for their approach to the language. They are setting a trend that could be followed by many others. It is sad that most of the high profile personalities on TV and Radio never utter a word of Irish in their daily programmes. Some would be utterly opposed to the language as one of them recently likened Conradh na Gaeilge to The Taliban.

Shouldn't the commercial and community radio stations be requested to adopt a similar approach to Irish Language broadcasting? The state, by its laws, could enforce such an approach, though given its current attitude to Irish it is likely to be a failure. I would prefer if the state would adopt a 'carrot' approach, setting up a special 'Ciste na Gaeilge' fund for local, community, commercial and national radio stations. This fund would be paid on an annual grant basis to those stations that have proved to an independent body their continuous and vital commitment to the daily use of Irish in their broadcasting schedule. A financial incentive might persuade these stations to change their attitude to the use of Irish on a daily basis.

I trust that you will give my submission due consideration.

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Record #473

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** For your urgent attention  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 22:31:25

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

*Shalom !!*

May the Lord of Peace Himself give you peace at all times and in every way (2 Thess. 3:16)

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Record #474

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Funding Irish media in the future  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 22:36:22

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

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In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

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Yours faithfully,

[Redacted signature]

[REDACTED]  
Record #475  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Feedback  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 22:36:39

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Dear Sir/Madam

I would like to express my thoughts with regard to the future of media in Ireland.

To date I've lost interest and have been very disheartened by our so called national broadcaster. It's clear that they do not respect the needs of the general population, but instead try to influence it.

The future for rte is bleak as they are rapidly losing the loyalty and respect of the public. This has clearly been demonstrated by their coverage of the referendum in Ireland in 2018. Recently their comedy portrayal of God as a rapist was the final straw. This was beyond sickening and very disturbing.

I grew up without a tv, when everyone else had one. I felt deprived at the time, however to this day I thank my parents. Though I now have a tv for my family, we switch it off a lot more than before. We've given up on national broadcast. Even the news is more about scare mongering and promoting certain ideals and political parties favoured by media.

During the first lockdown, the main way to find out about restrictions was via rte news. This meant that everyone had to tune in, whether they wished to or not. Sadly. Lot of reporting has not been accurate by rte. The list of unreliable information is endless.

The very obvious collusion between media and state needs to come to an end. I really think that this is the only way for the future of media in Ireland to survive.

I hope this helps.

Your sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #476

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Re Future funding of media in Ireland  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 22:39:24

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Dear all

----- Forwarded message -----

Date for submissions on the Future of Media in Ireland is TOMORROW Friday 8th January.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point. The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

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In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]  
Sent from my iPhone

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[REDACTED]

Record #477

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 22:46:43

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## Submission

The only answer to the Future of media Communications is Truth. Unfortunately, our mainstream print, radio and tv media is far from truthful and seem to be advertising agencies for popular ideologies and big money.

The result of truthful media is trust. It is not surprising that trust is in short supply currently.

I would suggest that we stop subsidising RTE or any other media outlet. If they tell the truth then people will support them. That we recognise that the BAI has failed to protect the media consumer, further, an investigation of the BAI should be undertaken.

I am completely against continuing the TV licence or expanding it into another type of tax.

There will be no need for subsidies when journalism and media is committed to truth, beauty and goodness.

Thank you

[REDACTED]

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Record #478

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission on the future of Media  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 22:46:54

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A Cháirde,

I have confined my submission to the amount of time given to Irish Language Broadcasting in Ireland. A recent Coimisinéir Teanga Report indicates that less than one per cent of broadcast time is given by RTE to the Irish language broadcasting. If this is the state broadcasting position on the first official language, it is beyond question that the amount of broadcast time given by the commercial and community media sector to Irish language broadcasting is perhaps nearer to .01 percent.

I know that my own local radio station Radio Kerry is listened to by approx 85,000 people on a daily basis. This amounts to about 60 per cent of the population of Co Kerry, a very good result for a local radio station. Radio Kerry had one weekly programme on a Sunday evening in Irish, which may now be discontinued. This means that thousands of people in Kerry never hear a word of Irish spoken on their local radio station. Irish, being the native language of the people of the Corcha Dhuibhne Gaeltacht and others who chose to use it, is treated like a foreign language on Radio Kerry. Some people might say that if you want to hear Irish on the radio, you can listen to Radio na Gaeltachta thus contributing to the ghettoisation and the marginalisation of the language.

The state cannot rely on the schools alone to promote the use of Irish on a daily basis. Most people listen to different radio stations or watch some television each day. It is imperative that if the state wishes the first official language to survive as a spoken language it should encourage by its laws and financial resources the use of Irish in everyday communication by the people. This is where local, community and national media should play a major role.

A certain amount of time or number of programmes should be given over each day to Irish language broadcasting. This could be done in an informal way and is currently being done by the likes of John Creedon and by Fiachna Ó Braonáin who continuously use Irish in their radio programmes. They should be applauded for their approach to the language. They are setting a trend that could be followed by many others. It is sad that most of the high profile personalities on TV and Radio never utter a word of Irish in their daily programmes. Some would be utterly opposed to the language as one of them recently likened Conradh na Gaeilge to The Taliban.

Shouldn't the commercial and community radio stations be requested to adopt a similar approach to Irish Language broadcasting? The state, by its laws, could enforce such an approach, though given its current attitude to Irish it is likely to be a failure. I would prefer if the state would adopt a "carrot" approach, setting up a special "Ciste na Gaeilge" fund for local, community, commercial and national radio and TV stations. This fund would be paid on an annual grant basis to those stations that have proved to an independent body their continuous and vital commitment to the daily use of Irish in their broadcasting schedule. A financial incentive might persuade these stations to change their attitude to the use of Irish on a daily basis.

I trust that you will give my submission due consideration.

Is mise

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #479

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** funding to the Media  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 22:50:04

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I am totally against giving funding to RTE and Print Media like The Irish Times that are totally anti Catholic and blasphemous to Christians eg the NY E clip that was very blasphemous to OUR Lord Jesus Christ And the Mother Of God.

Yours sincerely [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Sent from my Galaxy

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█  
█



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Record #480

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From: [REDACTED]  
To: [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
Date: Thursday 7 January 2021 22:50:12

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemers, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,



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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #481  
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]  
To: [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
Subject: Fwd:  
Date: Thursday 7 January 2021 22:59:39

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submissions : **Future of Media in Ireland**

**Dear Sir / Madam,**

As an engineer who has worked throughout Asia, Africa, America, Australia, India and the Middle East, I am always heartened by the huge respect shown to the Irish who have selfishly brought education and prosperity to the many places they have laboured. The values they have shared and kindness they have shown regardless of payment or patronage.

And then I look at the basis in which broadcasting decisions in RTE are controlled by a small group of individuals who largely have the same group think and rarely share the values of many of Irish society.

As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not agree with the argument that fake news can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / sincere believers.

I would contend that in many cases, "one persons Fake news is another persons headline". To allege that broadcasting trivial stories, however true, while ignoring many more serious and true stories is GOOD broadcasting is simply playing to an agenda and can be very much a case of "Faking News" or "broadcasting news with an agenda". The current ad on RTE projecting itself as the purveyor of truth and fact is laughable.

RTE makes great efforts to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in some regions Nigeria is another case in point.

[REDACTED]

I might add that I travel and hugely respect the ordinary people of every faith and would like that Irish media would GROW up and behave like an adult.

The controversy over the RTE New years eve skit on God raping and impregnating a middle Eastern refugee and its refusal to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech, *goes to show HOW far its twisted bigotry allows it to project rape of a [REDACTED] reffuge as a joke- Oh VERY FUNNY !!!!* Also we all know that RTE would not attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the current system impossible.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

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**While many people may not be strong adherents of Christianity and may not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.**

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

I trust that I will receive correspondance in due course.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



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[Redacted]

Record #482

[Redacted]



  
06 January 2021

*“Are you worried about fake news? Is independent journalism important to you and to society? Do the media reflect your experience of the world? What could they do better?”*

*“The media are important for our democracy and society. They inform public debate through independent, journalism. They reflect and promote the lives, language, art, sport, music, culture, traditions, and identities of Irish people at home and around the world.”*

- The Future of Media Commission website homepage  
<https://futureofmediacommission.ie/public-consultation/>

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## Overview

There are a number of things, which above all else, need to be addressed, in order to maintain independent journalism, nurture a healthy public media service and promote public debate.

Unfortunately, these might be a little unpopular.

- The concept of “fake news”, as currently used and understood, is a bad idea.
- Accountability for content needs to be enforceable.
- Funding and accountability need to be intimately and structurally linked.
- “Inclusivity” and “Diversity”, as currently used, understood and implemented, are bad ideas.
- Deceit by omission needs to be recognised and accountability enforced.
- The BAI is fundamentally flawed. It requires serious structural changes to be of any real service to the public good.
- The Broadcasting act (as amended) 2009, requires careful updating regarding impartiality, program standards and definitions of editorial control.

The problems facing public media will never be resolved unless these issues are addressed.

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## Comment and Observations

Some of our oldest newspapers were established in late 1700s, but not widely distributed until the industrial revolution. Widely available, affordable newspapers were not available until just before the turn of the century and RTE was established in 1926, providing the first freely available public media, in the sense that most people were able to access a radio. Public media, in the modern sense, is a relatively recent phenomenon, beginning somewhere between 1900 and 1930, depending on how you define it. The power of this new medium was immediately recognised by the movers of their day, with devastating results.

The ability of public media to alter, control and guide public opinion is beyond doubt. By the 1960s the need for alternative media became apparent and there was an explosion of output which eased off when the “new” media became the establishment sometime in the late 1980s. The internet became the unforeseen game-changer, revolutionising news, education and entertainment as the mass-printing, radio, television had in their day.

However, the internet developed in tandem with mobile phone technology, doubling the effect, speed and expansion of the medium. This has all been a wonderful development in technology, a shining achievement of our civilisation, comparable to going to the moon, medical science and parliament in terms of reach and impact. Nonetheless, it is apparent that this public service media development is fundamentally different to all others before. While all which came before were equally as vulnerable to

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despotism, they were limited by human resources. A.I. algorithms have enabled a centralised control system like never before and as the public service media necessarily transfer more and more material to digital platforms, this centralised control exponentially favours the despotic influence – if it is allowed to.

The words at the top are the words of the commission, quoted from the website, and I would imagine that they are not off-the-cuff, but have been considered, written, reviewed, edited, rewritten and reread many times. While most people would agree with the sentiment, there is considerable resentment at the methods, activities and outcomes of initiatives purported to achieve it. Public media does a great deal more than just inform or reflect public debate and it would be disingenuous to pretend otherwise.

In recent decades, it would be more accurate to say that public service media controls and guides public debate.

I am not alone in harbouring an increasing distrust of Public Service Media. I am referring here to National broadcasters, National Newspapers, online media outlets and social media platforms. Often, broadsheet media and online media outlets have a large presence on digital media platforms, which seems to be encouraged by the social media hosts (Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, etc). The distrust of public media is even more pronounced in these platforms, where opinion is commonly presented as news and there is undeniable promotion or downplay of various topics and discussions as it suits the digital hosts. Various scandals and disclosures attest to this, with the Cambridge Analytica scandal being perhaps most well known. The last twelve months have highlighted many examples of the distance between public service media and the public. Unfortunately, very few people working in media are aware of this, some revel in it.

There is clearly a relationship between sensationalism and revenue (if it bleeds it leads, as the old adage goes) and there probably has always been. There is an increasing tendency to sensationalise any story in order to garnish clicks, tweets or paper sales. It is shameful that this continues unabated and unacceptable that journalists justify it because everyone else is doing it. Breaking news, immediate coverage, and rolling updates mean that little time is given to pause, think or investigate. It is not just so much as going with the crowd, so as much as getting ahead of the crowd, regardless of where that crowd is heading. This does not serve the public well. It creates an environment where public opinion, fear, outrage and sometimes panic lurches from one issue to another. Increasingly, journalistic endeavour, even at the level of individual journalists, is concerned primarily with creating, directing and guiding public opinion, rather than reflecting it or informing it.

Previously (up until the early 1990s, perhaps?) there was an accepted distinction between low-brow, middle-brow and high-brow which could be applied to any cultural, social, artistic, political, literary artefact or conversation.

Journalism was part of this, of course, and there was “High” journalism and “Low” journalism, clearly signalled and understood by all. This was gradually lost and replaced with some sense of cultural or social relativism. This phenomenon may be independent of technology, but it was certainly accelerated by it. Even with the subtle abandonment of qualitative values, there remains an undeserved claim of distinction by some public service media, which would like to be given the respect of “high-brow” (while avoiding reference to it for fear of a perceived elitism) without the work involved in achieving it. There is a discomforting and boring compacted dishonesty in this. The arts have also suffered very badly, and with the same results.

However, the objective and interest of the consultation appears to be journalism, current affairs and news (from the website), not cultural output (tv/radio arts and drama), so I will limit myself to that, even though there is a great deal to discuss in the other arena.

#### Fake-news

In the sphere of public debate, (*“They inform public debate through independent, journalism.”*), there is a very real emphasis and leaning towards limiting discussion, particularly by large, established public media outlets. This is of great concern for three main reasons.

Firstly, because of the endemic dishonesty (either consciously, or through laziness) of numerous large public media, it would appear that they are more concerned with reinforcing their authority rather than genuine concern for truth or public good. There is clearly self-interest at play, both corporate and personal. While one could argue about the extent of the self-interest, there is legitimate concern that, over time, only large public media will remain, which almost guarantees loss of public interest and harm to the public good. You have alluded to this in your prescribed questions.

Secondly, the use of “fake news” labels and the inevitable censoring and side-lining will have the opposite effect to that desired. It will give greater veracity to the “fake-news” because of the perception that there must be a reason why it is being concealed, buried or censored. The Barbara Streisand effect comes into full force, and it is an irresistible force.

To be clear, fake-news does exist and has been around for some time. While he may not have coined the phrase, I think Bezmenov provides the best description of it, and it is a disquieting concept. It is not the fake-news itself that is the problem, but the public perception of the existence of fake-news that is harmful. The point he makes is that fake-news does not seek to be believed as an item or piece of news, but as a concept in the mind of the public so that nothing is believed. It only exists to discredit everything else. The purpose is to dissolve social cohesion and atomise society to the level of the individual or in-group. Community, then shattered, is vulnerable to coercion and manipulation. As to the question of who or what will be the coercive or manipulating force, I do not know. Nobody does, but prevention is far better than remedy. By promoting the idea of fake-news, a great deal more harm is being done – possibly more harm than one can imagine.

In short, introducing a concept of “fake news” for downplaying particular discussions will only serve to reduce public confidence in the “true”, media because they will be perceived (perhaps rightly) as removing competition. Simultaneously, silenced fake-news news has greater probity in the public eye. An inevitable feed-back loop will develop, making matters worse. Constant accusations of fake-news will only serve to bring all of journalism into disrepute, where the public, exhausted and demoralised, will not reject just the fake-news but all news. This is already happening and must not be allowed to continue.

The only option is to allow free and open debate of all opinion and views on all platform and all media.

#### Accountability

At some point “government figures” became synonymous with “facts”. Simply reporting what the government says is superfluous. If journalists do not check and stand over their findings on behalf of the public then they are simply unnecessary. “So-and-so said this”, or “So-and-so said that” is not news, it is hearsay, perhaps only gossip, and I am tired of it being presented as journalism. My point here is that journalists and public service media avoid any culpability by “only reporting what was said” without taking responsibility for the content. Of course, there are times when what was said actually is the news. What I mean here is a presentation of received information as fact, on face value. Needless to say, this is not always the case. My point is that it should never be the case. Without some assurance basic due diligence, items may be dismissed or promoted at will, subject to the prejudice or preference of the reporting. This is one of the main sources of public loss of faith. This is public service media, particularly when funded, shooting itself in the foot, and sometimes more fatally.

Outside of government reporting this side-step is prevalent across almost all reporting. There is a public perception (certainly encouraged by public service media) that the content has been checked, but this is very rarely the case. As I was saying before, the line between “high” and “low” is blurred.

It is difficult to know precisely how to untangle this, but it certainly begins with accountability. Currently, there is almost no incentive to fully check and investigate as there is no way to enforce accountability for lack of due diligence.

#### Deceit by Omission

Of particular interest here is when the truth becomes distorted by omission. I'll refer to this as distortion or, perhaps more accurately, misrepresentation by omission. This is a rhetorical device which needs to be driven from news and current affairs, across all public service media. There is a requirement for opinion and news to be clearly signalled and separated, but this is very rarely the case. Even when there is clear signalling and separation, a mechanism is needed to identify this form of misrepresentation and prevent or rectify it. Such a mechanism is very important for non-news media, including the arts, indispensable for political debate and absolutely essential for news media. Again, this form of deceit should have accountability attached, even if it is as little as a correction and apology.

It is likely that you are all familiar with misrepresentation by omission, but to try to be clear, I will give an example. Take the sentence: "Every day, 500 people are accosted by pit-bull terriers." This may be factually correct, but by adding information, the meaning of the information changes: "Of the 15,000 dog attacks every day, 500 people are accosted by pit-bull terriers." Further information changes the meaning further. "With a population of 1.4 billion, of the 15,000 dog attacks every day, 500 people are attacked by pit-bull terriers and some attacks are fatal".

The original sentence, when read again, clearly has intent and gives a very clear meaning, that the dog-breed is dangerous, which is untrue when seen against relevant information. It is not just a matter of context either, because information given about bird or cat attacks would alter the meaning of the first sentence. The important thing to keep in mind is that the omission is wilful and not that the information was simply unavailable; something familiar to anyone on the receiving end of such a distortion, whether it is in the news, public debate or in the arts and entertainment. The point here is not just the effect on the target (whether that target is a person, place, policy, group or concept), but the effect on the media itself and the distrust it instils.

To reiterate, this simplistic example is not just a matter of context and often it not as obvious. Take a real world example from several years ago: The FRA Violence against women: An EU-wide survey, which reported that 26% of Irish women suffer domestic violence. Two things here, very briefly. The 26% was widely reported, accompanied by a terrifying number of women who are living with domestic violence at the hand of their male partners. Three things were not reported. Firstly, that the survey questionnaire to give back the reported percentage, asked the self-selected recipient if they had, at any time since 15 years of age, been pushed by anyone. Secondly, that the report did not specify perpetrator gender. Thirdly, the phrase "are living with" refers to the memory of an incident, not an ongoing situation. Astonishingly, many public service media continue to pursue the sensational story, even having all information to hand, while the details have become widely known to the public. This is just one example, but the harm this does is immeasurable. By sensationalising, people become jaded to the problem of domestic violence, domestic violence in same-sex couples is almost ignored, public service media loses credibility and the inference is promoted that one in four men are violent towards women. This causes a great deal of damage to social cohesion, and generates fear and resentment in equal measures. It is on a par with telling a untruth. I am sure there are other examples you can think of and if you care about the subject matter, you will see that it is a real problem.

#### Funding

I understand the argument that, without it, the players with the greatest revenue will dictate market share and the effect will in all likelihood only snowball over time. As they say, success breeds success, nothing succeeds like excess, and other such pithy one-liners as we used to find written on toilet doors, before twitter was invented. Essentially, the big fish squeeze out or eat up the minnows and some opinions never get a chance to be heard.

Also, in the interests of journalistic independence, it is necessary to have a publicly funded service, free of commercial pressure. I am thinking here of the national broadcaster, of course, but also of any organisation receiving public funds. However, that funding comes at a cost because integrity is not cheap. Unfortunately, the national broadcaster, and some other media outlets are dependent on the funding

streams and have simply replaced one master with another. There are serious concerns about the loss of distinction between the government and public service media, particularly the national broadcaster.

All publicly funded media is susceptible to this influence, both at its inception and for the life of the media. This gives unacceptable control to influence new national media and second and third tier local media. This has the effect of saturation throughout all strata of a singular worldview. This is not healthy. It's asking for disease.

Again, to be clear. There is nothing inherently wrong with funding, but without accountability and higher standards, it is an accident waiting to happen. People are turning away from the TV license because of the low quality of service, not simply because of alternative sources.

#### Inclusivity and diversity

There is a problem though, in that the funding comes with caveats, conditions and provisos. Generally, these tend to involve "inclusivity" and "diversity". Unfortunately, these policies tend to work in the opposite direction.

"Diversity" assumes a commonality amongst all persons of a defined group. It assumes that these individuals are incapable of the imagination necessary to see themselves in particular roles. It also assumes that an individual can act as a representative of a group, with the implicit assertion that these people may somehow be considered all the same. There is an assertion that persons from that group are incapable of achievement and require additional supports. There is the direct assertion that our society is made up of self-interested groups, which denies the possibility of common culture, demands further fracture and encourages tokenism. It presupposes an offensive undertone of racism while simultaneously accusing it without evidence. People are people and there is much greater diversity to be found within groups than between them. It is self evident that "Diversity" is a bad idea.

"Inclusivity", in the sense that provision is made for people with physical, mental, social or economic disability is perfectly laudable. If there is a way to train, inspire, assess people to have an active and productive role in society, then it is worthwhile. If it is simply a means to provide an opening to allow and encourage people to thrive better, than that is also worthwhile. If it is a means to provide care for individuals who need slightly more help with life, then that too is something most people can get behind. There should be no physical obstacle to anyone in pursuing any aspiration. As much as we can, through regulation and even building standards as a society, we try and in many areas succeed, to do this. However, as a means of improving quality of output, it is not desirable. Commonly, lower standards are accepted under the banner of "inclusivity", and lower standards are expected. This is observable across public service media and the arts in particular. People who are disadvantaged in life are capable of very great things, however that disadvantage is perceived, particularly by the individual. The arts particularly suffer from this, as with "diversity" above.

Art, whether literary, theatrical, visual, cinematic or comedic is at once an exploration of something unique which is expanded to the universal and is quite wonderful. "Inclusivity" and "diversity" destroy this beautiful symmetry by encouraging art with no universal appeal. In fact it takes the universal and makes it exclusive to the individual.

For most people, at least everyone I know or have ever known or met, their attributes which place them in a group, as these concepts insist, whether that is their physicality, their ethnicity, their sexuality, their social status or gender has always and inevitable been the least interesting thing about them.

"Inclusivity" and "Diversity" seek to make that the most and only important thing about them. Get rid of these concepts, please.

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### Recommendations

1. Stop promoting the concept of “fake-news” as it will only serve to make all news fake-news
  2. Make broadcasters, particularly in news and current affairs, accountable for misrepresentation. Ideally, if conditions of contract for anyone involved in media could include accountability for misrepresentation, it would go some way to encourage integrity.
  3. Revise the BAI structure so that it can better act for the public good. There needs to be some accountability by which the Authority or individuals can be assessed.
  4. BAI guidelines should be edited to expand upon misrepresentation by omission, treating it the same as misinformation.
  5. Remove or redefine the provisions for inclusivity and diversity for funding, and guidelines for all broadcasters and the BAI. Begin promoting the redefined provisions as soon as possible.
  6. Update the broadcasting act to firm up the requirements, understanding and definition of editorial control.
  7. Update the broadcasting act to treat misrepresentation by omission the same as misinformation.
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## Response to questions raised by the Future of Media Commission on the Public consultation website

### Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?

- How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?
  - *The government has no role in wider media. It should not (by definition) be involved with or have any direct, coercive or guiding control over an independent public service media*
- What can be learned from the evolution of public service media over the last decade?
  - The independence of journalism in the public sector has been lost, along with public confidence. The BAI has been ineffective in maintaining standards, particularly with regard to public services. The BAI do not appear answerable to anyone.
- What systems may be required to support and sustain public service content, e.g. high quality, independent journalism, in an increasingly competitive and consolidated market?
  - *Free market systems.*
- How might public service media be more effective in promoting the Irish language, sport and culture?
  - *Avoid the current two-tier funding system. Irish language and "irish-interest" programming has been ghettoised and ringfenced into an ever decreasing, more specialised audience, lacking general wider appeal.*
- How might public service media better respond to the needs and expectations of the public?
  - *Have a clear system or procedure of accountability – not just for image, but genuine accountability.*
- What can we learn from other jurisdictions?
  - *We can learn from their mistakes. They have not listened to public complaints ignore petitions, have no accountability and do not value impartiality. "Inform, educate and entertain" has become distorted and meaningless as a guide.*

### Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?

- What is the best model for future funding of public service media in Ireland? What approach best supports independent editorial oversight while achieving value for money and delivering on public service aims?
  - *Accountability. Misinformation or misrepresentation should result in dismissal. Any expression of political, social, cultural or religious opinion should result in dismissal. Once public confidence returns, funding will follow. As it stands, the licence fee model will only make things worse.*
- What opportunities exist to develop and implement business model and organisational changes within the public service broadcasters (RTÉ and TG4)?
  - *I have no intimate knowledge of the business or organisation of RTE or TG4. None that I know of.*
- How might content commissioning, including by RTÉ, TG4 and the BAI Sound and Vision scheme, be adjusted/improved/reformed to better achieve public service aims?
  - *Qualification and assessment of BAI sound and vision programs have mandatory "social inclusion" and "diversity" criteria. Diversity here includes gender, in addition to the supplementary gender equality criteria. Similar assessment is implicit and explicit in RTE and TG4 programming. This may seem self-evident to the commission and the BAI, but it is not at all self-evident to the general public. This does not produce better programming, services or quality. I have grown very tired of it (as have many people). It creates self-selective bias and tends to result in sub-standard output.*
- How should public funding or tax reliefs be apportioned to Public Service Content providers?

- *Public funding Flat rate, with accountability for expression of opinion. Again, any publicly funded provider signs up to the strictest criteria.*
- What does the shift in advertising revenues towards big tech firms mean for the future of print, online and broadcast media?
  - *This is a huge question! There should be no overlap between publicly funded content and commercially funded content. If publicly funded, then absolutely controlled without expression of opinion of any kind. The Public broadcasters were once a mouth-piece for government, hence the BAI – but it would seem that this has made things worse as the BAI are even less answerable, cannot be voted out, and have a jaundiced interpretation of the broadcasting act.*
- What role is there for alternative funding models for Public Service Content providers – voluntary, cooperative, crowdsourcing, subscription?
  - *See above. Get the house in order first, then ask for money and resources. Otherwise, it is foreseeable that there will be no Public National Broadcaster, and there will only be the influence of very powerful commercial interests.*

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

- What regulatory changes at EU or global level might impact on the governance of public service media in the period ahead?
  - *The EU should have no influence whatsoever on national broadcasting.*
- What challenges are posed to a vibrant, independent public service media by increasing consolidation / declining plurality of ownership in the Irish market?
  - *Is there declining plurality of ownership in the Irish Market? Depends on your definition. To what are you referring, precisely? What does “vibrant, independent public service media” mean?*
- Are current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media adequate?
  - *No. The broadcasting act is being preferentially interpreted and enforced by the BAI. The BAI is acting in its own interest, rather than in the interest of the public. We have the unfortunate situation where there is no one watching the watcher. Over the course of the past 2 decades, through selective enforcement and interpretation, the BAI (staff/board) has come to see itself as somehow “anointed” to gently guide and influence public opinion from the commanding heights. This is a real problem, particularly as it is being done with the best of intentions.*

Success breeds success, as they say, nothing succeeds like excess, and other such pithy one-liners as we used to find written on toilet doors, before twitter was invented.

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[Redacted]

Record #483

[Redacted]



From: [REDACTED]  
To: [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
Date: Thursday 7 January 2021 23:17:40

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,



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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #484  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of Irish Media  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 23:19:08

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Basically my thoughts on the current MSM are the whole lot of them need to be disbanded. They are a disgrace to the word journalism, paid shills the lot of them.

The people of Ireland are waking up to the lies and god help those implicit in the demise of our beautiful country, we know them all.

Transparency and being totally neutral is what we need, plenty of independent media out there. Gript media, freepress.ie they're the future of Irish Media.... the truth.

Regards

[REDACTED]

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy A50 - Powered by Three

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Record #485  
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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 23:30:39

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland.

I do not believe that we the Irish taxpayers should any longer support media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of a large part of the population of our country.

We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians and Irish Catholic Citizens.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups.

Little or no programming is available on Catholic social, political or cultural issues, other than those of a dissenting nature.

Indeed as recently as 31st December 2020 RTE created a disgraceful controversy directly aimed at mocking Christianity, the faith which our country was built on.

It caused deep deep offense to people of the Christian Faith in our country. The same People who are funding indirectly these obscene programmes ridiculing their faith with their taxes.

Irish taxpayers should no longer be asked to pay for such simple minded drivel that is being presented to them.

In addition it is extremely apparent that Christian's and in particular Catholics are constantly selected for special treatment and derided by these Media bullies.

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible.

Indeed even when complaints are upheld there appear to be no consequences at all for offending broadcasters.

Indeed and most bizarrely the BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island'.

At the start of this particular show a so called 'evil' priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

This highly offensive mocking of the Christian faith is broadcast on a regular basis and goes on completely unchecked.

This is pitched as a project and funded by the BAI !!

In another example the Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on who are totally ignorant of the Catholic faith referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

All of this from RTE and the BAI who openly proclaim themselves to be champions of equality, tolerance and fairness ??

Indeed it's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

This hypocrisy cannot be allowed to be funded any longer by the Irish taxpayer.

We propose the following:

1. Defund RTE and other biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax.
2. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership to include a greater cross section of Catholic representation.
3. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact information]

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Record #486

## **Submission on the Future of the Media**

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to make this submission. Given the role and influence of the media in our society and the way the media has evolved over the past number of years it is appropriate that this review is being carried out at this time. As regards the questions you pose my answers are:

**Question 1.** In your introduction you mention the importance of the media for our democracy and our society and state that they inform public debate through independent journalism. Account should also be taken of the power of the media in influencing public opinion and their concomitant responsibilities in this regard including the responsibility to ensure that the public are properly informed on issues by permitting all opinions to be heard.

At present there appears to be concern in what could be called the mainstream media that their influence is on the wane and other forms of media are becoming more influential. If that is so, it is largely their own fault. This is because large sections of the community feel, quite justifiably, that their views and their life experiences are ignored and excluded by the mainstream media. There was a time when the main newspapers published diverse views and opinions on the issues of the day but now it seems that views and opinions that do not conform to the 'accepted narrative' of those in control are denied access to the media. A primary aim of any Government support for public service media should be ensuring that the public are fully informed on all current issues by insisting that dissenting voices have access to the media. The intolerance of dissenting opinions that challenge the 'accepted narrative' has exacerbated considerably in recent years.

***Public service media can best respond to needs and expectations of all the public by dismantling the Echo Chamber in which they currently operate and ensuring that those who control the media fulfil their responsibilities to the public by allowing diverse and dissenting voices to be heard in their outlets.***

**Question 2.** Excessive public funding for the media creates the impression, rightly or wrongly, that the media are beholden to the Government of the day and must therefore toe the Government line. Any form of State funding for the media, apart from the national broadcaster, will fuel this suspicion regardless of how covert it may be, whether by tax incentives, training grants etc. Media operating in the commercial world should not receive any form of funding from the State. Indeed there could be a case made for an end to taxpayer funding for RTE.

**Question 3.** I believe there is a need to look at the remit and operation of the BAI, in particular its handling of complaints. In dealing with complaints the BAI appears to have too many 'get out' clauses which enable it to avoid dealing with genuine complaints where doing so might upset certain vociferous groups or powerful interests. At present its

complaints procedures seem to be restricted to specific broadcasts but it should be able to address complaints about bias in dealing with issues over a longer timescale, such as complaints that a broadcaster is promoting a partisan agenda on certain issues and excluding alternative or dissenting viewpoints.

At present the remit of the BAI only covers certain publicly funded bodies in the broadcast media. Given the important role media plays in our democracy and in our society consideration should be given to extending its remit to cover all media operating in the State. Alternatively there should be a statutory body set up to deal with complaints against media not currently within the remit of the BAI. While there is a Press Council in existence it is effectively controlled by the industry and its decisions reflect the bias of current media groupthink.

### **General comment on the media**

There is a sense that traditional media is in a crisis due partly to the development and expansion of online media. As I said above this is primarily the fault of those who control traditional media. If you look at the main national newspapers and other media outlets you will see that groupthink is the order of the day. Like so many other people I have stopped buying newspapers, preferring instead to get my news online where, at least, I can expect to find some diversity of opinion which is totally absent from mainstream media. Our generation like to think that we live in a more enlightened and tolerant society than our predecessors. I can honestly say that I have never known a time when there was such intolerance of diverse and dissenting opinions as there is in our society today. One would expect that the media would be champions of free speech and diversity, but instead they are the exact opposite. Our main newspapers have enthusiastically embraced 'no platforming' and 'cancel culture' and are very much in the vanguard of the movement to suppress free speech and the right to express dissenting opinions. Not only do they deny dissenting voices access to their publications (including letters pages) but they turn on their own colleagues who are deemed to be less than 'ideologically pure'. The hounding of George Hook, Kevin Myers and John Waters are examples of what can happen to the careers of anyone in the media who departs from the accepted groupthink. In many ways the mainstream media are the fulfilment of the prophecies of George Orwell in his book 1984 (he just got the year wrong). The newspaper which was once regarded as Ireland's quality newspaper has, sadly, become one of the greatest offenders in this regard. It could be said that the Irish Times sets the standard for intolerance of free speech and diversity of opinions within the mainstream media.

It is in the area of what is referred to as 'gender politics' that the most pronounced bias and intolerance can be seen. The only opinions on any subject that are published in mainstream newspapers or heard on TV or radio are feminist opinions. No alternative to the feminist narrative is permitted on any topic. The many problems encountered by men and boys in our society are mostly ignored or if they are addressed it is done in accordance with the

feminist perspective. The high rate of male suicide is attributed to flaws in the makeup of the male of the species i.e. toxic masculinity; not expressing their feelings; not seeking help etc. In other words blame men themselves but do not question the manner in which men are treated in society and by State institutions e.g. the family courts and above all do not even raise the question of the possibility that feminist influences on the Institutions of State, the laws of the land; the media or particularly the legal system could in any way be contributory factors in the high rate of male suicide. If over 80% of suicides were female there would be an ongoing outcry in the media blaming society, the mythical patriarchy and every institution in the State but never suggesting that women themselves or toxic femininity are contributory factors.

### **Negative portrayal of men in the media.**

As well as excluding the male perspective from analysis and discussion of social and political issues the mainstream media play a leading role in the negative portrayal of men and masculinity which has become so fashionable in recent times. Men are portrayed as the deeply flawed half of the human race whose innate masculinity must be deconstructed and reconstructed to meet feminist demands of what a man should be -a feminist version of eugenics. Women on the other hand are portrayed as human perfection and have no innate flaws but are constantly oppressed and abused by inferior humans, men, and the mythical patriarchy. When the coronavirus first hit us I correctly predicted that it would only be a matter of time until the media would be telling us that women are the 'real victims' of Covid 19. Not only did my prediction come true but articles also appeared claiming that women were the 'real heroes' of the epidemic. There is of course no evidence to support either of these claims. Indeed these claims demean the heroic work of the many men who work alongside women doing excellent work in the health services etc. The fact that the media seems to be compelled to relentlessly push the myths that women are superior to men; that men are deeply flawed compared to women; that women are the main victims of all the woes of the world begs the question; is the female psyche so fragile and insecure that they need constant reassurance that they are superior to the deeply flawed male half of the human race but are held back by the oppressive and abusive 'patriarchy'; that whatever catastrophe happens they are the supreme victims or is it that certain powerful forces who control the media relentlessly push this narrative to support their agenda. For the sake of humanity and especially women I hope it is the latter.

One typical example of the misandrist ethos of the Irish media was a series of articles which appeared in the Irish Times in 2016. To mark International Men's day that year the Irish Times cynically ran what can only be described as a week-long anti-man hate fest. For a full week they published a series of articles, all written by handpicked pro-feminist men who seemed to be competing to see who could produce the most negative portrayal of men and masculinity (the contest was probably won by Michael Harding with an article entitled "I know I am a man because I am selfish" – wrong Mr Harding; if you are selfish it is because

you are Michael Harding, not because you are a man. Don't try to inflict your flaws onto other men.) If such a vitriolic series of articles had been directed at any other group in society there would have been uproar, but because it was directed at men it was regarded as acceptable.

In summary I believe that traditional mainstream media is in crisis and the outlook for its survival looks bleak. If it continues down the road it has been on for the past two decades then its demise will be no great loss either to our democracy or society. Online media for all its flaws is more democratic in that it permits diverse to be expressed. The level of groupthink, intolerance of free speech, hostility to opinions that do not agree with their agenda, abuse of their dominant position by excluding access to people or groups offering alternative opinions and control by advocates of particular ideologies, especially feminism, mean that mainstream media no longer serves the best interests of democracy or our society.

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Record #487

[Redacted]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Re. RTE concerns  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 23:52:48

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTE's losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact a signature.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #489  
[REDACTED]

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTE's losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers' money. I do not believe either that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion ( [REDACTED] )

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

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In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid-air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

---

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #490

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Thursday 7 January 2021 23:57:07

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## Submission to the Future of Media Commission

Dear Sirs,

a free, democratic society is based on the free expression and exchange of views and opinions. The reporting of the public service media should be neutral and unbiased, offering personal views if wanted, but making sure that this understood as a personal view and not a fact. This last point, which used to be a mainstay of journalism, unfortunately has been quite absent for the last years.

The reporting on RTE has been biased and not objective, there has been clear framing of politically unwanted views and people. Now, the attempt is being made to go even a step further, not only will unwanted political, moral or ethical views not be aired on RTE, but they should even be suppressed altogether (denouncing them as "fake news"). The public broadcaster, financed with our tax money, has become a mouth piece of the government, and there is no critical, independent journalism at work here. What we have instead is a type of pro-government propaganda, with no real evaluation of what is happening in our country.

For the future of our public broadcaster an effort has to be made to show critical thinking, unbiased reporting and the ability to stay clear of political correctness. In my lifetime I have seen journalism decline to a level I never thought possible, but which is not far away from the propaganda I witnessed in totalitarian systems. Nowadays you can lose your reputation, job or college course for expressing unpopular views, and the media are to blame for this development. We need to get back to honest reporting to keep our society free and the discourse varied and open. Therefore I strongly object to any kind of censorship, it is unworthy of a democracy.

If RTE is in financial trouble it might be due to the many people who have stopped listening to it. The only station I can now tolerate is Lyric

FM, everything else gives me the feeling of being brainwashed.  
Fortunately we have no television!

I hope you will consider my views in your final report, it is the view of  
many of my friends.

With kind regards,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the sender's name and signature.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #493  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 19:29:34

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Please find below some comments for your consideration.

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

4. Journalists are not there to proclaim their own biased opinions as is the case with most RTE interviewers. They are there to act as independent voices to elicit information from their interviewees not to pursue their own agendas. Please also instruct your interviewers to stop always looking for the negatives when conducting their interviews particularly at this very difficult time. This of course also applies to all other national broadcasters.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Thank you.

Kind regards

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted line]

Best regards,

[Redacted signature]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #494  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Defund RTE  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 19:31:26

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1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

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3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #495

[REDACTED]

**Future of Media**  
**Submission to Public Consultation**

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Government should initiate legislation to ensure that public service media will actually be balanced and objective *in practice*, not merely in theory or law.

**Fake News**

Government's role in relation to public service content in the wider (privately-owned) media should be limited, as it is extremely dangerous for a government to exercise any excessive authority in relation to media. In particular, while the consultation website refers to 'fake news', there should be no role for government in relation to so-called 'fake news'. Outside the law of defamation, government has no right to determine what can or cannot be said.

The term 'fake news' is sometimes applied to stories that are indeed false, but most of the time it is simply a label used by mainstream sources (which are almost all left-wing) to suppress the truth, damage their competitors and smear people whose opinions they disagree with. Too often 'fake news' simply means 'truth that does not suit a left-wing perspective'. While there are cases of actual fake news, nothing can be done to address that phenomenon fairly, because the people who have real power to address it (whether in government or in social media companies) cannot be trusted to confine their curtailment of 'fake news' to actual fake news, as opposed to truths that do not suit their narrative. In addition, government and social media companies exhibit no interest in dealing with the problem of fake news emanating from 'authoritative' (i.e. mainstream, left-wing) sources.

**Fairness on Social Media**

Government should seek to ensure that social media companies respect freedom of expression. Like the media in this country, social media companies are operated by people with left-wing opinions, which would not be much of a problem if they were prepared to treat people who disagree fairly but they are not. There is a long and well-established history of social media companies discriminating against people with conservative viewpoints and there are countless individual examples of this occurring. This is well-recognised and is denied only by highly partisan and dishonest actors. These social media companies enjoy special protections from legal liability, particularly in their home country, specifically because they are open platforms for everyone rather than publishers and so are not responsible for the content on the platforms in the way that a publisher would be. The rationale for such legal protections has disappeared since they operate not as platforms but as publishers determining what content is to be demoted or suppressed. Social media has in recent years become the main public square, and so it is vitally important to prevent censorship and ensure respect for the basic human right of freedom

of expression on social media platforms. There should be effective deterrent penalties for breach of these standards and a judicial remedy in civil proceedings should be available for parties affected (if such remedy is not yet available it should be introduced by statute). These remedies should be available to all (though in practice they are unlikely to be required by those on the left in reality). I understand there is a Polish Bill seeking to address social media bias, so in terms of looking at what we can learn from other jurisdictions that may be a good starting point.

### **Diversity in Media**

Regarding the question about what systems may be required to support and sustain public service content in an increasingly competitive and consolidated market, what is needed is some means of promoting diversity of ownership in media – not just diversity in the sense of ownership by different individuals/companies, but by different individuals/companies *with different viewpoints*. Having more outlets presenting different viewpoints is essential to a properly functioning democracy in which people genuinely have a choice between different worldviews, and it would also help to promote honesty in the media in the sense that any outlet distorting the truth to suit a particular agenda would then know that another outlet would be drawing public attention to a very different picture of reality.

Outside of that, it is not the responsibility of the State to introduce some new system to support and sustain public service content. Like businesses generally, media outlets are supposed to face competition, not to be protected from it, and certainly not to be funded by the very authorities they have a duty to hold to account.

### **Funding of Public Service Content Providers**

In terms of the question about apportioning public funding to public service content providers, the idea of giving them public funding should be out of the question. There are many reasons for this, but in my opinion the following are the foremost among the reasons why they should not be given public funding:

- (1) Any such arrangement obviously entails an enormous danger of media organisations failing to hold government to account, since the funding would incentivise them not to, and would also incentivise them to speak against any politicians or parties who seek to reduce or eliminate their funding.
- (2) The vast majority of the media in this country, especially in terms of the national media, hold substantially the same opinions on every issue of public importance. They are almost uniformly left-wing (except to some extent on economic issues), but not necessarily liberal because genuine liberals support freedom of expression and a true marketplace of competing, diverse opinions enabling the public to make up their own

minds. If there were conservative news outlets with enough resources to achieve a comparable reach in terms of public consumption then this would help redress the balance, but that is not the reality in Ireland. Since the mainstream media in this country refuse to give equal opportunity of persuasion on matters of public importance, it is especially inappropriate to suggest they should be funded publicly. It is totally unacceptable to force citizens with conservative or other views<sup>1</sup> to fund biased publications whose views are diametrically opposed on some very important matters. To borrow the words of Mr. Justice O’Flaherty in the *McKenna* case: “The public purse must not be expended to espouse a point of view which may be anathema to certain citizens, who, of necessity, have contributed to it.”<sup>2</sup> (in the *McCrystal* case this quotation was recognised by the Supreme Court as being one of the *McKenna* principles on funding in relation to referenda. It has a wisdom and fairness of much wider application).

- (3) Most of the media in this country appear to lack even the desire to perform the vital public watchdog role which media have a crucially important duty to discharge. They accept government narratives far too readily; they do not ask sufficiently challenging questions (except when on some issue the government is actually not left-wing enough to satisfy them); they ensure that the views of experts and others who agree with them are given far more prominence than those of experts and others who disagree; and they are far less interested in actually informing people than they are in using their publications to manipulate people into thinking precisely what they want us to think. They use their platforms to distort public perceptions of what is occurring in Ireland and the world and they suppress or under-report truths that do not suit their agenda. They also fall short in their vitally important function of challenging excessive exercises of government power – a particularly important function over the course of the last 10 months or so. There are a few honourable exceptions to whom these statements do not apply, but not nearly enough.
- (4) Providers of public service content are private businesses which are responsible for obtaining their own income. They can do so by sales, subscriptions, advertising, and by other means. At a time when so many others have been denied their livelihoods, and the foreseeable future is likely to remain difficult economically, it is even more outlandish now than it would be in ordinary times to suggest that there should be public funding for media.

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<sup>1</sup> I am using terms such as conservative, liberal and left-wing as a convenient, general shorthand, although I recognise that – just as I do not hold conservative views on every issue – many people likewise do not fit precisely into one of these boxes.

<sup>2</sup> In *McKenna v. An Taoiseach (No. 2)*

If equal funding were given to conservative media as to the mainstream media then this would address some (not all) of the above concerns. However, there are very few conservative media outlets in Ireland.

### **Public Service Media**

Public service media should be financed by advertising, both via their radio and television broadcasting and via their online platforms. Cutting unnecessary expenditure would help to ensure this is sustainable. One aspect of this would be ceasing to pay ridiculous salaries to RTÉ presenters, salaries which are rendered all the more highly inappropriate at a time when many people have been deprived by the government of their livelihoods and when many equally talented people would gladly do the same job for a much more reasonable salary.

RTÉ should not rely on public funding and the licence fee should be abolished as a matter of urgency. Many of the same reasons given above as to why privately owned media should not be funded by the State apply with equal force to the case of public service media, especially in the absence of more effective safeguards for balance and fairness in broadcasting.

It should not be regarded as acceptable to force people to pay for any media outlet, but if it were acceptable the only circumstance in which it could be so regarded would be if that public service media outlet were strictly and consistently objective and even-handed in its coverage of all issues. Any outlet that wishes to avail of a privilege as extraordinary as the licence fee must accept that the price of that is unwavering adherence to its statutory obligations. That high standard is a very, very long way from the reality of how RTÉ conducts itself. Instead, what we get from RTÉ is a procession of people with left-wing/liberal opinions using their highly privileged positions to promote their views. From the content of RTÉ news coverage to the issues RTÉ choose to highlight; from the guests they select to appear on their programmes to the particular experts whose views they promote; their false and egregious character assassinations of people they do not favour, such as Declan Ganley and Kevin Myers; the disparities in the amount of time they afford to parties and opinions they do not favour; their often hostile questioning of people who hold those opinions in contrast to their soft questioning of people they agree with; and their ill-disguised contempt for broadly conservative views and for Christianity, RTÉ abuses its position in order to induce the Irish people to think what RTÉ wants us to think. This is not public service broadcasting worthy of the name, and it is disgraceful that people who disagree with RTÉ's views are forced to pay for it. Even people who never watch RTÉ are forced to pay.

This is not, of course, a new problem. RTÉ have been like this for years. For example, they received a warning notice from the BAI in 2016 following a series of instances of breach of their statutory obligations on the issue of abortion (and indeed there are many examples of their bias on that issue before and since the 2018 referendum, many of the pre-referendum examples

having been highlighted by the Pro Life Campaign and Hear Both Sides). Still however, despite the BAI's past interventions, the problem of RTÉ prejudices has continued to contaminate their broadcasting on a variety of issues, because there is simply no deterrent, no proper sanction to deal with the problem. This ultimately is why the statutory and other changes suggested below are necessary, and why without them no credible case at all can be made for continuing to compel people to fund RTÉ. Even with the changes suggested below, in my view no-one should be compelled to fund it, but at least some argument can be made for funding it if it is made to become a genuinely even-handed broadcaster in reality as well as in theory.

If the government actually wants to solve this problem, it can and will take very meaningful steps to do so. If on the other hand it opposes positive change in relation to RTÉ, then it will not. The government can easily introduce statutory mechanisms to correct RTÉ's lack of regard for its statutory obligations of even-handedness. That is an essential step. It is vital that these powers include strong, effective deterrents, such that RTÉ and the appropriate people within it face real and adequate consequences for breaches of statutory duty. RTÉ's own conduct has long since proven the need for such changes, and no person interested in fairness could seriously deny that.

Such enhanced statutory powers are important, although they are not sufficient in themselves without full willingness and ability to uphold fairness in broadcasting. In this regard, it seems regrettably clear that the BAI is not exercising an adequate supervisory function as, incredibly, it has not upheld any complaint since 2018, according to a report in *The Sunday Times* Culture section in or around September last.

#### **Time allowed for Submissions in Public Consultation**

Finally, while it may not be something the Commission can do anything about, perhaps you might be kind enough to suggest that in future more time be allowed for public consultations, particularly on issues as complex as this. This deadline is very shortly after Christmas, and between that and work commitments it is difficult to get around to writing a submission. Probably like some others, I would have liked to have time to add more to this submission.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #496

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Funding of Media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 19:24:09

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To whom it concerns.

I want to object to the funding of RTE with taxpayers money. Their agenda is directed by the government which is anti Christian and the moral values of Christian living. Any debates on life issues are one-sided to ensure they brainwash the public into voting for referenda to change our constitution. Many programmes are anti Church and anti Family. I believe we should have a choice on whom we fund and allow other media develop and grow, especially those with good Family values who speak the truth. I want clean comedy and drama with an uplifting message to help people. The dramas and soaps produced by RTE in recent years are mostly immoral and violent. They incite aggression and hatred in those who watch them and are not suitable for family viewing.

I request that funding of RTE should stop immediately.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #497

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of Media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 19:23:01

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RTE is no longer a broadcasting station that is unbiased. It no longer presents an issue in a balanced fashion. This has been the case for some years, but in the last two to three years it has become much worse. As a result it should no longer be financed by the licence fee. The recent New Years Eve programme is an example of how poor the standards are with the station.

I have stopped watching RTE for some years now for the above reasons. In a phone-in programme, I am told, a person with a Christian outlook on life gets treated very differently than a Moslem or those with the so-called liberal agenda. So, again I say, defund RTE.

Thank you  
[REDACTED]

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** the Future of Media Commission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 19:12:00

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe either that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

- RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.
- The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]
- The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.
- The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".
- In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.
- The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.
- While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It

cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of the sender.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #502

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** RE: URGENT - Defund RTE  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 19:10:17

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Dear Sirs

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

Posted Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2021



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #503

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 19:05:35

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTE's losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED].

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it is now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's

questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #504  
[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Future of Public Service Broadcasting  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 19:02:05

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Fri 8 Jan 2021 at 16:38  
**Subject:** Future of Public Service Broadcasting  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie) <[info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)>

Hi there

I would like to see Public Service Broadcasting being just that for ALL of the Public no matter who e.g race, religion, sexual orientation.. everyone gets a chance to speak , everyone gets a chance to be heard in a non biased manner

Also National Public Broadcasting should be inclusive, that everyone on this Island has the opportunity to be heard

Rural areas need to be represented as much as Dublin is.

I believe we need to save our culture, t our Irish language, our Irish traditional music. We have are veering more and more to being Americanised whilst losing our precious heritage. More support should be given to TG4. We have a massive increase in Gaelscoils, Naoinras etc which means we have a huge amount of young people fluent in our national language and to keep that culture alive we need programmes to meet their needs and the needs of their families

Our national broadcaster seems to be a puppet of the government ( who seem to be pulling RTEs strings), running with their viewpoints. RTE should be an impartial body. I pay my licence fee and always have done but feel that why should I bother subscribe to a body which is not fair and certainly does not show balance

This was certainly evident during the Abortion Referendum. Broadcasting was hugely imbalanced, lots of derogatory innuendo directed towards pro life advocates, choice of guests was again not balanced abd if you are to listen back to many radio and tv programs the questioning style was not impartial

If you want true balance then RTE needs diverse views and people and encourage open discussion.

Free speech needs to be welcomed even if someone's opinion is different from others respect is always necessary, they do to be belittled, vilified, demonised.

Media moulds the minds of our youth if you promote demonisation and humiliation and vilification of those who have different viewpoints then you risk having a very aggressive society where communication is not a two way process

I worry for the future of Irish Broadcasting and it is for this reason I am emailing you because I want a fair, balanced, impartial broadcaster

Kind regards



[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #505

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** re the recent scandalous remarks about God made by Aongus Mac Griana  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 18:58:56  
**Importance:** High

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1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

your truly

[REDACTED]

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Record #506

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** The Future of the Media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 18:55:51

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I would like to make a few comments in relation to the media outlets in Ireland at the present time.

1. As a citizen I am constantly dismayed by the lack of fair coverage displayed on Radio and Television and newspapers in Ireland today especially in the area of faith and religious belief.
2. This was especially evident in the run up to the Abortion Referendum. I was staggered by Radio Interviews when presenters failed to ask relevant questions in relation to what the person they were interviewing was saying which resulted in statements made being unchallenged and thereby appearing as fact.
3. I was also appalled by the bias shown to people representing the 'Yes' side in the abortion debate.
4. I do not think that RTE should receive the funding it does but that the funding should be shared with other platforms who attempt to deliver the truth. An example of this would be Gript.ie
5. The shocking viewing on New Year's Eve in relation to the raping of Mary by God was distasteful and blasphemous. Same and shame again on RTE. The Church may be down but I am just one of thousands who are believers and this was gutter and comedy.
6. Defund RTE and give other quality platforms a chance.

With great expectations,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

█

█  
█  
█



█

Record #507

█



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** remove RTE Licence  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 18:43:25

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Dear Commission,

I have never purchased an RTE TV licence.

It is not only because RTE have embarrassingly bad presenters who are paid twice as much as their more professional BBC and ITV counterparts, despite having an audience that is less than a tenth of theirs.

It is not only because RTE are anti-Catholic bigots who have been socially engineering this country for decades with their hate and guilt.

It is not only because they have become a mouthpiece for the Irish Government "spinning" their lies. The convergence of a so called "national station" and our political system has produced a totalitarian fascist state.

It is not only because they have dumbed down this country with their tendentious and loaded programs which even a child can see coming a mile off.

It is not because their presenters are so cringy and no-one listens to them.

It is not even because I would rather not have a TV than pay a licence fee to RTE.

It is not because their presenters and producers would probably not find work anywhere else (certainly somewhere that would give them RTE salaries)

And not because thousands of unemployed (mainly single mothers) have been hauled through the courts because they cannot afford a fee. These easy victims of RTE are the least able to defend themselves and the least able to pay. Though this would be reason enough.

The main reason would be that If I purchased a television, I would then be forced to fund RTE and their rich talentless "stars" whether I watched them or not. If RTE is so good, why don't they forgo this compulsory and criminal tax and let the market decide. We all know what they would earn then.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #508

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 18:39:37

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And while ye are at it close down public transport etc in fact stop the world we want to get off as you can see from the above I don't agree that we should defund rte they make stupid mistakes but this is not a good reason to do so it's like throwing the baby out with the bath water

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #509

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** RTE - the future of media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 18:39:36

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Why am I saying to myself - "what's the point?"

The main stream media, of which RTE is an integral part in Ireland, is so liberal and secular that I feel that there's no point "going against the tide!" I'm not just talking about religion though it's blatantly obvious that the Catholic Church is the "last acceptable prejudice"!

Obviously I should give examples, but, quite honestly, there are so many examples I would be here all day. Three examples come quickly to mind;

the recent skit/sketch narrated by Aengus Mac Grionna blaspheming Jesus, and

the bias pro-abortion coverage leading up to the Abortion Referendum, and in the aftermath of it

Ray d'Arcy outspoken liberal, secular bias in his daily afternoon programme.

Human nature being what it is how can RTE, all of a sudden, become objective and neutral/

Prove me wrong!

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #510  
[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 19:34:00

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In short that you would raise the bar.  
Not pander to undergraduate (juvenile) humour.  
To provide platforms for intellectual arguments between contrasting views.  
Not ad hominem.  
E.g. interviews with people like the agnostic Jordan Peterson.  
Teasing out philosophical concepts through the interplay of enquiring minds.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #511  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** UNFUND RTE  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 19:36:23

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To The Media Commission

We no longer watch RTE due to it's complete bias against truth and towards a specific government narrative. RTE news does not present the truth of situations in Ireland. But uses Public Funding to advance political ends which are anti God, anti faith in Jesus, and certainly do not allow for freedom of speech regarding different perspectives here in Ireland. RTE does not represent the views of the Irish Public, but obviously aims to mould the views of the Irish Public.

Ireland is a Republic, and therefore is obliged to care for the individual Irish citizens, as a Commission it is of paramount importance that you consider the views of all Irish Citizens, therefore

**1.** RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

**2.** The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

**3.** If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support [Gript.ie](http://Gript.ie) rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

With concern for the lack of freedom of the press in Ireland

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #512  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 19:46:44

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Please defund rte and sack the entire board for it's continuous bias it is an utter disgrace the way the blatant bias in it's programmes is put on people every day the same people who fund it

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #513

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Defunding of RTE  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 19:46:16

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RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The [Journal.ie](#)* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support [Gript.ie](#) rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

These are my shared grievances views and actions clearly needed to address current media imbalances

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #515

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Unrepresentative  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 20:07:39

---

I wish to state my objection to RTE receiving tax payers money on the grounds that it is no longer a community focussed service and has increasingly become an instrument of propaganda for some minority groups.

yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #516  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Catholic Programms  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 20:08:22

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TO whom it should concern as a TV

licence payer my family & friends would

appreciate if Rte include some programs

of a religious nature as their is no such

programs to cater for our needs which

says Alot about RTE. We now question are we getting value for our money??

Regards [REDACTED]

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Record #517

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of Media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 20:09:36

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Dear futureofmediacommission,

Below are some of my views on the future of media in Ireland.

### RTÉ

It is of great regret that I have come to the conclusion that RTÉ should be defunded!

It receives vast sums from the taxpayer each year and yet it totally fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many. These include people like myself with pro-life views or people of faith. However, we are still forced to fund this organisation.

Their token inclusion oone minute Angelus a day and Mass once a week in no way makes up for the bias and ridicule spouted throughout the rest of the day / week. Their bias with their continual factual inaccuracies, always on the liberalising side of a public debate, has gone on too long.

One has to look no further that the New Year's Eve Countdown show and their so-called "satirical sketch" accusing God of rape. I found this sketch extremely offensive and made my views known to RTÉ. It was only when thousands of others like me contacted RTÉ also, that an apology was forthcoming. I believe that their first attempt was not an apology at all, but instead just a box ticking exercise with their insistence at keeping the blasphemous item up on their player platform.

### Expanding Public Funding

From what I've read, it appears that the Future of Media Commission is considering expanding / increasing public funding for media platforms. Well, if this is the case, then the funding model seriously needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved more. I have no problem admitting that I would rather my taxes go to support an organisation such [Gript.ie](http://Gript.ie) rather than the likes of RTÉ. I know that I'm not alone with this viewpoint.

Stakeholder involvement, i.e. the tax payers, could be gotten involved by being given the opportunity to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all, and include all platforms who has an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives should always receive support.

The current situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have "I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine" relationships with the Government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

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Record #518

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future Funding Media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 20:25:31

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payer's money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith-based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith-based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God-fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid-air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So, we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith-based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded

deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

Kind regards,

[Redacted signature]



Virus-free. [www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

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Record #520

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Stop funding BIA  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 20:38:06

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,



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Record #521

From: [REDACTED]  
To: [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
Date: Friday 8 January 2021 20:39:31

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is now the TV license, to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax which is designed to cover RTE's losses.

It's been suggested also that failing print media could be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payers funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria which may be at risk of genocide is another case in point.

The controversy has continued over the outrageous skit on God raping and impregnating Our Lady, in part due to the stubborn refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's just satire and an expression of freedom of speech.

This despite everyone knowing, that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

Furthermore, the mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear useless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs in particular, as to make confidence in the system impossible and any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know, has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell to trick people back to Church.

In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". All pitched as a project to and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, plenty of people still do. In any case, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation if not one of the anti discrimination grounds.

So we propose defunding of biased individual media outlets ( rather than our subsidizing them through a national household tax ) that happily break their own regulations and I would say, the law, as long as its about Christians and Catholics in particular.

If you the Commission on the future of the media, propose to advise further funding to RTE and similar outlets then you are furthering the discriminatory practices outlined above. Stop funding RTE or other media outlets through a coercive license or tax which guarantees a conflict of interest in journalistic independence when the government of the day part pays journalists' salaries. Enough journalists have joined government ranks as it is. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI (and in turn of RTE) so as to not engage in discrimination against just one faith based group. The BAI cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours

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Record #522

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of Media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 20:46:01

---

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,



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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #523  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of the media in Ireland submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 20:48:51

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To whom it concerns

I wish to give my views on the future of the media in Ireland.

My understanding is that the issue of public funding of Irish media by way of a broadcast charge is currently under consideration and I want to register my opposition to such a proposal.

Now more than ever the issue of news trustworthiness is vital. My impression of much of Irish media is that it can lack objectivity, impartiality, independence and balance. Unfortunately there can often be a tangible sense of group-think, with the Irish media, both print and broadcast, appearing to exist within an echo chamber much of the time. How can so many hold such similar views on so many issues? Some minority groups and individuals who question the aforementioned group-think can be demonised or trivialised. It is so dispiriting. Greater voice should be given to dissenting viewpoints, rather than tokenism as is the case currently in my view.

Our TV licence fee supports RTE and we have no choice in the matter. In the recent New Year's Eve Countdown programme taxpayers' money was used to fund a deeply offensive item which portrayed God as a rapist of a young migrant woman. RTE appeared to deem this funny rather than grossly offensive to people of faith, in particular Christians, in addition to rape victims and anybody who considers rape heinous and indeed to migrants too. It took several thousand objections before RTE agreed to remove this offensive and insulting material from their player. What guarantee is there that one can expect any different standard from the print media?

Private business should be required to finance itself and not be subsidised by the taxpayer. It is also vital that the media be independent and free from any form of political interference by the Government.

Thanks for taking the time to read this submission.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Record #524

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 20:53:20

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I feel that RTE does not represent or cater for public in a fair even handed way. The broadcasters do not reflect the range of views of the public. They appear to remain in that group think bubble that was noted in the Aoife Kavanagh false reporting of a few years ago. Ray D'Arcy, Joe Duffy and Ryan Tubridy are grossly overpaid. Their programmes are poor quality., often embarrassing. The latest recruits to primetime are rude, arrogant and cold as interviewers. Sara Mc Inerney is competent but becoming increasingly arrogant. She was rude and unfair to the Minister of Education on Jan 6th interview. Only in its Sports broadcasting and parts of TG4 is RTE useful. Generally speaking Bryan Dobson is mannerly to his interviewees. The NYE broadcast depicting God as a racist was outrageous. The apology did not appear genuine as it remained on the website for too long. I deeply resent paying for a TV licence and paying tax to keep the RTE operation funded.

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

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Record #525

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of The Media  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 20:54:37

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Dear Future of Media Commission,

I am writing regarding the future of the media in Ireland and the money that is spent on same eg tax payers money.

1) RTE should be defunded it completely fails to provide a representation of fair hearing especially to those with Pro Life views or people of faith, and these same people are made to fund the station. Most recently in their New Years Eve Countdown show the blasphemy to God and Our Blessed mother was deeply offensive. RTE only apologized after 5,000 people complained and petitions were signed by many thousands more.

2) The funding mode needs to change if this Commission persists in providing or expanding public money for media platforms. Why don't you ask the public to vote for their favourite recipient from a list of news providers? Of course this list would have to be genuinely open to all spectrum of opinion.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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Record #526

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future funding of media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 21:23:57

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland.

We are being forced to pay taxes (tv license fee) that openly mock our catholic religion. It was an absolute disgrace what passed for a program on New Year's eve on Rte & indeed the mocking occurs also in other programs throughout the year.

An apology is not good enough. They should be defunded now. No other religion would be allowed to be mocked so openly without a public outcry.

Where is the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland in all of this? How are they allowing Rte to get away with this?

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

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Record #527

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission to Future of Media Commission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 21:24:39

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I frame these comments in the context of the preamble to our Constitution (pasted below).

It is recognised that modern Irish society is multicultural and represents a wide range of faiths and none, nevertheless there seems to be a strong media bias towards a humanistic and atheistic world view, devoid of any spiritual and moral context. I believe that a large proportion of Irish society would like to see public service media more cogniscent of widely and deeply held moral and spiritual convictions, in particular our Christian heritage, which for centuries has underpinned education and healthcare, and our laws and justice systems. Sadly, many shortcomings and failures in the church have triggered a backlash where the precious baby has been thrown out with the dirty bath water. The general impression of the national media is that it has become unbalanced, disproportionately swayed by pressure groups.

I know I am not alone in having a particular concern regarding the upholding of free speech, and concern over the trend towards branding expressions of unease with the views of others as "hate speech", and suggesting that they should be criminalised. It seems as if Irish society is inventing its own morality with no particular frame of reference to define, for example, what inclusion and diversity should mean, and ceasing to listen to or understand the spiritual truths and values of our forefathers.

I hope that the committee will uphold the highest standards especially with regard to public media output, respecting a framework of free speech where all may speak openly and respectfully without recrimination, and aware of the spiritual dimension of man. In these troubled times we would do well to humble ourselves and seek the help of the Almighty to give us wisdom in the days ahead. Then perhaps may we be:

*"seeking to promote the common good, with due observance of Prudence, Justice and Charity, so that the dignity and freedom of the individual may be assured, true social order attained, the unity of our country restored"*

In hope,

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[REDACTED]

Preamble to the  
**CONSTITUTION  
OF IRELAND**

*In the Name of the Most Holy Trinity, from Whom is all authority and to Whom, as our final end, all actions both of men and States must be referred,*

*We, the people of Éire,*

*Humbly acknowledging all our obligations to our Divine Lord, Jesus Christ, Who sustained our fathers through centuries of trial,*

*Gratefully remembering their heroic and unremitting struggle to regain*

*the rightful independence of our Nation,*

*And seeking to promote the common good, with due observance of  
Prudence, Justice and Charity, so that the dignity and freedom of the  
individual may be assured, true social order attained, the unity of our  
country restored, and concord established with other nations,*

*Do hereby adopt, enact, and give to ourselves this Constitution.*

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Record #528

## Submission: Future of Media in Ireland

The bias that the media, especially RTE presents to the public is very worrying. I'll make this short and sweet with a few examples.

Even "It says in the Papers" is biased. As an example,

***Lee v Ashers Baking Company Ltd and others* [2018] UKSC 49** was a [Supreme Court of the United Kingdom](#) discrimination case between Gareth Lee and Ashers Baking Company, owned by Daniel and Amy McArthur of Northern Ireland. Lee brought the case after Ashers refused to **make a cake with a message promoting [same-sex marriage](#), citing their religious beliefs.**<sup>[1]</sup> Following appeals, the Supreme Court overturned previous rulings in favour of Lee and made a judgement in favour of Ashers. The court said there was no discrimination against Lee and that Ashers' objections were with the message they were being asked to promote.<sup>[2]</sup> The court held that people in the United Kingdom could not legally be [forced to promote a message they fundamentally disagreed with](#).<sup>[3]</sup> The case became known in British media as the "**gay cake case**" **From Wikipedia**

This case went on for a few years because there were two appeals and then the Ashers took it to the Supreme Court of the UK and won their case. The winning of the case was all over the papers the following day. However, it was never mentioned in "It says in the Papers". I wrote to the Head of Radio and was told that I should contact the News Department. I was told then to contact Fiona Kelly who had done that morning's "It says in the Papers". I did but I never got a reply, not even an acknowledgement. In my view, it is not so much as to what RTE says, it is what it doesn't say. It cherry picks **their** selections, not what some listeners might want to hear.

It is the same with the interviewers. Most of the interviewers show their bias whereas their job is to treat the interviewees with impartiality. Most listeners have an opinion one way or another, but they are not being paid by RTE to be impartial. An example of this would be Mary Wilson's interviewing "technique". If she agrees with a person, she gives a nice soft interview. If she doesn't, she challenges them with hard questions. A case in point was her interviews on the "Dying with Dignity" bill. Mary certainly showed where she stood on the issue. There were references to choice, bodily autonomy, and personal sad stories such as ones which were given during the abortion referendum. A Drivetime reporter Barry Lenihan gave a report on the bill and the report was absolutely in favour of the bill. Mary didn't seem to like the palliative care consultant, Dr Feargal Twomey, as she kept interrupting him. He was interviewed on a different day. Mary said "that there were very strict guidelines", Dr Twomey disagreed. He found the bill flawed and dangerous. His points included fear for the disabled, the vulnerable who might feel pressurised or compelled to die. He had many points, one being how the original legislation is usually extended as time goes on.

Another point, how is it that some stories remain forever on the media and other similar ones are dropped almost immediately? For instance, the George Floyd story ran and ran whereas the unarmed woman in DC who was shot by police hardly got a mention.



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Record #529

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Modern Media.  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 21:35:48

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Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Date:** 8 January 2021 at 19:05:54 GMT  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Modern Media.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Date:** 8 January 2021 at 16:21:51 GMT  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Modern Media.

Modern Media.

A Chara,

It is my opinion that modern media is not doing it's job and is feeding into it's own sense of importance.

It lacks truth, objectiveness, fairness, morality, dignity and professionalism.

I think that it is biased, populist, presented over-dramatically and is sometimes led and funded by lobbyists and self interest groups.

It needs to voice each side of all issues equally and impartially.

This means that the industry has to employ educated people who are idealistic in their approach to presenting issues calmly and fairly.

There needs to be a international group of responsible and audited news media set up that will ensure an accurate, unbiased account of what is happening in the world.

Strict guidelines and legally binding rules need be introduced for social media.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #530

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 21:42:02

---

Dear Sir or Madam ,

A significant proportion of the citizens of this state are prolife and hold views on the continuum of life i.e. from conception up to death. This includes abortion,euthanasia , assisted suicide and many other topics.

These views should be treated with equity when it comes to broadcasting. Such as in a fair and balanced way with appropriate prolife representation.

Yours Sincerely, [REDACTED].

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[Redacted]

Record #531

[Redacted]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** defund the propaganda  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 21:46:29

---

RTE is no longer serving the population. it is a machine of the most negative forces in society today. Defund this disgraceful organization; it is not longer fit for service.

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.



Record #532



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 21:56:58

---

I strongly believe that the The Pro Life issue should be addressed and Our Catholic and Christian faith Should be respected by all forms of Media .at the moment Our Faith is not respected by RTE

Yours sincerely [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Sent from my Galaxy

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #533  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** The Future of Media Commission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 21:59:09

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For a long time now the media in Ireland all speak from the same viewpoint, which is not shared by

many Irish people.

I discovered over the years that many people I know -including myself - had quietly decided to stop buying newspapers because the papers were so at variance with their own views.

This has been going on for 20 years or more.

I know very few people who now regularly buy a paper. They got weary of Christianity being ridiculed, of pro life views being mocked, of a push towards euthanasia etc. One can stop buying newspapers but one cant stop paying for the TV licence. I didn't see the so called comic sketch on RTEs New Year's Eve show. However I did see how slow RTE was to apologise.

The older age group that still watches RTE is the age group that still values Christianity. RTE knows that very few young people watch them.

Yet they bite the hand that feeds them!

In the time before the Abortion referendum there were 33 articles pro abortion to one pro life. No one can claim that this is clear factual unbiased writing.

Lots of channels besides RTE provide news. The sixties are long gone. It is hard to see why RTE should be subsidised when it generally provides the same point of view as every other channel. No effort is made at being unbiased and giving different sides to complex issues.

It would make more sense to subsidise GRIPT. At least they present a different point of view. They are not part of the current consensus. In fact it is clear that there are different points of view among the writers in GRIPT which is quite refreshing and widens out the picture on whatever is under discussion. In addition they seem to research their articles well which is not always the case with mainstream media.

If this Commission is serious about the future of media, it needs to acknowledge that all branches of media at the moment are crowded with people who all have the same ideological views.

It needs to ensure that the views of people who hold Christian values, and see the world through the lens of these values, people who believe every life is important and that life should be protected from womb to tomb, it needs to ensure that these values are taken seriously and not airbrushed out of the picture or ridiculed and sneered at.

It also needs to accept that many secular and atheistic and agnostic people hold values similar to Christian's. In short it needs to accept life is complex.

One further point if newspapers etc cant survive without subsidies does there come a time when the market dictates what happens. After all to misquote the old News of the World " All human life is not there!"

Yours Sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #534  
[REDACTED]

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It is being suggested also that failing print media should be supported with taxpayer's money.

I do not believe that the argument, that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians/ conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith-based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith-based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the New Year's Eve (NYE) skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it is satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]. The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it is now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against is meaningless. The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it is stated that an evil priest, Fr. Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God-fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church". In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host/Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it is Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While many young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It is questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So, we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith-based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #535  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Future of Media Commission feedback  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 22:29:05

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## To whom it concerns

**I would like to raise the following points with you and give feedback as today is the closing date for submissions from the public today**

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The **Journal.ie*** which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support **Gript.ie** rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Sincerely



Sent from my iPhone

11



[Redacted]

Record #536

[Redacted]



From: [REDACTED]  
To: [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
Subject: The Future of Media Commission  
Date: Friday 8 January 2021 22:42:15

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Dear Sir/Madam

Having never done one of these before it may not be exactly in the format you usually get, but because of RTE's New Year's Eve show on the 31st December 2020 last year I have to make my feelings and thoughts felt on the whole subject of media in Ireland. I have yet to meet someone who thinks that RTE is an independent media forum and definitely the presenters etc., are paid way too much for such a closed shop.

RTE is a state funded organisation with presently a reliance on Minister Catherine Martin for the distribution of the TV Licence money and this in itself is wrong - the very two stated organisations often quote that Church and State should be separate, well now I think is the time for Media and State to be separate in relation to RTE and the Government. The state side (95% of politicians approx) kept their mouths shut over the most insulting slur that was on the above stated show under the pretext of satire. Well this satire alienated a huge portion of citizens in the country of Ireland and beyond. RTE were asked by the head of the Roman Catholic church in Ireland to "take it down", but all they did was put an 18yr warning re content up. I thought that an age sign was to do with violence and sexual content - I stand corrected. One of RTE's presenters, while putting a Mr. Wilson, from Ryan Air, under what I would call an interrogation, stated that having had "1000 complaints" surely they (Ryan Air) should take down their add about "Jab & Go" and that surely "they (Ryan Air) were reading the mood wrong"- my point is that RTE got over 6,000 complaints about this one show and they ***WOULD NOT*** take down their piece

from the show but di so ***only*** when they realised their back's were up against the wall and their own people said they had broken their own rules. Where is the media's responsibility to its public when their own updated "Policies and Guidelines for 2020" state:

**Quote from Policies and Guidelines updated 2020**

**"As part of its commitment to public-service broadcasting, RTÉ reflects, interrogates, celebrates and explains the diverse beliefs, cultures and spiritual values of the people of Ireland. Our editorial principles include:**  
**9.1 Respect for All Religious Views The fundamental right to hold religious views and to practice religion is respected and acknowledged. RTÉ must remain religiously impartial, objective and fair. RTÉ will also contribute towards the audience's understanding of international issues by providing information on and analysis of the role of religion in world affairs. 9.2 Tolerance of the Diversity of Belief RTÉ content will not only reflect the major faiths traditionally found in Ireland, but also those of the country's new and minority communities. Diverse religious voices should be part of the national conversation reflected in RTÉ's content, including those of**

**people who are agnostic or atheistic."**

**RTE's Mission Statement also states "Treat people, inclusive of staff and partners, with respect, even when it challenges." "Have a deep understanding of its audience"**

What is the point of the above media outlet having these written statements in their policies etc. when they don't abide by them themselves, but yet they hound people and other organisations until they get a head on a plate metaphorically speaking of course. They had a breaking of the Covid rules recently and the only sanction was for the presenters to watch a video. Why is it that RTE gives out the sanctions if you can call them that, when a Sky news reporter was given a 6 months suspension for mingling in a restaurant, out of work hours and outside of her workplace? This Commission needs to look at the whole issue of sanctions. RTE was given a written warning from the BAI approximately 3 years ago over Ray Darcy and guess what he got €50,000 of either a bonus or increase in his salary in the same year! Now I ask you where can anyone scrape any bit of trust that RTE will do the right thing when you see these kind of examples of so called sanctions/repercussions??? Another one is that the political party Aontu have been climbing up the opinion polls, but yet parties such as Social Democrats, People Before Profit etc. get a huge amount more airplay than this party - why? Because this party is broadly made up of members who are Christian and belief in life. In this country if you have a Christian faith you do not get interviewed (if you get on the airwaves at all), on an RTE show you get interrogated. No Politicians came out to stand up for this section of the population that has been soo deeply insulted by RTE - you might state that this shows that State and Media are not connected, but I state that the politicians are soo scared of RTE and that they wont get onto the airwaves if they complain about them. The media has such a strong hold on the airwaves that unless you are on a certain side of the fench you get very very little traction. Reading your website and about the Commission Members, I see that some of your members have rightly fought hard for women's rights etc. well I ask this lady, did she or any other member of the commission complain about the very obvious attack on the religious views of a huge number of Irish Citizens both here and abroad by the, as stated, nationally funded broadcasting station of the country that ye are looking into the present/future running of? I ask this because this piece was also about the issue of rape! If you didnt make any statement of complaint, I ask you why not - what is the point of this commission, if the self same people wont stand up for the rights of what could possibly be a minority and also the issue of violence against both men and women in the form of rape? Another member talks about making "an inclusive society" well, that means respecting all and their views and faiths, at least that is what I think an inclusive society means. The same thing happened over the abortion referendum - people found it near impossible to get airplay if they were prolife. When reporting on the Rally for Life it was like listening to a different Rally, regarding the numbers etc.

I have both seen and heard on the TV and Radio, the media in Ireland ridicule people of faith, mostly Christians, and because they are in positions of such power they feel they can do this without any consequences and in reality what are the consequences when RTE basically rule the airwaves and are self regulating, as has been shown in the last few days when RTE is self declaring themselves to the BAI, but I say what will the consequences be? No heads are being called for because they are the media and they wont call for their own heads and what other media is going to call RTE to account and politicians wont call for their heads as they depend on them to get airplay! Why did they terminate Sean O'Rourke's contract over attending the "Golfgate" when their own employees just have to watch a video for doing virtually the same thing? Accountability - WHERE?

Anyway, this is my submission and thoughts re the media in Ireland at this present time and I only see it getting worse - it is practically one sided and if you are not on that side well you have a battle on your hands getting heard!

Thank you for reading this and by the way I only saw this on a social media page tonight that is why it is really all over the place, but I'm sure you are getting the jist of it. This does not appear to have been on the airwaves - just a point. Not sure what happens this now or what the process is, but at least I have as an ordinary person put my say in. Thanks again.

**Kind regards**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #537

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]  
To: [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
Subject: Fwd: Future of Media Ireland  
Date: Friday 8 January 2021 22:36:06

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]  
Date: Fri, Jan 8, 2021 at 10:27 PM  
Subject: Future of Media Ireland  
To: <[info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)>

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands, Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the tv licence to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTE losses. It has been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with taxpayers money.

I don't believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or, in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programmes that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians/conservatives.

RTE make effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and, in particular, catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally, and especially in Nigeria, is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that its satire and freedom of speech. This, despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with any other religion [REDACTED]

The mechanism in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless, as it is now clear the the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible, or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit, for or against, meaningless.

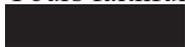
The BAI, as you know, has been funding 'Fantasy Island', which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, its stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemers, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church". In one episode, the trio sent to fight him, see a host/Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that its Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene, the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

While a large number of young people may have left the Church, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. Its questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidising them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It

cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,





Record #538

Denzil McDaniel



1. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the Commission from my perspective of having had a long career as a working journalist in a Border region of Northern Ireland. I began my career as a trainee journalist with the Impartial Reporter in Enniskillen in 1973 and spent 40 years with the paper. For a number of years, I was a working journalist during the Troubles in Northern Ireland's divided society, and became editor of the Impartial Reporter in 1987, spending 27 years in the post during which time we moved into a post-conflict society. In 2000, I became Managing Editor and joined the Board of Directors, contributing to the business side of the company while continuing my editorial role. I stepped down as editor in 2013 but continue to write an opinion column for my former paper.
2. During my career at the Impartial Reporter, I contributed articles to Irish and British newspapers, acted as a commentator for broadcast organisations and authored a book "Enniskillen: The Remembrance Sunday bomb" in 1997. I continue to do so as a working journalist.
3. I have seen numerous changes in the media landscape in Ireland, north and south, over my career. These include media ownership, the decline in sales of traditional print with the consequential economic impact on journalism resources, the competition from Netflix, Prime etc for traditional broadcasters, the onslaught from social media and its impact on society in what has been described as a "post-truth era". I will reflect briefly in this document in further detail. But at this point I would say that sadly, the trust in traditional media is now not what it was. I would have to say that in many cases, this is not the fault of many of the fine individual journalists still working in the industry.
4. So, radical reform is needed to support journalism, both in terms of how it is funded and regulated so that it better reflects the society it operates in and challenges that society. Independent journalism remains a crucial plank of a free and democratic society.
5. Ownership. When I began in the Impartial Reporter, it was still owned by the Trimble family, whose ancestors had founded the paper back in 1825, and when the MD Joan Trimble retired, she was succeeded by her daughter, Joanna McVey, the fifth generation. In addition to the very economically-successful business, local ownership and relationships meant that the newspaper was very much in touch with local issues. This meant on occasions, we challenged local Councils or central Government even though they were advertising in the paper; this shows, I believe, that it is possible for funders and challenging journalism to co-exist for the benefit of citizens.
6. In common with many other local-owned newspapers throughout Ireland, their profit-making nature saw many of them sold to bigger groups from the UK. In some cases, this was partly due to a concern over succession in the family business.
7. Overall, there were changes in the ownership of Irish papers at local, regional and national level throughout the 90s and early 2000s. In the case of the Impartial Reporter, it was bought by a company called Dunfermline Press, who also owned a number of weeklies in the Republic of Ireland, including the Meath Chronicle, the Anglo-Celt in Cavan and papers in Westmeath.
8. Unfortunately for the new owners in many cases, there followed an economic crash which saw dramatic declines in advertising revenue streams in the traditional areas such as property, motors, classifieds. A wider issue of fewer people buying newspapers generally and using other forms of media also resulted in a loss of income. In some cases, ownership reverted to local people but the Impartial Reporter changed ownership on a number of occasions, briefly in a portfolio owned by Goldman Sachs but is now owned by Newsquest.
9. A major result was cutting in resources with fewer journalists, and decisions being taken centrally outside Ireland as regards overall policy. Worldwide, newspapers are now in the

control of too few people which creates a danger of public issues taking second place to vested interest.

10. In Northern Ireland, the BBC became the dominant media outlet, including the broadcast arena with independent broadcasters also facing economic challenging times. Effectively, the old model of privately-owned newspapers being profitable, with money from advertising sales and paper sales sourcing good journalism, is broken. The lack of plurality of news and current affairs outlets due to depleted resources has had a major impact on the type of journalism covered.
11. Effectively, this has often meant a reduction in news and current affairs coverage. This includes investigative journalism, but also the news agenda does not include a good enough range as regards a changing society in Ireland, including coverage of minority communities, be it the black community or other ethnic minorities. There is also not enough reflective coverage of issues such as the legacy problems in a post-conflict Northern Ireland or the issues of a shared island in the post-Brexit era.
12. I would also contend that generally on both sides of the Border, there is a partitionist mindset in our media at a time when the future of the island is under greater consideration than ever.
13. While BBC NI provides a good service in many ways, I would question why in some cases a public service broadcaster needs to be confrontational in its journalism to chase ratings, and in the case of RTE, the broadcaster does not fully reflect either the diversity in the south or indeed full coverage of the whole island.
14. There are some exceptions; the investigative reports by journalist Rodney Edwards in the Impartial Reporter about historic sex abuse were deservedly award-winning, and the Black and Irish podcasts promoted by RTE are also welcome. The Irish Times has also carried a series of reports and opinion pieces about the shared island initiative. But much more needs to be done as regards the range and style of journalism required in a democratic society. Too often, journalists trying to catch the attention of a declining number of readers, listeners or viewers don't consider the "bigger picture" of their function and role in society.
15. Overall, in view of the decline of the industry throughout the island, an initiative is needed for a new model to publicly fund journalism. The BBC has a scheme by which it provides Local Democracy reporters to local newspapers. These reporters provide, for example, copy on local councils to a BBC portal and participating newspapers can avail of it. It works to a certain extent, but I would question why the BBC should be in such a privileged position to control it. Aside from the fact that the BBC culture is viewed as establishment, the concept takes something away from the autonomy and competitive nature of newspapers.
16. Rather, I think, there should be a public service journalism fund of some sort. Newspapers, broadcasters, websites and other outlets should be able to access funding for additional reporting, for example on courts, councils, investigations, reflective opinions and perspectives from a range of diverse parts of society. Those accessing the fund should be able to account for the quality and range of coverage they provide and show that they would not otherwise be able to provide it. Strict criteria to ensure this greater range of subject matter to ensure society is fully represented and the establishment is fully challenged should be applied.
17. The fund should be administered by an independent body at arms-length from Government, should be robust in holding content providers to account for providing a public service, but should not interfere in the editorial line taken by the journalism. Responsible journalists do not fear regulation which ensures they are being accurate and fair.

18. The public service fund should be supplemental to more traditional forms of funding, and ways to find other funding should be explored. I would also welcome greater public funding for the training of young journalists, to increase standards with emphasis on journalistic ethics.
19. As regards the digital era and social media, Government should do more to regulate sites including preventing sites taking more resources away from traditional media. The “fake news” campaign has been effective in undermining trust in traditional media, ironically by often using social media sites which are not sufficiently fact-checked. Government can legislate to level the playing field economically and ensure greater responsibility in the accuracy of information.

Denzil McDaniel, January 2021.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #539  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 22:55:13

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I see from your website that the closing date for submissions from members of the public is today, 8 January. However, since you do not give a closing time, I am assuming that submissions can be made up until midnight.

On your website, there are several references to independent journalism and its importance. While this sounds like something that everyone would be in favour of, it is not clear what exactly is meant by independent journalism. Does it mean independent of an owner who would dictate what editorial line should be taken on various issues? If so, then it is of very limited value.

Independent journalism suggests that journalists have a wide variety of viewpoints but that is not the case in Ireland. Apart from a couple of outliers, the overwhelming majority of journalists are of one mind on a vast range of issues. It does not matter whether one is listening to RTE or to Newstalk, for example, the output is the same. Individual broadcasters can move from the private sector to RTE or vice versa as in the case of Pat Kenny but it makes no difference to the programmes broadcast. Sometimes RTE can appear more polished because of greater resources but the message is the same. There may be an occasional difference in style, but never in content.

Young people are watching less television and listening less to the radio than older people. They get their news online. This is undoubtedly a cause of concern to those who support public service broadcasting as it inevitably results in lower advertising revenue, not to mention reduced licence fee income from fewer television sets. Hence the impetus to fund public service broadcasting by imposing a charge on every adult, regardless of whether they have a television or watch public service broadcasting. This smacks of an elite deciding what is good for the population as a whole and forcing them to pay for it whether they use the service or not.

The fact is that there is no difference between the vast bulk of programmes on radio and television. RTE Radio 2 is a pop station similar to all the other Irish radio pop stations. It is true that some distinguish themselves from others by playing certain types of music but there is nothing that is particularly public service about Radio 2. RTE Radio 1 has excellent sports coverage but so too has Newstalk. In fact for several years 'On the Ball' has been probably the best sports programme on radio. Both radio stations cover the arts and culture while RTE copied the history show format from Newstalk, broadcasting it on a Sunday evening at the same time as Newstalk broadcast their history programme.

What is true of radio also applies to television. A significant amount of programming is bought from abroad by both RTE and Virgin. Both stations cover news, current affairs, sport, the arts, etc. It is often argued that RTE covers minority interests that are not commercially viable and that is true. I don't know the figures but I suspect that only a small fraction of its total budget is spent on such minority programming. That money could be made available to a commercial station to provide such programming. That would be a much fairer and cost effective way of dealing with the issue.

There is a perception that public service broadcasting is somehow superior to that in the private sphere but I see little evidence of that. The vast bulk of programmes could be the

product of either sector. RTE can seem more substantial at times because it is more heavily resourced but the difference is marginal. The same result could be achieved at much less cost by imposing certain legally binding requirements on private broadcasters and paying them to provide for niche areas as required.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #540

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** RTE/Media Coverage in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 23:02:55

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to say I am really unhappy that my taxes are used to fund RTE. I virtually never look at it as I consider the reporting is very biased and that it does not give a fair hearing or representation to many people. We have seen this in all the recent referendums particularly for anyone with prolife views or people of faith. It is unjust that people should be forced to fund a national media that does not give a fair and democratic representation.

The recent New Years Eve countdown show was appalling and hugely offensive and blasphemous. Would RTE air a sketch that would be so offensive as this to people of the Muslim or any other faith.

Factual inaccuracies are often used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate. The RTE media platform is also used as a platform which have the favour of the Government. This is undemocratic. The State should not dictate what news is fit for media coverage.

The present situation where taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms that they dont agree with and dont watch is grossly unfair. The public whose taxes are being spent need to be involved.

I would like to see these issues addressed.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #541

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 22:56:40

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Hello,

I would like to make the following submissions:

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

3. In 2018 RTE received 86% of the total revenue received from the TV license. This is a very unfair distribution of taxpayers money. Compounding this unfairness are the huge salaries received by the top earners in RTE. The average full time salary in Ireland is €49,000. Several of RTE's top earners receive twice, 3 times and up to as much as 10 times this amount. RTE squanders peoples hard earned money and I believe they have sold assets in order to balance the books.

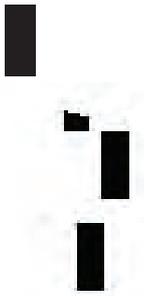
4. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

I appreciate you taking the time to read these submissions.

Regards,

[REDACTED]



Record #542



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Media in Ireland  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 23:12:39

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland.

The TV license which is paid by Irish households should not be allocated to organisations that cannot support themselves and that do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of people living in Ireland i.e paying towards the production of programs that openly mock Irish citizen's beliefs and which undermines values.

There is a immediate need for unbiased media coverage and more open and honest debates on topics and especially those matters which have significant impacts on the lives of Irish people.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #543

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #545

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** The Future of Media Commission - Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 23:25:56

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Dear Sirs,

I believe that that the TV Licence is an utterly archaic system and should be abolished and should not be replaced by any other indirect taxation regime. I believe that it should instead become a subscription service.

I base this opinion on the following:

- The TV Licence charge is, as is the proposed Broadcasting Charge, a form of indirect taxation and is a regressive tax. It takes no account of the person's ability to pay and accordingly discriminates against those on a lower income.
- It forces people to pay for services that with increasing frequency they do not use.
- It is anti competitive and has distorted competition in the broadcasting market place and has stunted the development of the Irish Broadcasting industry.
- It gives massive resources and power to one legal entity.
- RTE has failed to be properly transparent and accountable in its broadcasting operations.
- The TV Licence was originally established to cover the capital cost of establishing RTE. This is no longer necessary but the TV Licence remains in place.
- RTE is a financially bloated organisation and receives state financial support far in excess of the value of the services provided.

You might kindly acknowledge receipt.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #546  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Need for Change  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 23:28:50

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Hi,

Thank you for seeking views from the public on the future of the media. This in itself is a great idea.

I think we need a number of changes:

1. RTE has a virtual monopoly of Irish TV media. This is unhealthy. They are broadly speaking left wing liberals. It is quite obvious where their political allegiance lies and their social view point. They should be neutral. They should provide a platform so that others can speak. Instead they project their own opinions. This is unacceptable in a democracy which promotes freedom of speech. It is freedom of speech for everyone...not the preserve of a select few. On this basis, unless RTE is democratised I would like to see it defunded. The recent blasphemy scandal showed a certain arrogance and disrespect towards the captive audience of license payers.
2. RTE fails abisimally to cover events in our EU partners. They are obsessed with events in Britain, with even the most trivial of events being reported, but fail to inform the Irish public of developments in Germany, France, Spain etc.,etc. It would seem that these are far away countries that no one has ever heard of. We are linked politically, economically and by a common currency but hear nothing of the internal politics of these partners. This service is inadequate. They do not appear to appreciate the need to report on these countries, let alone other continents...unless of course they are English speaking. This is too important to be left to a station that is not up to the job.
3. Beyond RTE, it is remarkable that our TV and broadcasting licences are given to corporations like Sky and Virgin who have almost carte blanche to broadcast whatever they wish...and to neglect or omit whatever they choose. Broadcasting licences need to be more prescriptive. They choose to broadcast a wide range of channels from the Indian subcontinent but nothing in French, German, Spanish or Italian, languages that we teach in our schools and which we presumably seek to assist. This needs to change urgently.
4. Can we, as a country, invite Continental countries to broadcast directly into Ireland? ZDF, ARD TF1, RTVe, RAI...is it too much to ask that they be accommodated by our broadcasting system? After all, when you stay in a hotel on the continent you have a selection of channels from a good number of other countries. We need to catch up.
5. If we value democracy, we need to end the dominance of the liberal elite in RTE and allow another station (RTE 2?) to air more socially conservative views. Some of the anti Catholic views broadcast by RTE would not be tolerated where they to speak in the same way it other Faiths, of minority groups etc. They also have a clear political bias. It may not be possible to be absolutely neutral, we all have our preferences, so maybe a counterbalance could be achieved by allowing RTE to differ in outlook from the establishment in RTE 1. In effect, RTE has morphed into a political party which doesn't have to stand for election. Quiet a powerful position when you think of it. This is in the nature of things over the last few decades. We see how many showmen and journalists have gone into politics. RTE have managed to remain in the media but wield an unchallenged power over the political world in Ireland (think of the Commissioner Hogan resignation). This is extremely unhealthy for democracy.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #547  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Fwd: The Future of Media in Ireland.  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 23:31:12

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Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Date:** 8 January 2021 at 14:18:16 GMT  
[REDACTED]  
**Subject: The Future of Media in Ireland.**

Dear Sir or Madam,

I believe, if the Media in Ireland is to be of any benefit to the people, it must be unbiased and truthful.

In recent years, it's become obvious that there is an agenda which pushes a certain opinion or mindset, while refusing to acknowledge or accept the opinions of those who disagree.

Many of the programs are offensive in nature, particularly to Catholics/Christians. Debates are usually one sided and unfair as we saw during the Repeal the 8th campaign and the News bulletins cover little news. Many untruths have been told and despite evidence to the contrary, have received airplay on most, if not all, the outlets covered by the BAI.

If the public are expected to fund mainstream media, either in their taxes or by licence fee, then there must be a complete overhaul of the media, fair and unbiased reporting and programs that don't offend.

Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Balanced view  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 23:34:47  
**Importance:** High

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Dear sir or madam.

Could you please in future give a balanced view on the protection of human life from the moment of conception to natural death.

Could you also give a balanced view to Ireland's Christian faith which is so important to a large majority of Christians in Ireland as I personally have an inner knowledge as all people do that our God loves each one of us dearly and does not desire the loss of a single soul.

Please a balanced view.

Regards yours in Christ Jesus.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

1

1

[REDACTED]

Record #549

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Review of Media.  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 23:46:11

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Freedom of Speech is fundamental to a democratic society. A review of global history shows that wherever people are denied expression, Society is destabilised, people feel oppressed, fears, prejudices and outright lies become established which invariably results in violence and war. Because of its global reach, today's media have immense power. This should also mean immense responsibility to create a harmonious environment for objective discussion, impartiality on the subject matter and respect for all people but it is rarely the case. Media use their power to dominate and control people to conform to the current viewpoint on topical issues. For the most part, the tone of News Bulletins and investigative reports is intimidatory, aggressive, confrontational and derisory.

Emotional intimidation is commonplace.

For example, last week after it was announced that all schools would be closed with an exception made for Leaving Certificate and Special Needs students, some politicians loudly protested against it. Despite many valid health reasons to completely close all schools, RTE choose to use recordings of two school girls expressing their fears of catching Covid to emotionally catapult the people to this viewpoint. The State is supposed to cherish all people equally. So young people who face weeks of isolation in cold cramped homes, possibly surrounded by crying babies and argumentative parents, deprived of hot food from the canteen, feel alienated from a State who care nothing about their emotional needs. It also deprived students and parents of special needs children of an opportunity to explore if some form of compromise could have been achieved.

Vaccination is now set to become another flashpoint. Vaccines are an absolute necessity in modern life. It is also a very lucrative product for pharmaceutical companies. The State, and media, should have a duty to allow people to express their worries and fears, to be listened to and feel assured that bad reactions will be properly documented. Unfortunately, this has not happened; emotional bullying, derogatory name calling, ridicule and derisory subjection of any person who questions vaccinations is already common. There is also the threat to silence them, by closing their social media accounts.

Fake news is the term most often used to dominate and silence critics. It denies the opportunity to debate an issue, argue a point or produce supporting evidence. It gives media operators the same power as judges and literally controls the world. While initially it might be used by people of good intent, it would very quickly become corrupted.



Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Submission  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 23:55:17

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I believe that R.T.E should be defunded as is not representing true media coverage. It is deliberately biased against the majority of people in this country who have a Christian faith. It fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people on the Island of Ireland.

RTÉ continually have factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public report.

The New years eve countdown show was offensive to me and i would believe the 84% of Christians on our Island.

It is o.k. to have a go at the Christian Faith. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] An apology is not ENOUGH.

I am paying my T.V. Licence every year and I am angry that R.T.E. are allowed to have a go at the God of our Christian Faith.

The state gives funds to this station. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption.

If this commission is to persist in providing public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The present situation where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #552  
[REDACTED]

## Submission to the Future of Media Commission



Friday, January 8, 2021

I would like open my submission and set the tone with a quote from the Emeli Sandé song “Read all about it, Pt III”.

“If no one ever hears it, how we gonna learn your song.”

The fundamental problem with the media in Ireland, is that too many of our songs of opinion can't be learned because no one ever hears them. He who is paying the piper is calling all the tunes.

The media in Ireland lacks diversity of opinion, originality of thought, genuine inclusiveness, respect for the views of others, and inculcates a single totem pole of acceptable, in its introverted opinion, viewpoints. It affords little access to other viewpoints, certainly not in the mainstream, and rarely without signalling counter to them.

### 1. Responses to specific questions of the commission

*Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?*

- *How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?*

The French had the concept 200 years ago of the Five Estates, winning five different groups which were an influence on society. The press, in today's parlance the media, were the Fourth Estate. That's a good place to start. So the media should be a pole of influence in society, but clearly not the only pole of influence. In France, the church was also a pole of influence, the so-called First Estate, but again, not to the point of exclusive influence. In the USA, there is the doctrine of separation of powers, so that a functioning democracy, which is a republic, does not have all the power concentrated in a single class, single elite, or a single stratum of society. Neither should it have excessive power concentrated in a single pole of influence.

Like your chairman, I am a physicist. We both understand the concept of orthogonal dimensions operating on their own axes. That's a good

analogy for how society should operate. Multiple poles of influence, “estates” if you want to call them that, each having an independent existence of each other, and having freedom to influence society along their own pole of influence.

Ideally these poles of influence will talk to each other, influenced each other, and interact with each other, while retaining their essential individual and independent existence. That is a separation of powers of influence. In some societies, cultural strata have pillarised, to use the Dutch phrase. We can see examples of that in part of our own country, and it is not necessarily a healthy thing for society. Nevertheless, the Netherlands does have a strong diversity, and a place for everyone, both in the media, and in public discourse. You might not like everything that all of these people say, but at least they have the right to say it, and so do you.

Alienation is becoming an increasingly growing problem in society. There are three steps to alienation: I don't understand it, I don't like it, and then, I don't like you. In this case, “you” is often the public face or faces of those who deliver whatever is not understood or not liked, or may simply be the frontline person doing the actual delivery. It must be accepted that the concentration of media ownership, media and content opinion making, lazy journalism, and groupthink within media, have led to a radical loss of diversity of opinion in public discourse over the last four decades or more. We all understand that certain opinions are politically correct, that certain opinions are “to” be encouraged, and that other opinions are “not to” be encouraged. Public discourse is in effect predestined and preordained by subliminally inculcated self-censorship. A good example is the subtle bullying over decades of those taking a strong line on the peaceful constitutional unification of Ireland, or asking legitimate questions about violence carried out by groups other than the IRA. Imagine if we conducted scientific investigation in such a culture. Well, we did one time, and people like Galileo got locked up for asking the wrong questions the questions that you were “not to” ask, the ones which risked revealing, to use Al Gore's phrase about the environment, the “inconvenient truth”.

Therefore, I will put the proposition, that public service media must serve all of the public. It cannot do that if it is not politically and culturally diverse, echoing and giving voice to a wide range of opinions in society. Within the media itself, there must also be multiple poles of influence, as there are in society. The media cannot be a cartel of consensus, by design or by default, lacking competitiveness of opinion. That is true whether it is public sector or the general media. The fundamental job of the media commission, is to ensure a genuinely diverse and free media in our republic, giving a mainstream voice to as wide as possible range of opinions. If it fails to do that, it will fail in its job.

There will always be some questions that are out of bounds, from the point of view of the respect of others, especially of the culture of others, and questions which are simply obscene to ask. I do not see for example, the censoring of Holocaust deniers, as a threat to public discourse. Likewise, the recently reported piece of blasphemy on national television, which simply offended many groups of people, Christians, women, people of other monotheistic religions, and people have no religion who have a basic degree of respect for others and society who do. In plain English, it is the simple human judgement, that while there is great freedom and attitude in society, who don't go "too far". So there is a very high bar, but there must always be a very high bar.

- *What can be learned from the evolution of public service media over the last decade?*

The honest answer is, very little. That is why we have this commission. There has been no evolution, rather a regression. Again and again there have been proven cases of egregious application of editorial responsibility, fundamentally poor journalism, groupthink, and poor judgement, as well as a palpable and perceptible lack of objectivity in much of the non-opinion parts of current affairs and news programming. There are exceptions. For me, the gold standard was the editorial work on RTÉ Questions And Answers by Betty Purcell during the 1990s. Panels were meticulously and reliably balanced on all three major axes of difference of opinion in this country, economic, the national question, and social issues, on every weeks programme. More recently, the debates on the eighth amendment hosted by Claire Byrne, were run objectively, with fair representation and fair opinion from every side, and an almost imperceptible facilitating presenter whose opinions simply did not come across. The problem is that these gold standards are nuggets of exception. The only other positive evolution, has been the fading away of the anti-national Stickle influence in RTE, and its extraordinarily chilling intent and effect on reporters of very high calibre, including a former president of Ireland.

- *What systems may be required to support and sustain public service content, e.g. high quality, independent journalism, in an increasingly competitive and consolidated market?*

We need to recognise, as Mark Little did in creating Storyful, that content, i.e., reporting, the process of journalism to turn the basic report copy into readable articles, and investigation, verification, and fact checking, as well as legal review in the case of certain articles, is a commodity in itself. Media, in its various forms, are the means by which this content is communicated. They have separated palpably in recent years. The syndication of content is quite obvious if you read a wide range of Irish English and German media for example. The analogy is also to be found in other areas of public activity for example transport and utilities. The

people who run the trains are not necessarily the people on the railway that there they operate on any more. Likewise the generation of electricity and its supply and sale are no longer done by the same people or organisations.

We need to treat content in the journalistic sense in exactly the same way as we treat music in the modern stream sense. Everybody needs access with articles. Everybody must have access to all public media platforms. That way you will get diversity of opinion. Obviously, it isn't going to be the free for all that you have on social media, and facts will have to be checked and editorial standards maintained. But there is no reason why a smalltown part-time but properly trained, at least in the basic sense, journalist cannot produce copy for the national media. That is how things happened in the 1930s and 40s, when there was wide network of rural correspondents who could turn up at a story. That no longer happens. They create a situation where the journalist is seen as an out-of-town, or God forbid, Dublin person, coming in from outside. No better way to create alienation and suspicion. Far better the stories arise from their own communities, and if deserving of it, are published nationally.

So the means of payment needs to be paid by story, pay by click, pay by imprint. Access for all shades of opinion on public platforms. If people want to read it, it gets funded. If that is empowers those who would prefer to have only one editorial policy in the country, good!

- *How might public service media be more effective in promoting the Irish language, sport and culture?*

By exactly the same means outlined in the previous two paragraphs. The culture of paid access, and a culture of a wide range of local correspondence offering diverse local and national interest content on the media platforms. There is no more effective way to promote Irish language, our many sports or our diverse cultures. It will also give a voice to other languages for example Polish.

- *How might public service media better respond to the needs and expectations of the public?*

Guarantee access and voice to all shades of opinion. Stop alienating some sectors of society. Stop campaigning and start reflecting.

- *What can we learn from other jurisdictions?*

We can probably learn a great deal from Germany. Its only national newspapers are Die Welt, Die Zeit, and the old DDR newspaper Neues Deutschland which is still in business. All the others are city or regional based. They carry little or no advertising and appear not to be beholden

to advertisers. The Leipziger Volkszeitung offers one example: it prints all the petrol and diesel prices in town, every day, so people can see where is best. Imagine that happening in Ireland? Not a chance. Many of the newspapers are grouped in Germany, so that for example, much of the content in the Köln Stadt-Anzeiger will be similar to that in the Berliner Zeitung, because they come from the same editorial and content stable, Dumont Newsnet, which holds many regional newspapers in Germany, although recently following a controversy, Berliner Zeitung appears to have gone independent again. A Berliner can read different points of view, getting a counterpart to the Berliner Zeitung by reading the Conservative, CDU-aligned Berliner Morgenpost, and Carter opinion from elsewhere in the country by reading for example the Frankfurter Allgemeine. Nor is the SPD left out. It has its own news stable, RedaktionsNetzwerk Deutschland, closely aligned to the party, although not a party newspaper, and that group owns quite a number of regional newspapers for example, the Ostsee Zeitung on the Baltic coast. Newspapers which are aligned to one or other of these content-generating journalism groups announce it on their masthead. Everything is very transparent.

This all happens because, in order to kick-start democracy again in 1945, newspapers had to be licensed and subsidised. Everyone has a newspaper that they find will reflect many of their viewpoints, as well as asking questions from different points of view which various people in German society feel, from their point of view, should be asked. As a result people are not alienated from the print media, nor have they opted out. As a result, a relatively small newspaper like the Ostsee Zeitung, which only publishes on the Baltic coast of the former East Germany, serving approximately half of the population of one province certainly less than 2 million people, can sell typically 149,000 copies per day, far in excess of any Irish newspaper, and it does this with two major competing newspapers at least, of which one is in the provincial capital. The Ostsee Zeitung is an excellent example of what a provincial newspaper could be in Ireland. It has local reporters filing stories from every village, as well as carrying the national and international news. Local sections are published for the major counties and cities, and everything is reported.

To give one insight into the level of local reporting, while on holiday there in 2019, there was a one-page story featuring the mayor of a local village complaining about the vandalism of his local bus shelter and the removal of four planks by thieves! I will contrast that with a very recent experience in a small west of Ireland town where I know that there has been a major Covid outbreak due to the aftermath of the funeral and wake, that the parish priest has been out of action during Christmas and New Year, that it is all over local social media, that some people are not self isolating like they should, and none of this is being reported in any mainstream media because there is no local reporter. Well there is one

correspondent, in the hinterland, but he rarely reports on any goings-on in the town. Many towns do not want to be reported on in Ireland.

Another society worth looking at is the Netherlands. Today the unique Dutch phenomenon of pillarisation, *verzuiling*, is less pronounced than maybe a generation ago, nevertheless remains the situation that there are newspapers and broadcast media which leaned towards the Catholic viewpoint, towards a liberal Protestant viewpoint, towards a Conservative and reform Protestant viewpoint, and towards a socialist viewpoint. The lesson is that everybody gets a fair degree of airtime.

The views I have outlined above, lean heavily towards the newspaper world, that which I understand best. Nevertheless, the equally apply to other forms of media. As I say, content is the key, and the media are simply the means of communicating that content.

*Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?*

- *What is the best model for future funding of public service media in Ireland? What approach best supports independent editorial oversight while achieving value for money and delivering on public service aims?*
- *What opportunities exist to develop and implement business model and organisational changes within the public service broadcasters (RTÉ and TG4)?*
- *How might content commissioning, including by RTÉ, TG4 and the BAI Sound and Vision scheme, be adjusted/improved/reformed to better achieve public service aims?*
- *How should public funding or tax reliefs be apportioned to Public Service Content providers?*
- *What does the shift in advertising revenues towards big tech firms mean for the future of print, online and broadcast media?*
- *What role is there for alternative funding models for Public Service Content providers – voluntary, cooperative, crowdsourcing, subscription?*

*Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?*

- *What regulatory changes at EU or global level might impact on the governance of public service media in the period ahead?*

Whatever regulatory changes are brought in, they must not provide for further groupthink or censorship of alternative ideas. Regulation must mandate diversity in the media, and diversity of access to that media.

- *What challenges are posed to a vibrant, independent public service media by increasing consolidation / declining plurality of ownership in the Irish market?*

It isn't just the declining plurality of ownership, it is rather that there is a declining plurality of opinion, there has been a declining plurality of "Accepted" opinion. People feel that they are not getting fair access in the mainstream media are choosing together information elsewhere social media. That's not ideal, but in the absence of a diverse, fully representative, mainstream media, that is what you will get. Alienation from the mainstream. In the light of recent events, I don't think I have to explain how dangerous that is.

- *Are current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media adequate?*

They are totally inadequate. They do not mandate diversity. And insofar as they do mandate diversity they don't enforce it. We need a plurality of broadcasting organisations mandated to have different editorial policies. Editorial meetings need to be open to the public in the sense of having a single observer in each meeting, an ombudsperson from a panel, funded by the state, in all editorial meetings to observe on and report the culture within those meetings to ensure that that the correct culture is there, and that there are no hidden agendas.

What is needed is to create about half a dozen mandated newspapers, a similar number of mandated national radio stations, and to insist on different mandates for all six terrestrial Irish channels that are currently operating. Then, subsidy money, which will be necessary, including the licence fee for television, and any money which follows the sale of newspapers, should follow when the people wanted to go. A person should be allowed to subscribe to 2 mandated newspapers of their choice such that the associated state subsidy will follow their subscription. Subscribers could be allowed to elect members of their editorial ombudsman panel, as well as board members to oversee both the governance board and the editorial board of the medium, whether it is a radio station, television channel, or newspaper. Likewise approximately half a dozen regional newspaper groups should be created again with different mandated editorial ethos.

This would be a radical change. It would upend the lack of diversity in the media in Ireland, and would discommode certain elements who prefer this lack of diversity and one-way traffic of opinion. It would also end alienation, and draw people back from social media to mainstream media in large numbers. That can only be good for democracy, and for society.

We also need to make our media less Anglo-centric. I was challenged on Twitter last night to name the three CDU candidates to succeed Angela Merkel. I knew who they were because I read German newspapers. The person who challenged everybody on Twitter last night, made the point that the Irish newspapers rarely report what goes on in non-English-speaking European countries, but the report everything that goes on in English speaking countries. That needs to change. Or do we really want to be European? I think we do. I certainly do.

I will finally comment on social media. It is good, if it is properly run. However the premise under which certain social media companies were founded, which is well known, was not exactly compliant with GDPR. We need more Irish and European control of social media, not of the state sense, but in the people and ownership sense.

Let me end once again with another line from Emeli Sandé's "Read all about it, Pt III"

"Let's get the TV and the radio to play our tune again.

It's about time we got some airplay of our version of events."

Because, many of us have not been getting that for several decades.

██████████

████████████████████

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #553

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Bias  
**Date:** Friday 8 January 2021 23:57:56

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I wish to defund rte because of their Liberal leftist anti Catholic agendas. Thank you. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



Record #554

Ray Kinsella



## **Submission to the Commission on the Future of Media**

**Dr Ray Kinsella, formerly Professor of Financial Services at UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business**

### **Introduction**

The Government's decision to establish a Commission on the future of media is to parlous, on the one hand, the financial position of RTE which is a burden on the Exchequer and, on the other hand, the pressing commercial pressures, exacerbated by Covid-19, on mainstream print media and the resultant migration to online media. That is the core. That, and the disenchantment of many readers and viewers, increasingly perceiving themselves as marginalised and disrespected by the dominant mainstream broadcast and print media in Ireland. Addressing this presents difficulties for Ireland's political establishment, since it has captured, and now exercises ideological control, precisely through the media. Accordingly, the distinct issue of Arts and Culture funding has been pressed into service to resolve a three-headed dilemma that casts a cold eye over the future of media in Ireland for Government: state expenditure, market pressures, and consumer/viewer/political disenchantment.

There is an important corollary. The Commission's membership has an impressive set of experts across many disciplines and domains. However, the failure by Government to appoint an internationally-acknowledged philosopher to assist the Commission is a significant deficiency. It limits its scope for critiquing the crisis in communications, the reaffirmation of Truth, and the restoration of trust and a moral purpose in print, digital and social media, and communication. These are pre-eminently the domain of Philosophy.

To put this differently, consider for a moment the Taoiseach's introductory Statement to the work of the Commission: "A sustainable, independent, and objective media landscape plays a critical role in the functioning of democracy...". It is not clear how the Committee is to approach the challenge of measuring "Independence" or "Objectivity", still less what constitutes a "functioning democracy" (a concept rooted in Greek philosophy), in the absence of a philosophical understanding of these terms.

In looking to the future of the media in Ireland and especially in the Public domain, Truth, Trust and Democracy are not concepts that can, still less should, be delegated to the controllers and enforcers of Twitter, Facebook and other social media. The demonstrable lack of balance, conflict of interest and "capture" of media by a technocratic hegemony, is a clear and present threat to Irish democracy, freedom of access to information and to freedom of expression.

Importantly, this would be exacerbated by proposed coercive legislation on so-called “Hate Crime”, a vehicle to further control thoughts and words and with no ‘objective’ justification, other than ideological bias.

The work of the Commission should engage in what is central to “The Future of Media”. Namely, the risks to free speech of social media-mediated state censorship and the invasion of privacy. That is, to the risks to democratic freedoms of the sequestering and commercialisation by ‘Big Tech’ of private information. These are exacerbated by the rapid integration of AI into digital media and communications technologies. The use of AI to weaponise behavioural psychology in the service of propaganda is now ubiquitous. That raises profound philosophical and moral challenges. It is not clear that the Commission has the scope to address these challenges and yet they bear directly on its remit.

More generally, the absence of a philosophical perspective undermines the Commission's work in identifying and mitigating systematic bias on the part of the State, and the philosophical challenges of ‘capture’ by a technocratic hegemony. This is especially the case when the infrastructure of propaganda has been partly externally funded, as the work of journalist Breda O’Brien demonstrated in pioneering articles in 2016 and 2017.<sup>1</sup>

A key component of the Commission's work relates to Culture and the Arts and how its funding might be put on a sustainable basis. By its nature, this is an integral part of the national narrative: national consciousness, creativity and conversation. It is an essential part of public service content. It should be acknowledged that RTE, through radio, TV and digital media, has played a pivotal role in supporting the Arts, through commissioning and broadcasting the work of Irish artists, musicians, historians and cultural archivists. Such content is very much a “Public Good” and in most countries, there is a “market failure” in funding the Arts. It follows that long-term, sustainable funding is essential. However, it is not clear that such funding should continue to be embedded in the existing funding arrangements, including the Licence Fee.

Funding the Arts and Culture on ‘Public Good’ grounds is distinct from the origination, editing and broadcasting of news and information. These latter are globalised and contestable – in the sense of being open to new and global digital entrants, which provide consumers with options. They are vulnerable to ‘capture’ by agenda-driven ideologies. Control, explicit and tacit, of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/01/07/youtube-censorship-symptom-corrosive-philosophy/>

publicly-funded content in public service media is an established means of capturing and reinforcing political control of the national agenda and creating incentives against the grain of objectivity, Independence and Truth. In other words, the scope for ‘capture’ as understood in economics as well as politics, highlights the twin – imperatives of editorial independence and political neutrality as lodestars of media content and broadcasting.

Rigorous oversight, governance and high professional standards are paramount, but they are not proof against the capture, the imposition through systems of incentives of a mind-set and self-selected ascendancy in content and coverage. This bears directly on the constitutionally-grounded expectation of objective Truth in transmitting news and information. “Objective” truth is a normative virtue. Virtues are more important in underpinning the integrity of Irish journalism down the years than “Mastheads” and “Mission Statements”. A significant proportion of Irish consumers and voters – they overlap, though not totally – are now marginalised and alienated from RTE and mainstream print media. They look instead to exponentially increasing online trusted alternatives, both domestic here in Ireland and foreign.

There is no reason why, in these circumstances, they should be impelled through the licence fee to pay for what is no longer provided to them. Indeed, to the extent that they have been alienated by the measurable ideological colonisation of broadcast and print media, to force them to pay for the privilege is doubly oppressive. It is the prerogative of mainstream media to have an “editorial line” on everything from EU Federalism to Euthanasia. But there is no good reason why the State should privilege them in its policies on future funding arrangements for public media or regulation of public broadcasting.

### **Context**

In Ireland, the work of the Commission takes place against the backdrop of an egregious and oppressive failure of the publicly-funded state broadcaster RTE to comply with in-house and external broadcasting standards. This event highlighted systemic bias and failures in editorial oversight. The fact that the item in question was directed specifically at the Catholic faith-community and the failure of management to remove the offending item until directed to do so in the aftermath of unprecedented complaints from a broad section of the public, cannot be ignored by the Commission in its work.

Internationally, there are equally compelling examples of failures of print media and communications to maintain objectivity and independence in terms of sourcing, editing and

broadcasting material. In the UK, there has been an evident decline in investigative journalism, under the twin pressures of ideology and the political pressures as well, of course, as market economics. In the EU, the most tragic example of the lack of ‘empathetic independence’ was Charlie Hebo.

In the US, ‘fake news’ became a defining feature, across the entire political spectrum, during the Trump Presidency. A Commission focussed on the future of Irish media cannot ignore the lessons. These lessons need to be seen in context. A political orthodoxy which enforces relativistic ‘Identity Politics’, thereby commandeering language and meaning in a way that contradicts normative science, must take some responsibility for the consequences. Columbia’s Professor Mark Leila, in his “The Once and Future Liberal” highlights the costs of “Identity Politics” to the Democratic Party (of which he is a member), and to the broader case for Liberalism. If “words mean exactly what I want them to mean”, then objectivity and truth in the media are taken hostage. “Fake news” is an inevitable consequence. The apparent attempt by the New York Post to restrict access by the public to material potentially damaging to President-elect Biden’s campaign is another example of the failure of communications media to differentiate private views from professional responsibilities.<sup>2</sup>

All of this points to a mindset seemingly unaware that it is inside its pages or behind the screen, rather than on its “mast head”, which is important to objectivity, truth and public trust. Most disturbing of all, perhaps, is the oppressive pressure this puts on journalists to conform to this mindset. The debacle of a journalist in a mainstream US paper in 2018 is a compelling example of a journalist who was effectively pushed out of her profession for not deferring to the orthodoxy within her newspaper.

### **Core Principles**

Funding public service aims through media will be influenced by public Trust in these same media. Trust is subverted by state coercion, by discrimination and by hegemonistic external pressures via Social Media. Building Trust and therefore, consent requires adherence to “core” values and principles. The journalistic professions are aware of such principles -- more so than those outside the profession. The following comments are offered with that in mind. To assure, so far as possible, the future of an Irish media with public service dimension means a media

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<sup>2</sup> <https://nypost.com/2020/12/10/how-media-covered-up-the-hunter-biden-story-until-after-the-election/>

bound to the highest professional standards, including rigorous and independent oversight. That can no longer be taken for granted. There is an evident need:

- To affirm and uphold normative values of Truth, integrity and non-discrimination in sourcing, editing and broadcasting.
- To reflect more rigorously on current challenges for journalists. It's one thing to be a dissonant voice interrogating national issues-- it's quite another contesting against global CCT behemoths with unprecedented commercial and ideological power and "reach".
- To uphold in Ireland, the EU and globally the "Right to Privacy" against external pressures to suborn these rights for political, ideological or commercial reasons.
- To closely monitor and limit the power and influence of Social Media, both directly and through the power, including the "information wealth" they have sequestered from individuals via data acquisition and mining.
- To their presumption in imposing censorship and, also, decision- making in the domains of philosophy and religion.
- To continue to prevent State intervention in broadcasting, other than on tightly defined Public Good grounds that respect the Constitution. More problematically, there is the issue of limiting the scope for politicians to manipulate news and information through, for example, "leaking".
- To address what a significant proportion of the population perceives as anti- Catholic bias in parts of the media. The recent RTE NYE "sketch" gives substance to this perception and to the belief that the Government has the back this anti-Catholic media culture. This, it should be highlighted, is not special pleading. The Constitution prohibits religious discrimination. It is paradoxical that in a country with 1,500 years of Christianity woven into its history – its anguish in famine and political suppression – and in its indispensable contribution to the Arts, Culture, Architecture and education; Catholic should now be made to feel oppressed because of their religious convictions.

That is the reality. It makes no sense to seek public service objectives via the media in the face of this intolerable bias. In this regard, the deliberations of RTE in the wake of the recent discriminatory debacle should be an invaluable input into the Commissions work to ensure transparency in access to information, as AI becomes more prevalent, and the exercise of power and control becomes more opaque. This itself would require a separate Commission.

To welcome the proliferation of new online Irish media which, while putting pressure on RTE and print media, raise standards by meeting public expectations and provide Irish and global outlets for Irish journalists wherever they are based

Letter to DG of RTE

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #559

[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Request for Media Commission  
**Date:** Saturday 9 January 2021 00:47:14

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe either that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

- RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

- The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

- The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

- The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

- In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

- The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

- While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]



Record #560

John Flahive



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Public Consultation - submission by John Flahive  
**Date:** Saturday 9 January 2021 03:16:07

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Dear Future of Media Commission

My name is John Flahive and I am an Irish documentary producer currently based in London.

I only became aware of the Commission and the consultation quite by accident late this evening, thus I've only have time to offer a quick thoughts on one core issue which I hope you will be able to consider. Sorry if this looks a bit rough and ready.

In my view a key question that the Commission needs to examine is the relationship between Ireland's politicians and its public service media, principally RTE. Obviously this is a bigger subject than just RTE but just as in the UK one cannot examine public media without dwelling at length on the BBC, it's the same in Ireland.

- There has always been a difficult relationship between Ireland's politicians and RTE as a result of its political coverage, which does of course exist in other countries. Politicians in the UK are often aggrieved about a particular interview or report, or felt that they had got a hard ride compared to others, and it's not uncommon for them to believe that a supposedly hostile BBC has cost them seats in a election. In the UK one sometimes sees the BBC being accused of bias simultaneously by the left and right.

- A key difference in Ireland is that its politicians have retained direct day to day control over the Licence Fee. There has been constant refusals over decades to grant an increase in the TV licence fee, refusals to index link unlike other public sector bodies, and a refusal to move licence fee collection away from a separate organisation which has failed to reduce high evasion rates.

- Obviously one can put two and two together and conclude that Ireland's politicians have been engaging in a form of "payback" or have wanted to retain "leverage" etc. Regardless of whether this is the case, the consequence of the decades of squeezed funding has paradoxically not impacted most on RTE's political coverage, but on everything else.

- Irish political coverage is the one area in which RTE has a unique indispensable offering to Irish audience that's not going to be made by foreign competitors such as BBC or Sky, and is difficult for domestic Irish commercial channels to afford. Any perception that politicians get an easy ride would only result in audiences switching off, which would be the end of RTE.

- Ireland's never been in danger of becoming the sort of "illiberal democracy" one now sees in Poland and Hungary where the media has become a mouthpiece of Govt. Though there was one Irish Govt minister Ray Burke who created a very hostile environment for RTE for a period from 1989 to 1992. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ray\\_Burke\\_\(Irish\\_politician\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ray_Burke_(Irish_politician)). Thus its not a desirable situation to have.

- At the same time, Ireland's politicians need an RTE which (still) has the capacity to deliver a mass audience to whom they can present their case. Even in 2021 there is no obvious

alternative.

- Thus the areas that have suffered most as a result of funding squeezes is the production of drama and comedy, arts, music & culture, children's and educational, factual and creative documentaries, along with the orchestras. This obviously diminishes the capacity for Irish cultural expression.

- It's also stunted the development of the independent production sector relative to other countries. Since the 80's there has been a shift by national broadcasters from making everything in-house to commissioning from outside independent producers. As this sector has experienced reduced growth in Ireland rather than being cut back, there's not been much protest. Basically, they don't miss what they never had.

- A TV licence fee increase a few years ago led to the creation of a media production fund within the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, instead of allocating it directly to RTE or other public service organisations to fund production themselves. The difficulty with something like this is that it risks a disconnect between TV programming and production. Producers apply to the BAI to make programmes that may be difficult to schedule, and its more remote from audience feedback.

- Another development is that Screen Ireland has been allocating more of its budget to developing and producing TV programming, which leaves less for its previous core mission to support cinema. This is completely the opposite to other countries where its public service TV that comes in to supplement the funding of cinema. In the UK the British Film Institute pitches its projects to BBC or Channel 4 for co-funding, never the other way round.

- There has been commissions like the Future of Public Service Media and various reviews before, but every time Ireland's politicians have retained the status quo controlling the licence fee. In my view the Future of Public Service Media commission needs to address this relationship directly, and encourage new thinking.

I wish I had time to contribute more, not just about RTE, but I hope this is useful. Let me know if there is anything further that I could participate in.

Best regards  
John

John Flahive  
Wavelength Pictures

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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1  
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Record #561

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Complaint  
**Date:** Saturday 9 January 2021 10:17:17

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Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland.

As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax (that is the TV license) to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming government "broadcast tax" designed to cover RTEs losses.

It's been suggested also, that failing print media should be supported with taxpayer's money.

I do not believe that the argument that 'fake news exists', can be an acceptable rationale for the tax payer forced to fund media outlets that cannot support themselves; and ones that do not adequately or in a balanced way, present the views held by many people in Ireland.

We are being forced to pay taxes toward programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our traditional values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs; and in particular the catholic religion, but not other faith based groups.

For example the failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally, especially in Nigeria.

The controversy continued with the New Years Eve skit on God raping and impregnating The Blessed Mother Mary. Initially RTE refused to take down the clip claiming this scandalous offence was acceptable to broadcast. This decision was made on the threadbare grounds that it's "satire and freedom of speech".

They prove themselves discriminatory, as all know that there is no earthly way RTE would attempt this with [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Instead they select Catholicism for a public kicking.

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless, as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible.

In October RTE unveiled another unacceptable attack programme.

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland as you know has been funding the offensive 'Fantasy Island'; which is tries to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest,

Fr. Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days.  
He is evilly portrayed as the devil or a vampire, who curses, blasphemes, and tries to extort money;  
Advertising "All sinners welcome for a fee" and he uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a sacred host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and the profane quip made that "it's Jesus". That the hosts are being used by the priest to manufacture and sell crisps using "a black magic catholic guilt trip spell".

In one closing scene the priest is shown cleaning a mountain of excrement.  
In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest".

Pitched as a "project" it is funded by the BAI.  
The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the sacred Eucharist as "magic bread".

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice their faith, this does not exempt RTE or the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to "not deliberately provoke offence". It is clearly false.

It's an open question as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax.

Stop funding the BAI and review its membership.

Provide new oversight of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, to prevent them discriminating against any one faith based group.  
It cannot be allowed to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the deeply offensive skit,

Yours faithfully,

A solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Sent from my Huawei phone

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Record #562

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# SUBMISSION TO THE FUTURE OF THE MEDIA COMMISSION

**From:**

**Marc Coleman** BA M Econ Sci ASP MBA

**Capacity:**

**Formerly in following media roles:**

- Economics Editor, Irish Times (2005-07)
- Economics Editor, Newstalk (2007-13)
- Current Affairs Presenter Newstalk (2007-14)
- Columnist, Sunday Independent (2007-14)
- Author/commentator 5 books
- Served on 2008 Media Mergers Advisory Group (appointed by Micheál Martin)
- Initiated 2010 “Confidence in Media” on role of the media in the previous economic crisis with guest speakers including then Finance Minister, NUJ General Secretary, TV3 CEO, Communicorp CEO, INM Group Business Editor, RTE Business Editor and other prominent media/political speakers
- Winner 2014 “Justice in Media” awards for broadcasting
- TCD Senate election 2011 (won 12% of vote)

## **Credentials behind this submission (degree of competency)**

At the outset I should say that the views in this submission are purely personal and not necessarily those of my professional persona, previous employers or associates. They derive from reflections garnered over 15 years of engagement with – 10 years of which as an active and senior journalist, economics editor and broadcaster and a subsequent 5 years from a public affairs perspective – Ireland’s media at national, local and social level.

In these roles I not only influenced media diversity policy (as reflected in the 2009 Competition Act as it governs Media Mergers, reflecting the recommendations of the 2008 Media Mergers Advisory Group on which I served), but also took a leading initiative to improve media coverage of the last financial crisis (see above) and, between 2009 and 2014 as presenter of “The Marc Coleman show” frequently discuss media issues with guest panellist Seamus Dooley, including media resourcing, living and working conditions for Irish journalists, fairness and balance in media coverage, the need to promote and protect regional media, the Hackgate affair, the resultant Levenson inquiry and many other aspects of media in Ireland. I believe my show was one of the few to apply to the Irish media the same constructively critical eye that it applies to the rest of Irish society. I also made a conscious effort to promote gender, regional and political balance in guests with a strong emphasis on ensuring adequate representation from non-Dublin media.

In my contribution to the Media Mergers Advisory Group contributions, I stressed the need to ensure diversity not just on the ownership of media, but in the philosophical outlook of the media in terms of a need to reflect the full diversity of views in Irish society, particularly on contentious issues. I also actively engaged in social media and was one of the few journalists in Ireland who, in 2007, made a conscious career decision to move from a “print only” (Irish Times) career to a blended engagement across print, broadcasting social media and authorship. My contributions in these varying regards have been recognised by figures as diverse as TK Whitaker and Peter Sutherland. I have also appeared in TV3, RTE and other media.

## **Context of submission**

The goal of ensuring a sustainably funded media must be put in the context of the need to ensure a fair, equitable and timely return to economic prosperity.

My submission is motivated by the view that compared to the last crisis – where I worked as a broadcaster columnist and author to help restore a fact based confidence in the economy conducive to recovery – the media is less resourced in this regard now. Having authored the first economic response to the current crisis (see [www.octavian.ie](http://www.octavian.ie)) from a public interest point of view, it is noticeable how most input to the current crisis is coming from organisations that are not exposed to the full economic risk of the crisis.

Another key question is whether the public is being fully informed of all dimensions of the crisis and whether key aspects of crisis response policy are being debated. Those most affected – small businesses, vulnerable employees in low paid work and those in less sheltered sectors – are those who, due to lack of resources – seem least able to articulate their interest. How is the media addressing this problem in its coverage? Doing so adequately means having within the media sufficient policy expertise across print and broadcast. But investment in this has declined significantly. In the previous crisis, sensationalist and unresearched negative analysis of the economy did huge damage to the economy by delaying recovery. Now the risk is different: Namely that those hurting the most will be heard the least.

In my work I strove to put a prior decade of experience in public policy (ECB, Department of Finance) and business (MBA, Carr Communications) at the disposal of the Irish people by way of quality, well researched and factual news and comment that was based and grounded on fact and evidence. I should say here that my decision to leave the media was undertaken because I did not feel that, given the dominance of public resourcing for public service media in one broadcaster, an adequate level of resourcing was available to provide such a service on a consistent basis.

Salary levels in broadcasting were, during the Celtic Tiger boom raised by publicly funded subvention to the national broadcaster in a manner that had knock on effects in private sector broadcasting. This investment in a personality based broadcasting – combined with the absence of significant public service funding outside RTE – left significantly fewer resources to fund professional expertise and public service broadcasting values.

The results of this are that many media discussions on key areas of crisis response (government spending increases, public pay, taxation, the need to support small business recovery) while well intentioned are not as informed as they need to be. Having made an effort to redress this in an April publication and related media contribution (see [www.octavian.ie](http://www.octavian.ie) “*An Economic Response to Covid-19*” I was struck by the dominance of public sector narratives (ESRI/Central Bank) on the crisis. While valuable and needed, these inputs also need to be balanced by input from those sections of the economy most at risk from the crisis (i.e. not publicly funded)

My own decision to leave the media in 2015 – and that of many other talented individuals have also left (many have also joined) – reflects a challenge that, outside of state funded institutions – there is insufficient resourcing to sustain a viable contribution to national life.

The question of whether the media offers a viable long-term career option for those contemplating raising a family is a very important one that touches on whether we want a fully diverse media – demographically and in terms of gender and outlook – or a transient one concentrated in particular demographics, social outlooks and urban locations.

As political change illustrates, this question may be becoming more pressing. In a Covid environment, it may become urgent. Last year in several social media blogs – and pointing to the rise of populism across Europe – I articulated the need for a well-resourced, Irish owned and diverse (in terms of reflecting the full diversity of Ireland in gender, political viewpoint and other respects) media to sustain democratic life.

Finally, I strove on my radio show to ensure that Irish language content was provided along with cultural programmes on other countries and on Ireland’s relationship with them. Ireland is unique in the world in having so little media output and print media in its own vernacular language. While an argument is made that this reflects a low percentage of the population using Irish, the success of TG4 despite slender resources suggests this may be a two way street: Underinvestment in Irish language print and broadcast media may be a key reason why Ireland has failed to be bilingual like Belgium, Finland and Switzerland.

## **Terms of reference of the submission**

The Commission has been asked to consider

- Identify what the Irish experience has been in delivering public service aims through public service broadcasters, other broadcasters, print and online media.
- Look at the challenges created by new global platforms
- Consider if current models are the appropriate ones in the next 10 years
- Review best practice internationally for meeting public service aims in light of changing audience expectations

Arising from this it is asked to consider

- Proposals for how public service aims can be delivered.
- How this should contribute to supporting Ireland's cultural and creative sectors?
- How this can be funded in a sustainable way to ensure editorial independence and value for money?
- RTE's role, financing and structure
- How this could be overseen and regulated having regard to EU obligations

## **My contribution to this submission**

Before elaborating on the response, it should be said that the deadline for submissions allowed very little time for a substantive contribution or for evidence to be gathered. In addition, while the composition of the Commission is impressive in terms of the calibre and professionalism of all of its members, there is more room for diversity in terms of representing more traditional media, more rural and regional media and a greater diversity of economic sectors and philosophical outlooks (see point 1 under "General observations" below)

Bearing this in mind, the following "general observations" are made as a prelude to answering the 3 questions posed above

## **General observations**

### **Point 1      Is the media a referee or a narrator?**

Firstly, the work of the Commission needs to be set in a clear context of how a crisis in the media may be contributing significantly and adversely to a fragmentation of political support, the rise in populism and alienation and eroding trust in public institutions.

As the Annex to this submission shows, there has been an alarming fall off in newspaper circulation during the last 20 years. While there has not been time to assess the impact of this on the polarisation of opinion in the UK during that time, there are strong a priori reasons for suspecting that this is a factor.

The point here is not to suggest in any partisan sense that a decline in the media has given rise to Brexit. Rather that on both sides of the divide, the divergence in media perspectives

and a receding of commonly accepted ground may be feeding a political divide. On both left and right, a move from commonly agreed fact and towards more politicised narrative may be making consensus in politics harder to reach. In the US rising polarisation may also reflect the growing phenomenon of media as an advocate of one side or the other, with fewer and fewer media outlets being seen as an honest broker

## **Point 2      A diverse approach to Diversity**

There have been welcome and successful initiatives to address the lack of gender diversity in Ireland's media over the last decade and also imbalances in pay. This needs to continue. However, this may not be the only diversity to be addressed. Through no fault of the media itself, but due to the tendency of mainstream media to be located in large urban centres and metropolitan in outlook, the media's demographic, philosophical and economic profile may not be as diverse as the country it exists to serve.

Fake news and biased reporting exist on both right and left of the spectrum. Any attempt to publicly fund public broadcasting may face criticism from either side unless it addresses the issue of fake news, bias and misreporting in an even handed and non-partisan manner.

Sometimes the problem is not conscious bias but the unintended impact of an imbalance in the ability of certain groups to express their position. As a broadcaster for almost a decade I was struck by the far greater ability of well-funded entities – often publicly funded – to resource appearance by their representatives on media outlets compared to more diffuse and poorly funded segments of civic society. While further research is needed to draw conclusions, the divergent impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the public and private sectors of our economy arguably renders urgent something that was even before Covid necessary: A study of the extent to which the full diversity of economic and sectional interest is represented in panel discussions and to which a conscious effort is made to reflect the views of large sections of Irish opinion that have no properly funded voice. By contrast some sectors of the economy may have a very large presence on media discussion panels that may be significantly greater than their share of the population. Over time this can become entrenched as relationships between researchers, producers, reporters and presenters grow. If this is true then this should at least be analysed and considered.

It would be very useful – time was not available given the short deadline – to study the views of the population in terms of how the public views the media in terms of its approach to covering and commenting on a range of social and economic issues. The public, as defined in the terms of reference, must be viewed in its broadest sense. If in Ireland – as appears to be the case in some other countries – a perception exists that mainstream media is not sufficiently diverse in outlook then, even if that perception is inaccurate – it needs to be seriously addressed, particularly if sections of the public are asked to subsidise the media. I will refrain from making any comment as to my own views on whether any perception exists and if so whether it is justified. I do suggest, however, that a study conducted by a respected and neutral source is necessary as a prelude to any funding proposals.

### **Point 3      Balance in resourcing and fair competition**

The Covid-19 crisis has illustrated how much policy making is determined and shaped by entities that are funded by the public purse. The Latin question "*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes*" – who watches the watchers? – springs to mind. As public expenditure and the role and power of publicly funded bodies and professionals rises, a key challenge arises as to whether publicly funded media services will have the incentive, courage and power to challenge the hand that feeds them.

Here a range of issues arise that I tried to address in my Newstalk show and which the absence of any public subvention gave me the freedom to address without fear of fiscal consequence. These included:

- Whether public service broadcasters should receive both public subvention and advertising revenue
- salary levels in public broadcasting organisations compared to private sector organisations and the print media
- the extent to which public broadcasters should express opinions on contentious issues and, if so, whether such expression would be diverse and balanced
- The existence of a healthy competition and meritocracy within broadcasting organisations and between different organisations in broadcasting and print.
- 

### **Approaches to the 3 questions raised in the submission**

Given the lack of time and consequent inability to conduct research, this final section of the submission offers tentative approaches to providing answers rather than providing answers.

*Question 1: How should government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role be in relation to public service content in the wider media?*

Arguably a priority here is for the concept of public service media should stress the provision of

- value neutral commonly accepted news service
- distinctly Irish content (and language) not to any nationalistic extent but simply to the same degree that the Danish/Dutch/Finnish broadcast and print media reflect their jurisdictions culture and language. This should go beyond TG4 and embrace all significant media outlets. Print media outlets should be sub vented if necessary to have at least one page in the Irish language.
- balanced commentary on social and economic issues
- regular monitoring and consultation with a representative body of the public

*Question 2 How should public service media be financed sustainably?*

Here two approaches are suggested:

- a study of funding models in similar media jurisdictions – as done in the Cassells report on third level funding in 2016 – to identify alternative models. Here a section should identify conditions attached to funding in terms of diversity and balance of views and a role for the public in monitoring output.
- an analysis should be conducted of the capacity of an additional public broadcasting fund to support public service broadcasting and print output outside the national broadcaster

*Question 3: How should media be governed and regulated?*

Here the two key suggestion are as follows:

Firstly, to conduct a comprehensive study of public attitudes to the media to identify and study – in an international comparative context (such as the Edelman approach) levels of satisfaction and trust in relation to balance and diversity and, where satisfaction levels fall below acceptable to identify how governance and regulation can respond.

Secondly, to examine the case for supplementing the provisions of the 2009 Competition Act as it relates to giving the government a test to ensuring plurality of media ownership with complementary tests for plurality of opinion. This means that a diversity of media ownership is not a means in itself but rather a means to an end in ensuring that, like a mirror, the media reflects fullest proportionate diversity of opinion in Irish life.

**Final 2 recommendations:**

Below are two additional recommendations not directly but indirectly pertinent to the Commission’s terms of reference.

**Final recommendation 1: Strengthening indigenous Irish content and language in the media**

Here the indigenous content of print and media output in Ireland should be compared with other small countries. Foreign ownership is a reality of Ireland’s media landscape at national and local level. Nonetheless, media plurality and diversity alone should require that as well as English, the Irish language, culture, music, art and perspectives are more reflected in output.

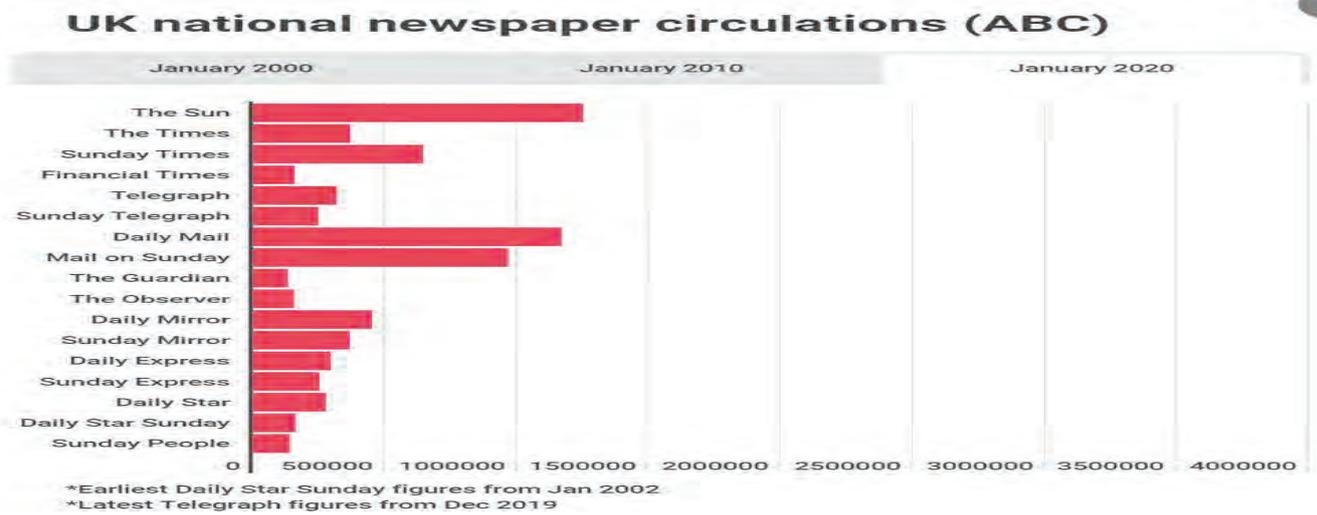
**Final recommendation 2: Establishing a Media Council on a permanent basis**

The Commission’s work is helpful in beginning this debate. By establishing a Council to take in a wider range of views – and with longer time frames – government could build on the foundations that the Commission has laid in its initial foundation. This Council could consist of the existing Commission members plus an equal number of additional members appointed by members of the Oireachtas.

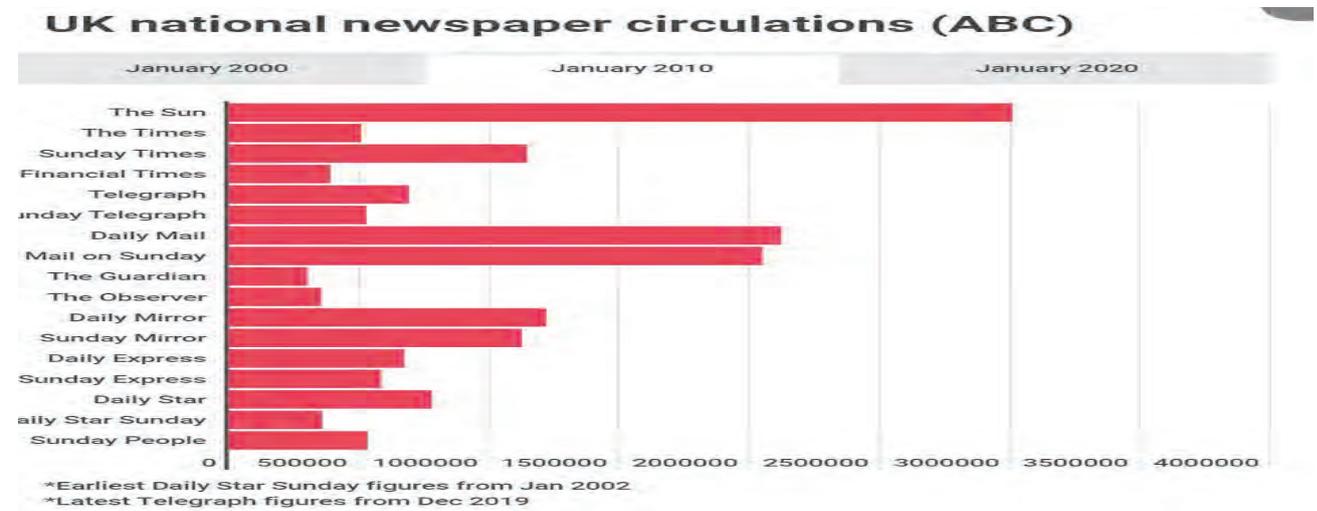
# ANNEX

# DECLINE IN BRITISH NEWSPAPER CIRCULATION DURING LAST 20 YEARS

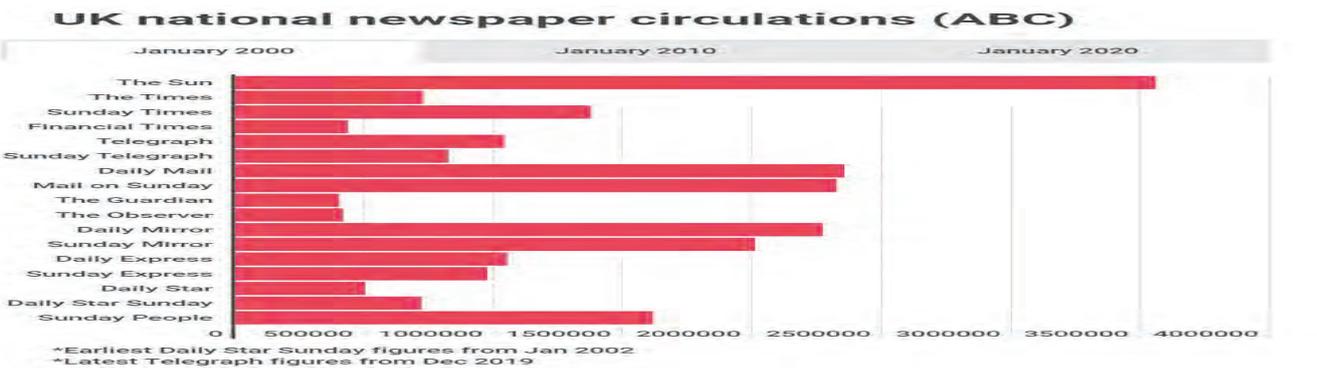
## JANUARY 2020



## JANUARY 2010



## JANUARY 2000





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Record #563

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** submission  
**Date:** Saturday 9 January 2021 14:06:16

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I apologise for my late submission but it is only within the last few hours that I have heard of this public service media assessment. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to share my thoughts.

In my opinion RTE really should be defunded. I 'tuned out' some time ago when I heard what I KNEW to be a lie from a fact checker on one of the talk shows. This demonstrated media bias to me, and also turned out to favour a government narrative. I question how fact checkers with possible conflicts of interest are chosen and how 'facts' can remain inadequately challenged and uncorrected on msm. I hold that the truth was not spoken but manipulated on that occasion at least.

The New Year's Eve Countdown show, where God was accused of raping Mary the mother of Christ, was a deeply offensive sketch to Christians, which demonstrated poor judgement, a lack of common decency and respect by RTE. This would not have happened if RTE was more mindful and adhered to their own "Journalism and Content Guidelines 2020" which states that "Whilst Ireland no longer has a blasphemy law, common decency demands informed sensitivity in the way RTE covers and refers to people's religious beliefs, histories, practices, festivals, symbols, language and rituals."

It was troubling that this poor judgement and disrespect continued to be demonstrated, by RTE player hosting this offensive sketch for a further five days which clearly signalled RTE's esteem of Christian beliefs by belittling and ridiculing them.

I expect higher standards from a public service and for the above reasons (among others) would prefer that my taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTE.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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[Redacted]

Record #564

[Redacted]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** Media future  
**Date:** Saturday 9 January 2021 14:19:50

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I would like the role of the media, to be impartial in forming public opinion

Be a platform for discussion and all opinions given equal time, respect and allowed free speech

The presenters present the program, when they become the interest, it is no longer a public media production

All minorities given fair and equal play

Less of the nonsensical correctness and a better command of language on the part of the presenters and make it mandatory that basic understanding of words and grammar are a must for presentors

I am one of thirty three per cent of the population who voted pro -life and I am not represented on public media, in fact, my opinion is treated in a supercilious manner and indeed the debate on media during the referendum was blatantly biased

Media ought to present and foster educational programs, that aspire to promote in depth thinking through, not the sound bite stuff that we are plagued with

Surely, we have not totally lost, the creativity and gumption that were our hallmark, when we had damn all else  
Sent from my Vodafone Smart by

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #565  
[REDACTED]



**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** RTE  
**Date:** Sunday 10 January 2021 13:46:26

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Dear Commission,

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that *The Journal.ie* which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

Your [REDACTED]

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Record #566

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [info@futureofmediacommission.ie](mailto:info@futureofmediacommission.ie)  
**Subject:** complaint re blasphemy New Year's Eve Countdown show,  
**Date:** Monday 11 January 2021 05:35:40

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New Year's Eve Countdown show,

It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #568  
[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Publicly funded (or with significant public funding) media should never become a pusher of ideologies or groups contrary to the common good. I believe this has been a major fault allowed to grow - especially in RTE - with a consequential 'shutting down' of many well-tested opinions and voices that are not allowed into the public square. How the 'common good' is defined is critical and open to abuse. A reasonable approach - as with other critical issues - could be to set up and maintain a 'reference body' comprising active/practicing members of Faiths in the country to monitor, guide and adjudicate on ongoing issues. The representation could be based on % of declared Faith membership as per last Census from the principal faiths 'active' in the country - and also representation from 'no faith' as a group. Why I suggest 'faith' as the basis is that the major faiths are based on long-standing and widely accepted central beliefs - and wisdom - as to what the 'common good' - and the ways to maintain it, embraces and requires

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Public Service media should receive the majority of needed funding from Gov Revenue. Editorial monitoring should be maintained by a body such as suggested for the 'common good' earlier. In whatever way it is done, the public service media should never be allowed to depend on, or fall under the direct influence of any commercial enterprise, political or ideological group

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Regulation is always needed where human beings operate! It should be as light as possible but as effective as needed - for the common good. The earlier model suggested should cover this.



Record #569

Ethel Hudson



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I would like the media to represent the views of conservative views as much as pushing liberal views. It was shameful how many pro life speakers were not represented fairly on Repeal, and in some cases shamefully cut off and not given equal time.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Its expensive to run a National station, and most comes from us taxpayers and a little from licences, and from advertising. may i add the comment that there are far too many ads for feminine products.we usually turn them off at teatime.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Its obvious that controls are not adequate after the dreadful skit that allowed a scene where Almighty God was being accused of raping Mary, on New Years Eve prog . The writers must have well been aware of the deep offense to God and to those who follow Him . It certainly set out to get a cheap laugh with no care for those who would be deeply offended. I am not a Roman Catholic but many Evangelicals have called rte, signed a petition by Aontu , and written to the BAI, and to the papers to say this level of offence is not going to be taken lightly. As a tax payer I object to insufficient oversight of producers of programmes to ok programmes which deliberately set out to break the code. I have no problem with debates which may disagree in a mannerly way, but this was shameful. I suggest Waterford Whispers contributions should be carefully looked at in future, as their facebook page has others that are pathetic about the Creator, who we will all face one day

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #570

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government should implement laws to allow journalism to be freer from liability lawsuits and to include laws to prosecute public officials who suppress stories that expose corruption. Journalists should have to have tighter rules when collaborating on the truth of stories and be made to print and broadcast retractions when in serious violation of the truth. Journalists and media, in general, should feel free to be able to be the voice of the people. Big tech, big corporations, banks, and 'big money' and others at present feel they can get away with anything. Any steps that can be taken to have a level playing field with the whole of society would be welcome. There should be more competition among the ownership of media outlets and stop monopolies owning the press/media. At present, the media is being used to brainwash people to convey their narrative which is far from the truth. Those who seek the truth have now to look to alternative outlets to get a balance to make a proper assessment of stories We the people, should be involved as far as is possible. Propaganda is a dangerous tool and steps should be taken through the education system to raise the profession of journalism to a higher standard The west is now no different from other countries in the world where free speech is forbidden. Here in our country three-quarters of the stories are propaganda regurgitated to push the agenda of a few and we are made to feel that we have a free press when in reality we are no different from those other countries. Ireland has been in a rush to leave behind her past and to chase after this big bright new modern future. Sadly we sold our souls for money and Ireland with her rich culture, especially in poetry and the written word and song has now so little to mark us out from the rest of the crowd because we joined their ranks.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

EU and Globalist are the problem.



"(1) On government developing and supporting public service media. I am concerned that public service media could end up being the official channel for government announcements and viewpoints. This would put a small number of people in media and government in a troublingly influential position in the country. Our status as a small island tends to amplify the already few media voices here.

Furthermore, catch an ad break on radio or television at almost any time of day, and you will hear "A message from the Government of Ireland" (or the HSE, Road Safety Authority, or other government agency). These days it is increasingly hard to know where "government" ends and where "media" and "journalism" begins.

There is a risk that publicly funded journalism makes journalists in some way beholden to government (even if not explicitly so). Already, the wall between media and politics is very thin. In the past 5 years alone, a significant number of journalists from print and broadcast media have abandoned their profession to become advisors to politicians, which inevitably involves leveraging their influence in media circles to the advantage of their new employer.

(2) On ensuring independent journalism: Public service journalism should avoid analysis or over-analysis of events by its own staff journalists. It is important that all sides of an argument be heard: analysis should come from experts on all sides. Balance should be sought in debates — public media journalists emoting on topics or sentimentally portraying contentious matters should be avoided.

(3) On Irish language and culture promotion: Irish language programming could be increased. Tuning in to RnaG or TG4, one often finds traditional Irish music. TG4 has provided some innovative productions over the years. More of that, and more spoken word broadcasts (live or pre-recorded series), could help RnaG. How about something like 'The Archers' and documentaries as Gaeilge? Quality is more important than quantity here: audience figures will not be huge." "On funding: RTÉ has too many irons in the fire. It has too many stations on both TV and radio. Most programming on RTÉ 2 in particular is not locally produced, but imported. This does not offer a valuable public service. In a time before the internet and satellite or cable TV, this had a place. Today, it is obsolete. Similarly, 2FM, a pop music station, serves no unique purpose. There is no valuable service rendered to the public by the playing of pop music. I think RTÉ 2 and 2FM could (and should) be shut down.

I think RTÉ needs to diversify its programming on RTÉ 1 and Radio 1. A lot of its offerings are live entertainment, light entertainment, human interest, and comedy. Programming on more serious topics deserves a place on the schedules. E.g. historical and cultural series and documentaries.

I am against any universal broadcasting charge. With rationalization, RTÉ can remain solvent. I am worried that a broadcasting charge is simply another tax - on everyone. This can be raised on a whim, and citizens are powerless to opt out. It also risks being misused / abused by government or

politicians as a tool to leverage influence with public service journalists. It would draw government too close to journalists and make journalists too reliant on government. Space is needed here for independence to be maintained."



Record #572

David Packham



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that The Journal.ie which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

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Record #573

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

It feels like there is a growing distrust of the independence of public service media in Ireland - especially RTE broadcasting which seems to regularly follow certain narratives rather than truly independent reporting and journalism.

At the same time there is probably a growing desire for genuinely independent public service broadcasting but if RTE and others continue to lose the confidence of the wider public it may be irretrievable...

We could be generous and assume the bias is unintended and a result of groupthink of like minded individuals in senior and influential roles, resulting in replication of similarly minded people in the hiring process etc.

Or we could be more cynical and think there is a certain cohort of individuals pushing certain narratives aggressively and/or letting it be known that individuals who generally fall in line with the accepted narratives will be the ones who succeed...

In either case the public aren't stupid and seem to be getting pretty sick of the lack of courage and diversity of opinions and perspectives among many of the most prominent broadcasters and shows.

If there is a desire to rescue the sinking ship of public trust I think the first step needed is to do some serious reflection on coverage of a variety of issues in recent years and to honestly assess where biases may have applied and to do a bit of root cause analysis to see how they occurred and continued, where they appear. Perhaps by selecting a number of controversial topics and taking a representative sample of that coverage to do some research with a cross-section of people from outside Ireland to evaluate each piece and assess whether they can tell/guess whether the broadcaster, interviewer etc. is in favour of, against, or impartial about the topic presented might provide some insight. Where there is general agreement among the media in any given country it can feel as though there is only one "acceptable" view on a topic but that is a self-fulfilling prophesy and absolutely unacceptable for a national broadcaster to be involved in such propaganda.

I think a greater separation between Government and public service media is needed also. Perhaps cross-party agreement on multi-annual funding could reduce pressure on the public service broadcaster to feel the need to keep any particular party/government/minister etc. on-side....

Similarly, clauses in the employment contracts of public service broadcasters could perhaps include a period of time after leaving service where they may not take up a role within any level of government to reduce the incidence/impression that

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

PS. My previous answer was submitted by pressing Enter unintentionally... I couldn't see any option to go back....

The point I hadn't finished making was that there is a growing public perception that many in media are soft on the government in order to prepare the way for a potentially lucrative government adviser role.

If all public service broadcasting contracts specified that no employee/regular contractor could work for the government for a certain period of time after finishing their employment that might prove a disincentive.... Perhaps a period of a year or so might be enough of a deterrent.....

That point probably relates to this question too as I believe increasing public trust in the genuine independence of public service broadcasting would increase viewership/listenership which would increase the possibility of more substantial advertising revenue, along with increasing public willingness to fund public service broadcasting.

Personally I have felt more and more in recent years that the majority of RTE 1 content specifically is more about subtly (and not so subtly) pushing a steady stream of narratives and trying to gently move the dial of public perception on a whole range of issues and it has massively reduced the level of enjoyment engagement I have felt with current affairs shows, entertainment shows etc.

It has gotten to the point where you can almost tell ahead of time who will get a soft interview, who will get the tough questions, who will get the "tell me more" questions etc. (for the record I think everyone should get both "tell me more about....." and also "How do you respond to....." questions) and when I see a guest on a show, usually within a few minutes you can spot the narrative they've been invited on to push...

It feels like almost constant propaganda to be honest and while I have always paid my TV license I am sorely tempted to stop that soon. I probably wouldn't feel comfortable breaking the law so may end up getting rid of my television altogether as I abhor paying for a "service" which is so often one sided and mocks those who share some of my world views. For me personally the more public service broadcasting is moving towards public programming broadcasting the closer I am to boycotting it altogether and I see growing momentum for that across society....

For some it is the perceived lack of quality content compared to all the other commercial TV/Radio stations and subscription services and for others it's the constant narrative pushing but I think if public service broadcasting is to survive and be funded willingly by the public it needs to become truly independent and to genuinely provide interesting, diverse content to cater to all sections of society.

TG4 for example produces some fantastic original content and doesn't seem to be quite as vocal in their narrative pushing.... maybe we need an English language version of TG4!

### **Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I'm not well enough informed of current media governance rules and regulations to speak to that but what I personally would love to see would be a genuine oversight of public service media to ensure balance.

I know the BAI is there but to be honest I have limited faith that there is sufficient impartiality within the BAI to adjudicate fairly and it often feels as though there is an implicit bias there too....

If possible I think there should be more efforts to diversify the viewpoints of those involved with governance within the BAI or any other bodies and to ensure that various groups within society are represented and feel represented by public service media.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #574

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Taxpayers money should be used only as a fair representation of all the people in a fair balanced way which is not happening at present with a strict watchbody.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

In this era a tv licence should be sufficient to fund itself, this could be done by reducing the massive salaries paid to the employees most of which is not watched or turned off, mostly because its sensational or rubbish which majority of people are sick of. The huge Irish talent ignored particularly traditional music etc not hardly heard, much more cost effective. Pay less wages and we would have a better class.

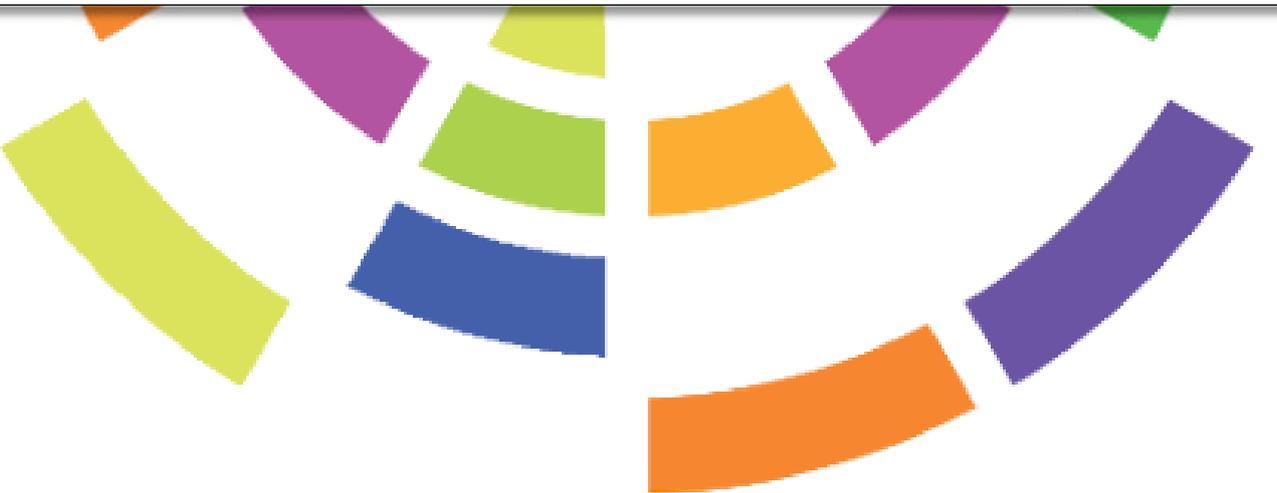
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

By a decent broadcasting board with no vested interest.



Record #575

Edward Mcmanus



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The Government needs to promote a genuine diversity of opinion and reporting. RTÉ and indeed Irish media have shown themselves to be very biased in reporting of certain issues. They have a very left wing “woke” agenda that is very anti-Christian and Irish in general.

A classic example of this was displayed in the “New Year’s” TV clip mocking Christianity, rape victims and immigrants. I appreciate this issue was ultimately rectified but only after a half hearted apology led to public anger forcing the withdrawal of the clip.

This bias was also seen a number of years ago when RTÉ was forced to pay huge damages in a libel case due to reckless defamation of a clergyman.

Further example of serious bias is the reporting of racial crimes. While I along with all reasonable citizens deplore attacks of any kind on people on the basis of ethnicity, culture or origin; it shouldn’t matter to the media the racial profile of the victim or perpetrator.

Yet there has been a number of very serious vicious attacks on people of European origin by those of non European origin which were downplayed by RTÉ and other Irish media.

Attacks on those of non-European origin are rightly publicised and condemned but why the discrimination?

This has led to unsavoury elements sharing disturbing videos online. These get a credibility and support they wouldn’t have if RTÉ and others did their job and reported truthfully and accurately. Unfortunately this is creating a racial divide which will only get worse if this issue is not addressed.

Non truthful reporting by RTÉ is not a new phenomenon. I remember at the time of the IMF bailout of the Irish economy relying on German and other foreign media for truthful accounts of what was happening in Ireland.

RTÉ needs to be overseen by a board representing Irish society, seeking to report accurately and truthfully the facts of the news and promote positively all aspects of Irish life in an inclusive manner.

RTÉ has fallen into the trap of a lot of diverse Irish institutions being dominated by group think that leads to closed thinking and results in huge mistakes because alternate points of view are not there to be considered.

I do not accept that we have a more competitive market - more consolidated, yes. Indeed there needs to be more controls restricting the concentration of media influence. There have been disturbing instances of journalists being bullied in Ireland because of this.

Quality independent journalism is vital to the health of democracy and the state needs to defend and vindicate this profession.

TG4 is excellent at promoting Irish culture and language and needs to be further resourced to increase this.

Irish artists and musicians need to get greater support from the media.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

RTÉ IS privileged to benefit from public funding as well as advertising. This contrasts with public service broadcasting in the BBC which is more wholly dependent on public funds.

RTÉ should have to compete for public funding with other broadcasters both nationally and indeed within the European Union. This could be done by a tender process.

While RTÉ and other media should not shy away from controversial issues, they should not abuse their power to push sectional interests.

The approach of other countries to this should be explored. The TV licence concept is becoming increasingly archaic and probably needs to be replaced by a broadcasting charge.

The quantum of charge must be based on the average of a basket of European Union countries.

### **Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The huge challenge of our age is a perceived “elite”

pushing their agenda and using main stream media to enforce the message.

This message has led to major political upheavals throughout the world and is being used by populists to challenge democratic institutions in formally democratic states.

Media needs to broadcast without fear or favour. However it needs also to use scrutiny. The current left wing liberal mindset marginalises alternative view points. This leads frequently to festering on social media rather than being rationally discussed in public leading to the public accepting, rejecting or modifying these views.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #576  
[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

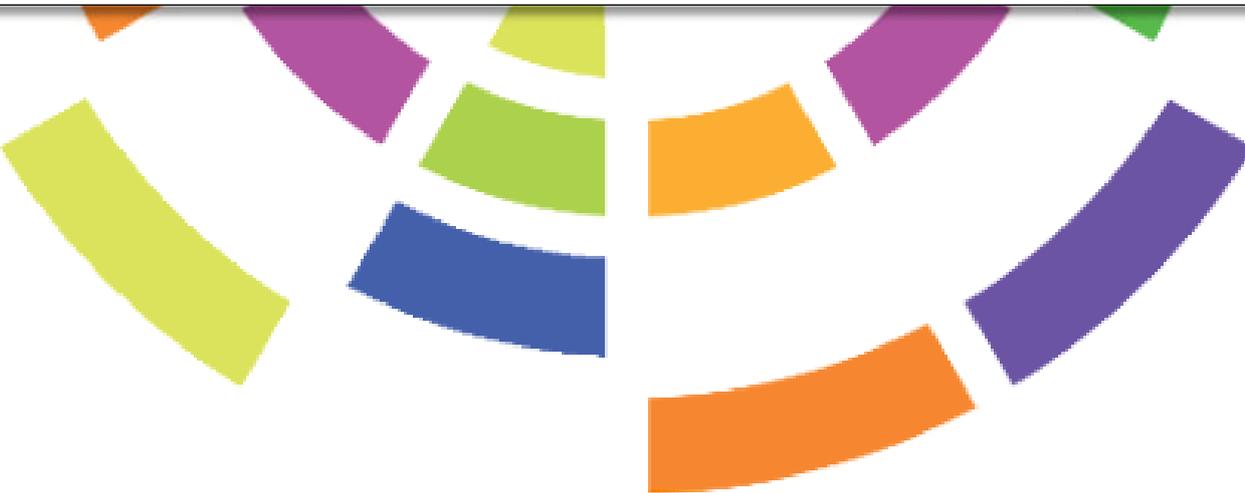
It is very unfair that tax payers money is being used to fund RTE. They show utter disrespect and disdain for people with Christian beliefs in this country, most recently seen in their disgraceful, blasphemous sketch aired on New Year's Eve which provoked almost five thousand complaints from the public. The very people they are offending are then obliged to fund such programming via the tv licence fee. Their bias also applies to the pro life debate and pushing the agenda for euthanasia, all of which are contrary to traditional Christian beliefs. This goes largely unchecked. Funding for cultural or sporting events could be dealt with separately from regular programming.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #577

Lidia Ryan



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media should, as the name suggests, be a service to the public, not a mouthpiece for the government. Since RTE is receiving so much funding from the government, it's not hard to see why there is hardly ever real journalistic research done on news items or any critical review on government policy.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

At present I am paying €160 per year for a network I hardly ever watch or listen to. I don't watch RTE, yet I have to pay for it. I would much rather fund a media source of my own choice, one which I know is not biased in its approach to reporting news - Gript.ie

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

If public service media is able to air highly offensive and blasphemous content on a New Year's Eve program, it just shows how out of touch they are with their viewers. Furthermore, who decides what is real news and what is fake news? The job of the media is to give unbiased facts and different points of view and to leave the public to make up their own mind.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #578

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Have more information about pro-life and the dangers of abortion.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

No, no, no

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Record #580

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions. The fact that the sketch is still on their RTE player means that their apologies were fake.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that The Journal.ie which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

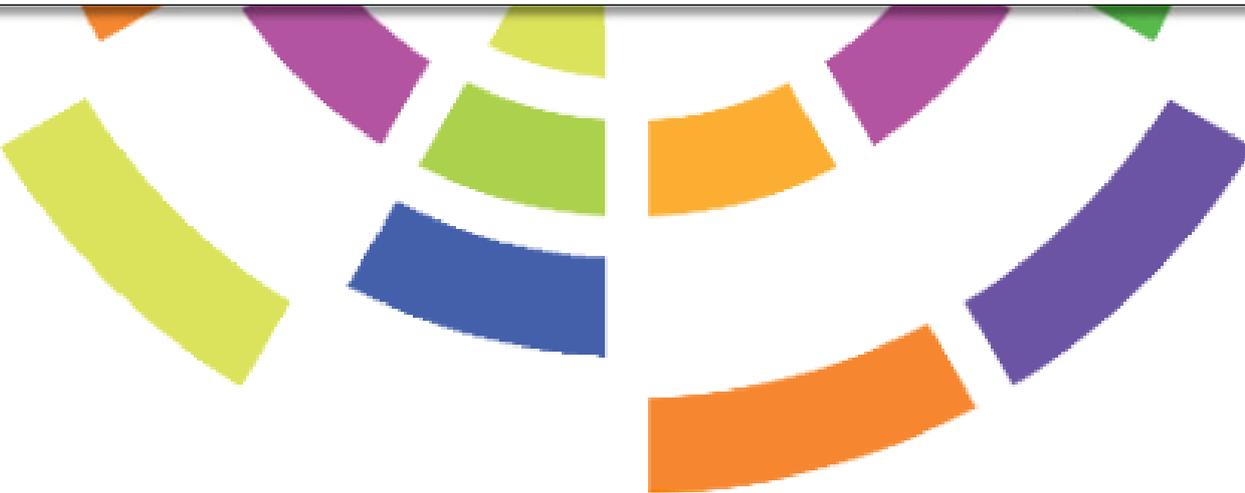
If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.



Record #581

Gearoid O Dubthaigh



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

1. Any broadcasting charge / tax (so called licence) ought to be sent to the media outlet nominated by the person paying, including broadcasters from outside Ireland.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

2. Today RTE is indistinguishable from commercial stations. If it is a public service broadcaster then it ought not seek commercial revenues, and its workers ought to receive normal public service rates of pay.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

3. Currently RTE and other national broadcast radio services seem to have made an industry out of mocking, marginalising, and misrepresenting the beliefs of Catholics. There is a need for a Catholic voices on the national airways. Also the stations can run various self-promotional snippets / ads at their own expense. These too have an editorial line and can be offensive. But the Advertising Authority and the BAI seem to so selective / precise in their areas of concern as to ignore them.



Record #583

Gerry Kingston



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Q1: Ensure truth in the news via impartiality and balanced reporting of the facts. The opinion of reporters is totally unnecessary. The public needs to be allowed to decide for themselves based purely on the facts.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Q1: Most probable that a major cost-cutting exercise accompanied by a major reorganisation of the station with a slimmed-down management structure and a reformed salary structure.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Q3: RTE to broaden its range of serious programmes and in many disciplines in a pleasant manner. Reduce the monopoly of "Entertainment" on RTE 1. Improve standards especially in the area of foul and suggestive language. Despite the drop in Mass going, the Catholic Religion is still in the majority. This should be continuously reflected in the programmes offered as should respect for the beliefs and practices of that religion. It would appear that the regulatory controls are either inadequate or fail to be implemented.



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government has clearly shown that it is incapable of developing public service media. The recent RTE sketch that aired over Christmas and that purposely targeted a religious group with hatred goes against the principle of tolerance in a modern society. The incident was so obviously offensive and sectarian that it is frankly impossible for RTE not to have known that before it was aired. This incident highlights that government supported media has allowed sectarianism to be aired. The government should not be involved in any media, as it has failed massively with RTE. Preventing the spread of sectarian hatred should be a simple ask for a public broadcaster. It is unfair for the religious members of public to be forced to pay their taxes and TV licences to fund hatred directed at them.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

It should be financed privately. RTE has shown that hatred of religious members of society is too easy to seep through in public media in Ireland. It is unfair for the religious members of public to be forced to pay their taxes and TV licences to fund hatred directed at them.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Media should be private and free. They shouldn't be put under any stringent regulation that may make it difficult for them to criticize government. It was private media and social media that helped highlight the religious hatred that RTE has aired. It is hence vitally important that private media is kept free to highlight when the government and government funded bodies fail so terribly.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #585

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government should not be in a position to dictate broadcast content, particularly with regard to news and current affairs. If media is to be a "public service" there must be independence in terms of what is broadcast. It is notable that, during the Covid-19 situation, for the most part the same "experts" were interviewed time and again, particularly on RTÉ, providing the same narrative. This is despite the fact that there are plenty of experts who disagree with the approach taken by the Government of Éire. On this point, the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland awarded grants last year to local radio stations in return for providing "public awareness and understanding of Covid-19" - these grants ranged from €45,000 to €95,000. This funding was made available at the request of the then-Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment, Mr. Richard Bruton. One wonders who decided what counts as acceptable "public awareness and understanding of Covid-19" - the one who was awarding the grants, perhaps?

The government must ensure true independence of the media, particularly on matters involving the State broadcaster, RTÉ. However, the sensibilities of the listenership ought to be taken into account, because while free-speech is important, it has its limits. This calls for objectivity in reporting and a genuine striving to convey the truth - this is not done by running an ad (as RTÉ has done) proclaiming oneself to be "the truth", but by the quality of the broadcasts themselves.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

There should be more consideration given to the distribution of the licence fee. At present, most of the money from the licence goes directly to RTÉ, which gives RTÉ a very clear advantage over other television and radio stations. In a sense, this also makes RTÉ "untouchable" as there is no real competition when RTÉ is always guaranteed the income of the licence fee.

Perhaps those who purchase a television licence could be given a say in how their money will be spent. I do not approve of my money going to RTÉ in particular for several reasons. On New Year's Eve 2020, for example, RTÉ broadcast a blasphemous sketch which accused God of raping the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was not comedy, but a gratuitous attack on the deeply held religious convictions of the vast majority of the people of Éire. Apart from this, it made a joke of rape, which is repulsive to any right-thinking person. The apology, which only came after hundreds of complaints, did not acknowledge that the sketch was objectively inappropriate - it merely apologised that some people were offended. In other words, the management of RTÉ could not see that the sketch was inappropriate in itself, as evidenced by the initial refusal to remove the sketch from the RTÉ player. I do not want one cent of my income to go towards an organisation with so little respect for God and for the religious beliefs of the majority of the people of this country.

Perhaps if public service media was funded by those who choose to fund them (i.e. by the individual deciding where the majority of their licence fee would go), there would be more genuine competition, less complacency, and offer a real opportunity for new and engaging media to flourish.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The current regulations (BAI) state that media plurality is important. While I agree with this, I see very little evidence of it. For example, it appears to be acceptable for several presenters to ridicule the President of the United States of America, with the bias against him even being evident in newscasts and reporting, which should be impartial and dispassionate. In addition, the State broadcaster and several other broadcasters carried a largely one-sided narrative in recent referenda.

Any media outlets which are directly funded by the licence fee should be governed in some way by those who pay the fee - perhaps a number of fee-payers could be invited on a short-term basis (e.g. two years) to participate in governance committees of radio/television stations.

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Record #586

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Media who sell advertising should not have financial support from the taxpayer. If publicly funded media should be clear of obvious bias and family links to Leinster house.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

RTE is no longer fulfilling its obligation as a public service broadcaster. 'Stars' are over-paid and try to curry favour with government as they always want more funding. This is not healthy. Media should be truly independent. If they appeal to the public they will survive. Proper public service broadcasting should showcase Irish culture and report current affairs in a balanced and unbiased manner.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Ireland needs to regulate its own media. We are a sovereign nation. Increasing consolidation / declining plurality of ownership is dangerous for democracy. No controls are clearly not adequate if we consider the sad state of RTE now.



Record #587

Seathrun Mac Ein



## **How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

For a long while now - and especially over the last decade, RTÉ has increasingly treated the morally and theologically conservative Christian groups with utter contempt. During, for instance, the referenda on abortion and "gay marriage", this was painfully obvious. Pro-life spokespersons were usually given a mere fraction of the airtime allocated to the other side and no attempt whatever was made to ensure balanced interviewing, whereas pro-abortion people were normally given very "soft" interviews with no searching questions. As to the marriage referendum, little or no attempt was made to inform the public that contrary opinions even existed - let alone to seek out and interview those holding them. Consequently, any legislation and/or regulations designed to ensure balance needs to be greatly strengthened very soon - and existing provision in this regard should be strictly and even ruthlessly enforced in the meantime. Furthermore, gratuitous offence to religious groups - such as that caused by the blasphemous broadcast on December 31, 2020 - should be rigorously avoided and, when it occurs, heavily penalized. This does not mean that well-informed searching questions to particular groups should be banned, but that they should be given balanced treatment. For example, not all Muslims are terrorists - and, indeed, some are outspoken in opposing terrorism - but those who are terrorists or who support terrorism should be exposed and subjected to searching questions on air when the opportunity occurs. In general, however, religious groups of every type, should be given the right of reply when at all possible. This should include giving them the right to defend their positions from their Holy Books.

As to the Irish language and culture, spokespersons for the relevant organizations should be given more airtime during English language broadcasts to publicize their views and their events. Too little coverage is given to these.

## **How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

While a large proportion of funding of public service media should ideally come from taxation - rather than from advertising or sponsorship from business - this Government funding should be dependent on observance of high standards as outlined in my answer to Question 1. Flagrant breaches of high standards should result in heavy fines or, in the worst cases, in partial withdrawal of Government funding.

## **How should media be governed and regulated?**

National constitutions and international charters of human rights are increasingly being interpreted by courts to give judgements of a kind which were never intended by those drawing up such documents. This often results in persecution of conservative religious groups whom, in many cases, these documents were drawn up to protect. Anyone wishing to redefine human rights should seek amendments to these documents rather than re-interpreting them in such a blatantly unjust manner. Broadcasting organizations likewise should operate within the provisions of what these texts actually say rather than what they would like them to say.

Declining plurality of ownership can lead to a lack of adequate competition and - in some cases - inadequate opportunities to have a variety of viewpoints fairly represented on air.

In line with my opinions expressed in my answers to the previous questions, it seems that present regulation of public service broadcasting is far from adequate. Either the necessary legislation and regulations do not exist or they are being flouted with frequent impunity at the whim of the broadcaster.



Record #588

Michael O'Sullivan



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

1. I favour government support for public service media but media needs to be objective and present news in a balanced manner. It is clear in recent years that there is a prevailing viewpoint which most media today follow. This invariably is left wing, secular, frequently anti-religion, pro-abortion. In my opinion, any examination of Irish media, including RTÉ, would conclude that it is heavily biased against traditional viewpoints. As witnessed on RTÉ over the Christmas period when a blasphemous sketch was broadcast, it seems that RTÉ felt that only certain people were offended. This shows that it is considered acceptable to attack Christianity [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. While I am in favour of supporting public service media, this has the media must be willing to deal fairly with all groups and news needs to be separated from comment, which does not happen at present.

2. Public service media has deteriorated badly in the last decade. Straight facts have been replaced with a mixture of slanted news mixed with comment.

3. There needs to be a redefinition of independent journalism. At present independent journalism is extremely rare. This may stem from the fact that journalists do not represent a broad cross section of Irish society- they are mostly middle class, they are poorly trained. Journalism colleges are a poor substitute for the apprenticeships trainee journalists used to receive with mentoring by experienced journalists on local newspapers, where they experienced a wide variety of news, court reporting, sports coverage etc.

4. Newspapers could support Irish language by providing news daily in the Irish language and by publishing good quality articles in the Irish language.

5. Public service media needs to provide fair and balanced reporting and needs to draw its journalists from a wide cross section of society. Until it does this it is not deserving of taxpayer support.

6. We can learn from other jurisdictions that we need to eliminate news as a form of entertainment. News needs to be treated seriously, it needs to stick to facts; sensational headlines need to be avoided; online comments from the public should follow the same rules as letters to newspapers, with verified names and addresses. This would help to raise the tone and quality of comments.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Public service media should be objective in order to obtain support. There needs to be a method for assessing objectivity. Support could be provided by returning a portion of Vat to the provider. TG4 should be supported with a proportion of a fund for smaller outlets. I would not favour a subscription model as this could not sustain a station such as TG4 who would have to compete with such as Netflix who have millions of subscribers.

Big tech companies should pay a proper rate of taxation - the moneys raised should be divided among the public service media. This would be partial compensation for the adverse effect they have had on the advertising market.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

We should regulate our own media to suit our own needs. We don't need advice from outside bodies.

The biggest challenges are posed by the media in Ireland who are not providing a good service. If the Irish media can provide an independent, trustworthy service, I can foresee a future for them. At present, the Irish public has lost trust in the media and unless they can be trusted again, I cannot foresee a future for them.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #589

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The public should have an option to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for publishing. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.



Record #590

Rosemary Watters



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I think it needs to reflect more accurately the opinions of the majority rather than a constant emphasis on minority opinions.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Tv licence, ads, a small percentage of tax payers money.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

A commission composed of a variety of people, and fair acknowledgement and consideration given to public feedback and comment



Record #591

Mary T. Sweeney



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

2. The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that The Journal.ie which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

3. If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Pay per view so user decides if they want to view the service or not.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

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The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.



Record #592

Mary Healy



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The very concept of “public service media” needs to be looked at. What do we even mean by the term?

Public service? What public are we servicing?

The evolution of RTE in particular has not kept pace with the evolution of Irish society particularly in recent years. The concept that RTE should be publicly, compulsorily funded is both outdated and inappropriate.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

There are many choices of broadcast media today. Any provider should be capable of surviving by virtue of revenue gained through customer satisfaction.

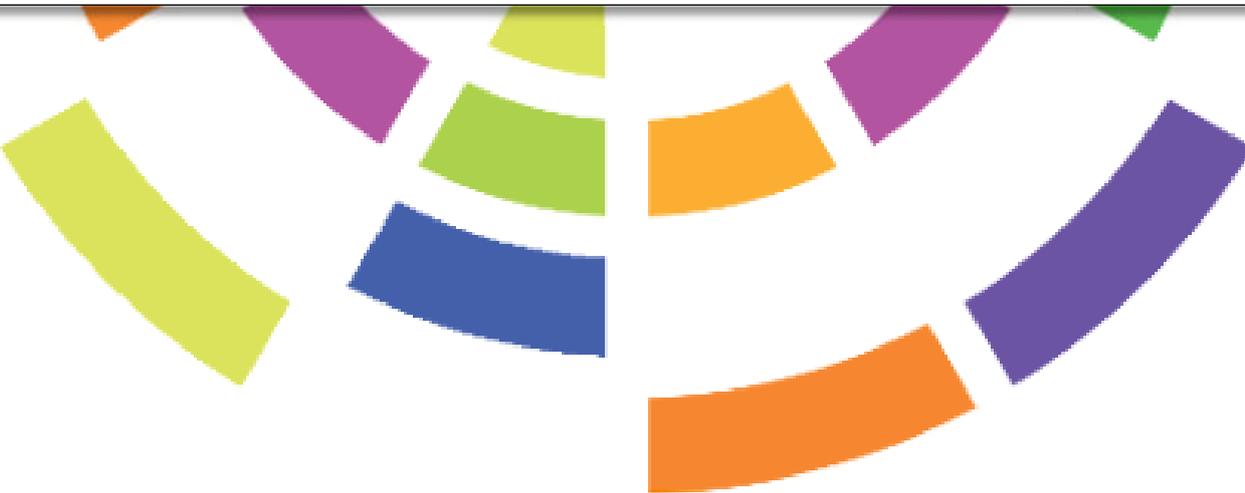
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

All media should be privately owned and regulated by national and EU law.



Record #593

Sinead Boland



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media should be fair and unbiased. Its content should not be decided by a group with any type of agenda. As it is generally funded by the public, it should not offend any sector of it. There is a definite bias in RTE and Irish newspapers against people of faith and against people who hold pro-life opinions, even though our taxes are used to support the media. Sketches like that broadcast on New Year's Eve are very offensive to many people. How did such a sketch get past the producer of that programme? Much more sensitivity is required to respect values held by a community. The public needs to be more involved in the type of presentation of media so that certain elements of society do not feel alienated by the media. This is a real danger in Ireland today when sources like Gript.ie are becoming more and more popular.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

State sponsorship of broadcast, print and online media is only justifiable if the content is balanced and not offensive to or unrepresentative of large sections of society. There is a feeling among many ordinary people that such media are state-funded but run by people with one particular vision for the future of the country which is not inclusive.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The media should be governed and regulated fairly at all levels, nationally and internationally, so that the news we receive is accurate, unbiased and if controversial, then with both sides equally presented. Truth is paramount in journalism of every type and every effort should be made to avoid personal or group bias in the reporting of events and trends. Referendums need particularly impartial treatment so as not to orchestrate a particular outcome. Legislation and regulatory controls may be needed to improve current practices in some quarters.



[REDACTED]

Record #594

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I simply want to say that I was disgusted and horrified at the low level to which RTE had sunk in calling God a rapist etc. I worked in the Muslim school, [REDACTED] for 10 years and have very good friends there. I can just imagine how any one of them would react to awful comments like that about their prophet but then RTE would not deride them in such a way. [REDACTED]

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I have no more to say.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #595  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Q1. The government should have no role in the framing of public service media beyond tendering for the provision of basic news content of public interest and national ceremonial/ Dail debate coverage and Irish language media.

Q2. Two media trends are evident in public media. Firstly consolidation and narrowing ownership of print media. Secondly a problem with the state broadcaster in reflecting values of fairness, diversity and real accountability in its service provision.

Q3. (A) Replace the current licence model with a mix of licence and subscription.

(B) Ensure greater accountability by applying real sanctions when BAI complaints are upheld.

Q4. These activities should be supported by a much reduced licence fee. The rest of RTE's offerings should be supported by subscription only. This would promote opportunities for more flexible and innovative enterprises to provide diverse and regionally interesting offerings.

Q5. In the debate over the future of the BBC a key question is whether it operates in a liberal, metropolitan bubble out of touch with the concerns of the rest of the country. This is relevant in considering the role of the state broadcaster in Ireland.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Q1 Public Service Commission. Elected by the public. Distribution of allocated media outlets which support independent quality journalism.

Q2. The state broadcaster is located on significant property land bank in south Dublin. Given the evolution in media production, this is a liability. It should be sold and replaced with a distributed reimagined model.

Q3. Only on the basis of a public service remit established by a public service commission.

Q4. This should be regulated by a public service commission

Q5 This should replace in large part the existing television licence.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Q1 I suspect there will be more focus on accountability and demonstrated commitment for journalistic standards, particularly in respect of public service media.

Q2 Editorial pressure and lack of commitment to upholding standards.

Q3. No. They are weak and prescribe no sanctions or accountability. The regulating body has no accountability itself.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Record #596

[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

A well-publicised and clearly independent "fact-check" organisation should be developed to enable people check the accuracy of information provided by newspapers, radio, television and social media.

The facts to be checked by this independent organisation would be based on searches made on its website by members of the public. Historical facts would be recorded and current facts would be updated as soon as possible.

deliberately present misinformation as the truth.

Many forms of social media

Sometimes

misinformation is presented as fact in print or on radio, television or internet platforms and goes unchallenged. For example, last year Edwina Currie claimed on a national radio station that England was handling the Covid-19 crisis much better than the Republic of Ireland. She was not challenged so many may have felt she was giving accurate information. Similarly, many contributors on radio and television give the impression that certain problems or benefits are unique to Ireland.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Funding for public service media should be provided by every person from 18 to 65 (or 70) years of age via a small deduction from earnings or welfare payments. The current high level of licence fee evasion is unacceptable.

Republic of Ireland of social media organisations should be taxed to help fund the public service media of the Republic of Ireland.

The advertising revenue from the

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

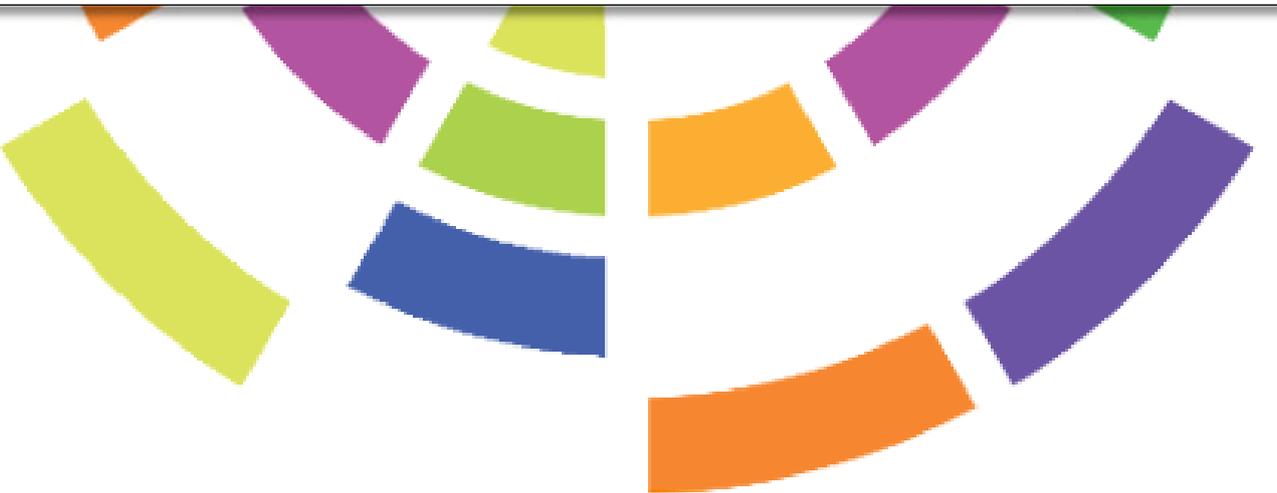
The existing structures, the B.A.I., the newspapers' Ombudsman, etc. should be strengthened to ensure a full and speedy right of redress. For example, a front page false story should be corrected as quickly as possible with an equally prominent article and apology.

The established duty of broadcasters to give both sides in a referendum or all candidates in an election proportionate coverage during a campaign should be extended to many months before the voting date.



Record #597

Rosie Cribbin



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Need to represent all people of Ireland which they do not do. Why should I pay a tv licence when they discriminate so frequently against Christians. They are a disgrace

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

RTE should be independent of public funding when they insult a quarter of their viewers

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

No they are not adequate hence the reason big tech / media control the narrative. There is an uprising in America as people are sick of big tech censorship. RTE should not be paid for by the public

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #598  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

It should not be controlled by the government. It should always present different views in equal terms and proportion of time.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Journalists should always be proven to be impartial in their writing. The financial model has to pass through the present model of advertising, unless a fee bigger than the present TV license was to be introduced to watch the Irish channels, which could be by subscription. The programs could include more cultural, wellbeing and religious content. Presenters should have a cap salary, certainly never getting to the present figures of nearing half a million euros a test in some cases. The impact of advertising on youth attitudes and behaviour needs to be looked at. In a country where they engage in drinking, substance abuse and with so many abortions, this is a must. To sum up: Value for money... the big question... as the public is varied and the impact of programs and advertisements needs to be evaluated. At the moment there is too much of very little value. And not enough independent news. Sorry to say.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Independent media just does not exist. Yes, this needs to be looked at. I can give you the example of how awful the treatment of information on the issue of the 8th amendment was. RTE and its reporters being peobreoesl.abd cuttings short any one who was not. This was unacceptable. Dropping the 8th was a huge thing, as it left the unborn human beings without protection. Yet not a single presenter made enough room for this to be openly seen. I hope this conversation happens again in an objective manner.

So no, regretfully regulatory and legislative controls for public service media are inadequate. Plurality is not the answer. But adhering to search for truth. Even when unwanted, even when classed as non progressive. Because the progressive views do not have the whole truth. As for example abortion does not and other avenues to helping women need to be found, but nothing is said in the media about that.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #599  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

There should not be a public service media funded by taxpayers as there are as many viewpoints as people and one editorial stance cannot please everyone eg abortion

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

No need for public service media as they are prone to taking a stance on issues and therefore offend a section of the population who are forced to fund them

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

No need for public service media therefore no need to fund them. Public funded media organisations are biased towards a certain viewpoint eg, anti - Brexit sentiment, anti - Israeli views. These opinions filter down through the news and we receive the public service media's opinions as facts.



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The constant barrage of anti Catholic material proves that there is NO regulation.

Stop using our taxes to fund BIGOTRY.



Record #601

Esther Phelan



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

R.T E. is totally biased e.g.U.S. Politics..Issues of Life.e.g.murder of unborn/born babies,elderly.Scriptural truth.Blasphemy.I only listen to news sometimes.e.g. COVID.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Certainly not by taxes.perhaps privately funded?

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Unbiased truth

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #602

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government of Ireland takes taxpayers money and gives it to people who have a very clear agenda which is to replace the Christian culture and heritage of Irish people with an anti Christian, materialistic and state controlled culture. All one has to do is look at the change in programme content and advertising.

RTE needs to go. It's presenters, programme makers and management all have the same world view and ideology. There is NO balance or attempt at balance.

Their main aim seems to be to discredit the Catholic Church and turn people against it.

To a large extent they have succeeded and that is why RTE needs to be DEFUNDED.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

As a member of the Roman Catholic church I have been insulted, my faith and values have been thrashed on an ongoing and increasing basis.

This culminated on the New year's eve programme on RTE television with the blasphemous depiction of God our Father as a RAPIST!!!!

That's the straw that broke the camel's back.

I'm telling everyone I know not to pay the license fee.

Would black people fund racist content?

Would homosexuals fund homophobic content?

Would turkeys vote for Christmas?

But Catholics obliged by law to fund anti Catholic BIGOTRY!!!!

Practically every day we're subjected to it.

Enough is enough and the debased, depraved sketch on New year's eve was TOO MUCH.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

It's hard to believe that there are any regulatory controls.

The constant bara



Record #603

Derek Kearney



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Move RTE out of D4 to the midlands and sell the site there. Make it accessible to all the country

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Pay per view

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Respect the view of Christianity as half of iteland follow these beliefs



Record #604



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

It should balance both sides of the public's opinion. Not just what they think is popular at the moment

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

All expenditure should be made available on national news and the minor detail accessible online

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

A cross section of the community should have a voice. Not one sided



Record #605



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I feel one concern is group-think. If we are to encourage the use of public service broadcasting over biased or single-interest social media platforms we need to be careful to provide genuine balance. By this, I mean trying to avoid the pitfalls of group-think which promotes a cancel-culture and others those who question the status quo. We should encourage and embrace opposing views while avoiding confrontational panels which force speakers into entrenched positions and argumentative approach rather than genuinely investigating and trying to understand opposing views.

There is currently a dearth of quality home-produced educational content.

Government funding without editorial input would be preferable.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Public funding avoids the pitfalls of sponsored programming or big companies influencing content. It would ideally be sourced through direct taxation rather than a licence fee.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

There should be media regulation by an independent body or ombudsman. International standards can be generalised but do not translate well to account for different societal norms in different countries.



Record #606

Brian Murphy



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media must respect the religious beliefs of all Irish citizens

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

government subsidy provided the public service media complies with government policy

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

by the Irish government in conformance with Irish Constitution



Record #607



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Government should encourage public service media to be impartial and represent everyone in Irish society. All public service media should be funded by advertising only in order to avoid public media (such as RTÉ) acting as a mouth piece that protects the Government. No one should have to pay a licence fee for a service they don't watch.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Through advertising or subscription services. No one should have to pay for something that they don't watch.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Government is already doing too much media governing and regulating. It needs to step back and allow hard truths to be exposed.



Record #608



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

RTE receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #609  
[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

In my opinion the media should cater for all of the public in Ireland not simply the secular minded. Their failure to do this was illustrated in their bias on things like the referendum on the Eighth Amendment where they were clearly pro abortion. They tricked people into voting to repeal the Eighth by falsely claiming that Savita Halappanavar died because she was not offered an abortion something which was proven to be completely untrue. Our media should be forced to tell ONLY THE TRUTH.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Smaller media groups should receive more funding especially those ones who cater for a wider audience. Rte should not have a monopoly on receiving a licence fee.

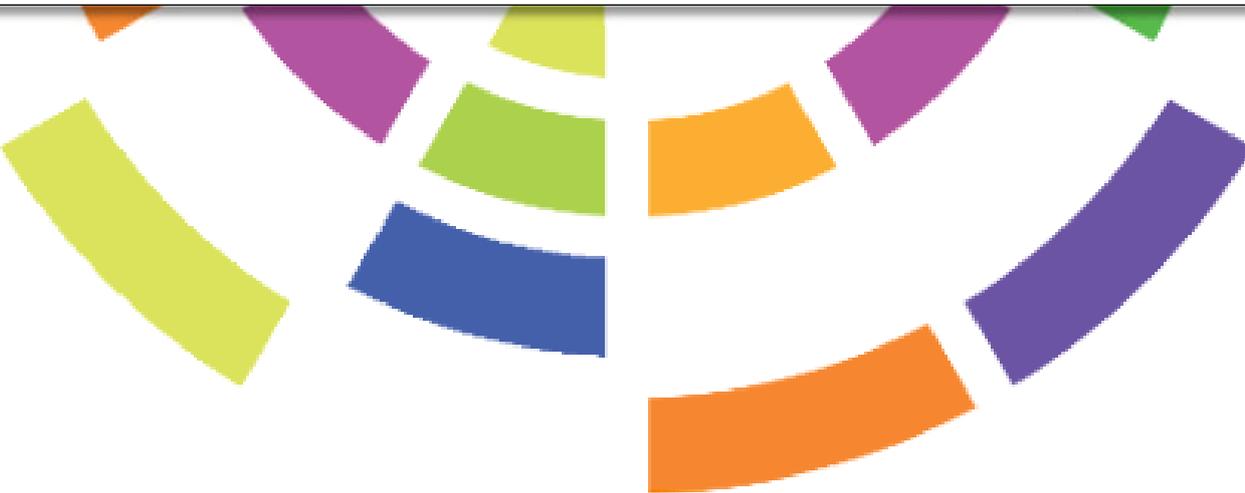
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

All the media sources should be forced to investigate fully any news they broadcast before broadcasting it. The current controls are not adequate as was clearly shown by Rte's blatant blasphemy on their new year's eve broadcast. Our media need to respect our Christian population.



Record #610

Mark Doyle



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The Government should Stop using RTE as it's personal Platform of pushing it's own agendas, and allow Proper & unbiased reporting & debates. The base during the water protests,

The abortion referendum,

The Election is completely one sided & designed solely to belittle, exclude, and vilify any who the prevailing Government deem as decentors.

Whilst forcing those least represented, to pay for the Privelege of being ignored at best or vilified, & criminalised or imprisoned for failing to do so.

As it is RTÉ has become a station Many simply are unable to receive, those who can least afford are being expected by those who have probable never experienced financial hardship to fund their very Extravant life stiles whilst trivialising or totally ignoring their plight & force feeding whatever is the Lobbyest & Government Spinn Doctors want to make the headlines.

RTÉ should be Defunded

It is not & has not been for decades relevant to the majority

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

It should be completely Defunded of any Tax payers money & Licence Fees.

You have privatised everything Else..

If the staff at RTE think they're worth their pay, make it raise it's own funding, make it voluntary what people are willing to contribute.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The regulations that allowed Denis O'brien so much control over such vast swathes of public media have to be changed.

No one man or media Corporation should ever have that control.

Or Government for that matter



Record #611

Teresa McCormack



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

There should be a censor to check that blasphemy and pornography should not be allowed.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The simplest way to finance it is to cut reduce the salaries paid to the heads of department and to the tv and radio presenters. It would be very simple to get a presenter to work for free.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

There should not be people influencing decisions for example advertisers or government with a special interest in stories not being aired. It should be totally independent.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #612  
[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Governments job is to protect the weakest in our society and let the citizens thrive in an environment that supports the religious freedom and all that entails, the economy and the human dignity of people. This includes an independence of media and state so media may not see themselves as above the law but as a balanced informer on events/issues arising and supporting a coherent society with all its different peoples. Not a silent partner.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I really think that public funding is biasing the public service content. As above. These funds should be for the award of service providers based not on size or presumption but on providing a diverse range of media into the arena

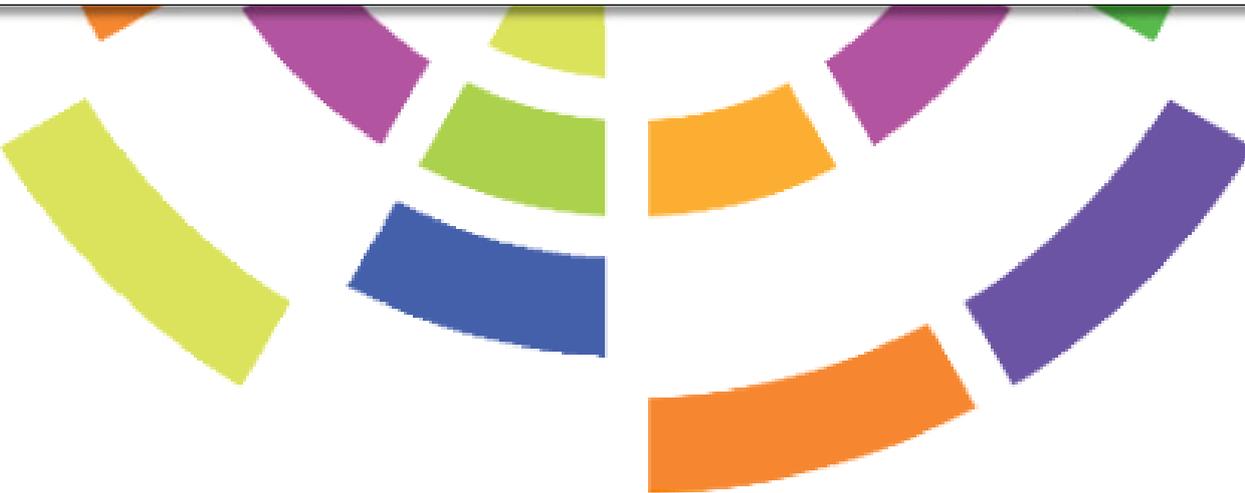
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Ensuring that regulations include the diversity of public service media to be democratic in its make up



Record #613

Ciaran Hogan



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government should only control no more than 51% of any Irish based broadcaster or media; RTE, TG4. The state should ensure there is a public area where ideas, and viewpoints can be brought to the public for the betterment of our democracy. A well balanced spread of private entities should be allowed to operate these broadcasters, the competition would stimulate better content. All political parties which receive above 5% of the votes in the most recent general election should have a representative on a content oversight board in these broadcasters to moderate any political bias.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Public service media should be financed in so far as they provide a valid and engaging platform for dissemination and discussion of ideas and values for the betterment of our political discourse. A reasonable mix of entertainment and informational content.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

a large portion (49%) of national broadcasters and media should be privatized, this creates a commercial interest in optimizing content and operation. As mentioned above all political parties which received more than 5% of the total 1st pref votes in the most recent general election should have a representative on a content supervision board in these broadcasters to moderate political bias.

Strict anti monopoly laws should be brought in that would limit the portion of the media market that any one entity could control, ensuring a plurality of voices and opinions.



Record #614

Eoghan Ryan



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Government should ensure conservative voices are properly reflected in any funded organisation. What we have seen in Irish media is a politically correct, left wing, pandering Corps develop unopposed. A chaos has been encouraged by the media here where all the major truths and institutions of life that stood for a long time have been attacked.

I would like to see the promotion of Irish cultural matters, as they would have been promoted previously: please stop the drive to be “inclusive” in everything: the value of some things are just as the are or were: Irish, perhaps male. Public service broadcasting should not have underlying agendas to be agents of destruction.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I personally see no future in funding RTE and object to paying a penny support to that organisation either directly by way of licence fee or in taxation. In my view RTE is complicit and accountable in the destruction of Irish values.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Media regulation should oblige freedom of speech. Either your argument is good enough to convince people of its merits or its not. ‘Hate speech’ is only a concept designed by left wing supremacists and anarchists to shut down argument.



Record #615



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The tax payer should not have to fund any media there should be no licence fee. If the government wants to fund media it should be shared with all media outlets It should not be given to one outlet.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I don't understand why the tax payer should have to fund any media

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The media should not be governed or regulated



Record #617

Mary Kerrigan



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

There should be a fully accountable commissioner and overseeing body to ensure all opinions and views are fully aired via RTE. The body of those engaged should be from all walks of life and opinions.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

There are very few openings for real change as I feel the new liberal has taken over all media. Where can one actually introduce any meaningful change???

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Unbiased representation can only occur at national level. RTE is supposed to be the broadcaster of Ireland. It can't be broadcasting from the perspective of a danish or German citizen. It must be for the Irish peoples.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #618

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

RTE should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the ultra-liberalisation of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. The debate concerning abortion on demand was almost one-sided with RTE commentators all taking the YES side and sometimes ridiculing those who supported a NO vote.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Those, like myself, with what RTE might call "conservative views" (just not ultra-liberal) should be given as much airtime with no criticism by the RTE presenters such as "Ah SURELY you don't believe in THAT!" I do actually.

Commissioning of content and programmes should be spread across the board with people such as David Quinn (Iona Institute) and Paddy Manning being consulted rather than ultra-liberals such as Colm O'Gorman (Amnesty Int.) and Mary McAleese.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Not as they are now. Anything that looks like honest criticism of

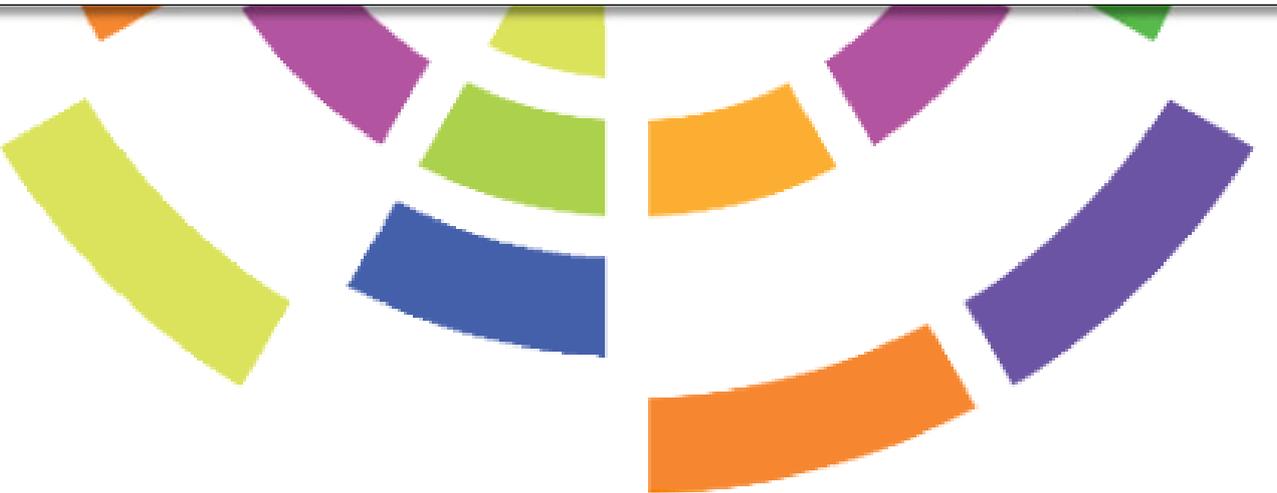
People should be entitled to

air honest views in the media without being censored.



Record #619

Marciel Apetrei



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

1. RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that The Journal.ie which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.



Record #620

Veronica McClean



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Record #621

John Woo



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

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Record #622

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**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public funded media needs to represent a much broader viewpoint rather than the narrow view presented today.

There needs to be greater oversight to ensure balance is presented in news coverage rather than one side getting the majority of coverage as is presently the case in public media especially as presented in RTE currently. This could be achieved by a oversight regulator that ensures balance is maintained and members of the public could raise concerns with the regulator. This would ensure minorities are not targeted by the media as is too often the case in Ireland currently.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Public media could be funded through a taxation being applied in a manner similar to the property tax possibly being incorporated as part of a broader charge and also directly from central government tax revenues ensuring it is adequately funded.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Consolidation of media into a few major players is at a very serious level in Ireland as it not only ensures some senior public figures are beyond reach of media scrutiny, but also that only one type of economic and social perspective is presented in Ireland. If you contrast this position with the UK, where you have media outlets with a very broad perspective on economic and social matters as represented by the Telegraph, the Guardian, Times and Mail, in Ireland this is sadly lacking and there is no longer any media representing the views and political perspective of a very significant proportion of the population.

For a smaller country the only answer or the answer with the best opportunity of succeeding is to fund public media better, while ensuring balance in reporting which does not exist currently within RTE.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #623

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media should be limited to news, weather, current affairs, cultural events and sports. We are in a new era where old fashioned broadcast media are rapidly becoming outmoded. A new type of citizen media has developed and is well on the way to become all dominating. RTE is a dinosaur. Most young people do not watch it. Public service broadcasting should not have a role in entertainment - the private sector is perfectly capable of providing this. The government should oversee the trimming down of RTE to a size that can be financed solely by advertising. The TV license fee should either be abolished completely or applied to those who actually watch RTE TV. Legislation should be passed to access the lists of those who receive TV through fiber, etc. Irish language broadcasting is a vast waste of money - the language is virtually dead and government needs to acknowledge it. Irish language programming should be confined to TnG and RnG and not allowed to spill over onto Radio 1.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

RTE should be made to exist on advertising revenue alone. I object to my tax money subsidizing it.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The best approach is to remove most regulation apart from actual incitement to commit violent acts and actual pornography. There is too much pushing of various agendas by media outlets - especially RTE. The presenters on any public service media should not be allowed to advance their opinions on any matter. RTE does this very often and then ignores complaints.



Record #625

Helen Greene



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Media service should be completely independent. The state sponsored media turns into a propaganda machine rather than balanced and objective media, especially when it comes to news

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

RTE is getting money from advertising, like many other commercial news outlets, I don't see the point in paying TV license for the content that is offensive

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Through an independent broadcasting authority

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Record #626  
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**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government can support some specific public service productions through the BAI Sound & Vision grants. It does not need to otherwise fund public service media. RTE systematically fails to be objective on many issues of national concern. It therefore should not be in receipt of any direct state funding.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

It is not necessary to have a national broadcaster and so the tax payer does not need to be burdened with funding RTE.

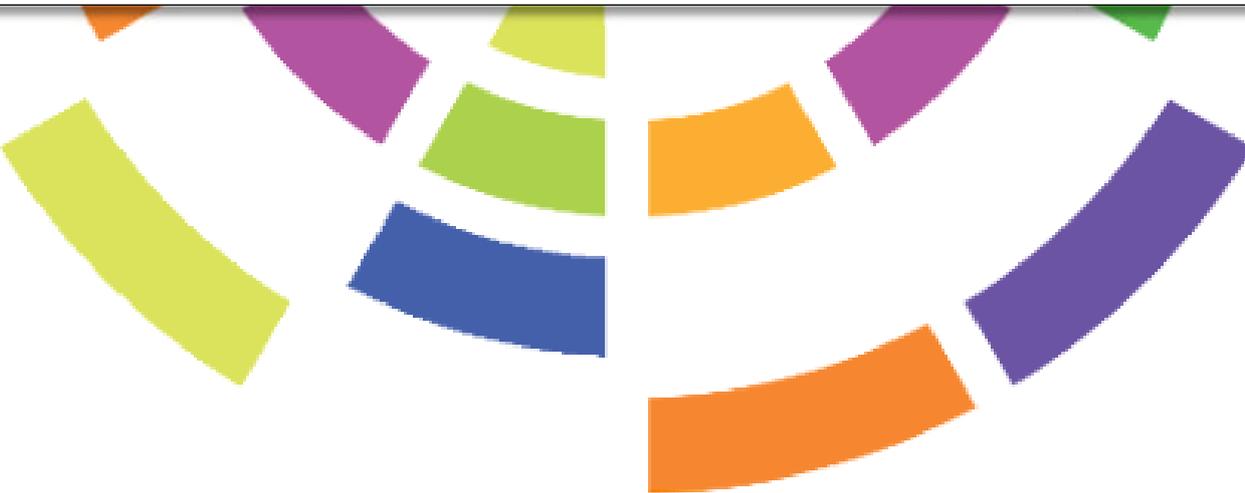
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The NUJ should abandon its partisan policies and instead adopt professional journalistic principles such as those espoused by the Chartered Institute of Journalists. To fund RTE whose journalists must comply with the NUJ's propaganda is to fund propaganda itself.



Record #627

Gerard O'Connor



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The role of the public service is to serve the Common Good:

- 1) supporting the Spiritual, Mental and Physical Well being of each member of every Irish Family,
- 2) providing balanced programming which educates Irish society Positively in matters where - virtuous living is promoted and valued
  - religion and science compliment and nourish each other
  - the proper use of technology is promoted across all generations
  - where News is not dominated by crime reporting of the court system, break down of society and negative values, but promotes education in science, scientific achievements, virtuous living and Faith based values, culture and

Cultural achievements and how the Irish have made and continue to make a positive mark on Global society.

- 3) promote Balanced Reporting on Human Life and it's inalienable value - right from conception to natural death.
- 4) foster a teaching / and an exciting learning environment for the very young - young families - the middle aged and the elderly - nurturing the mind the body and the soul of every person on this island.
- 5) foster interest in international knowledge - social, political, cultural, scientific, religious heritages, historical, technological and aerospace development.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

It's financing should be by the general public with no involvement by government or private industry.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

A rotating body of specialist media developers, promoters, international

Broadcasting experts and a wide cross section of representatives of the general public in Ireland and those who hold Irish Passports living abroad.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #628

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTEs losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.

The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.

The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.

The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

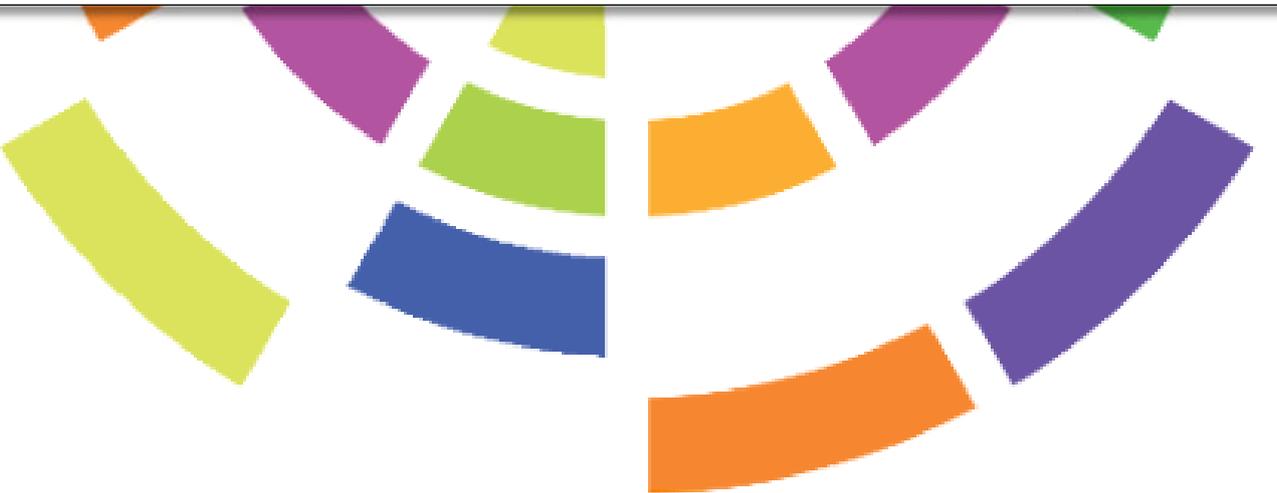
Yours faithfully,

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #629

Judith Leonard



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The welfare of the Nation might better be served if mainstream media reported news impartially, without setting particular agendas or acting as judge, detective, or any other role, which is not a part of its mandate. Furthermore - if controversial issues arise, care must be given that both sides are given equal airing time, otherwise media has failed in its duty as servant of the people and of democracy.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Two recent incidents have shown that greater control is needed for public service media. When the Covid golfing incident occurred, those involved were hounded by mainstream media but when their own members were involved in a similar farewell party in RTE, we heard almost nothing about it. Is this a case of an Institution closing ranks? The New Years Eve satire has similarly been passed over, with nothing more than an apology. People in the media who comment on Religious matters need training in Religious matters. Sometimes the ignorance of presenters about the teaching of the Church and doctrinal matters is sadly evident. We have been warned that there is one sin that will never be forgiven and that is a sin against the Holy Spirit. This should make us cautious and give us a deep respect when dealing with the matters of God.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #630  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The history of the twentieth century and of recent years show the importance of balanced, independent, truth-seeking public media. Too often (e.g. Nazi Germany, Soviet Russia, Brexit, Trump) populist parties and vested interests are allowed to propagate falsehoods which, if left unchallenged, have pernicious consequences for the common good. Government should publish and promote a charter setting the highest possible standards for truthfulness (the whole truth, not just part of it). This is especially important in a small country like Ireland where economics dictate that we cannot have separate media outlets to provide balance. For example, in the UK, readers have a choice of The Guardian or Daily Telegraph to learn of competing points of view. Similarly, in the USA, viewers can choose Fox News or CNN. Scale does not permit this in Ireland. Hence there is an additional responsibility on traditional media outlets to reflect on a balanced basis different points of view and state funding should only be available to organs that adhere to the highest standards in this regard. Sadly, in recent years, no such adherence has been evident in either state funded media (e.g. RTE) or its private counterparts, where there is manifest 'Group Think' and little attempt at objectivity. Thus, spokespersons for the politically correct viewpoints are given easy rides in interviews and provided with ready platforms for their views, while their opposites are routinely subjected to aggressive 'grilling' and provided with very limited opportunities to promote their viewpoints. This is dangerous as the most recent events in the USA make clear. Mendacious propaganda, unchecked, resulted in a threat to democratic order. In Ireland, there is a serious prospect that a party with links to criminality, and a fascist/soviet style governing structure could come to power. Its propaganda remains woefully unexamined and challenged by mainstream media, including the State broadcaster. If this situation continues, Ireland may have to learn the lessons of history the hard way. Hence, the vital importance of the state promoting the highest standards of communication. But - and this is vitally important - none of the above is to suggest that the state should have any editorial or censorship role in the media. A free press, operating to the highest standards is vital and the charter suggested above should set these out but leave any non-adherence to them to the independent judgment of a press council/ombudsman type structure.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

There are no easy answers to the above questions and I don't pretend to have them. However some of them may need a European, rather than solely Irish, solution. For example, the growth of substantially unregulated and unaccountable social media presents a real threat to mainstream media and to the responsible dissemination of truth, as the legacy of the Trump years in the USA graphically demonstrate. Hence, were there to be a tax on these social media platforms, with the proceeds to be directed to fund quality journalism, such action would need to be on a pan European level.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

As suggested or implied above, a variety of structures such as a press council and some means of requiring accountability by social media at a European (or better global) level are required, in my opinion.

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Record #632  
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**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The Government has no place in the provision or support of public service media in Ireland. To do so, particularly through direct or indirect funding, would not be in the public interest as the media and, in particular, journalists and news bodies would be compromised in their coverage of public affairs and in conducting investigative journalism as he who pays the piper calls the tune. This is already evident in the ongoing conduct of RTE. In the current pandemic, for example, this body has not made any meaningful engagement with expert opinion at odds with Government policy. RTE is also partisan with an agenda that targets men (e.g. Carlow Presentation College) and people of religious faith (e.g. the recent NYE "sketch" and Fr. Kevin Reynolds). Why should the public fund an organisation, and its staff members, which acts in such a calculated manner to serve its own prejudices. Other media organisations may do the same (in my own view, to a much lesser extent) but they do so without direct public funding (which may explain why they don't take free license - excuse the pun- to abuse certain sections of society and the trust placed by the public in the Fourth Estate).

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

"Sustainably" is a weasel word, devoid of any meaning so the question is poorly put. If the media and particularly news organisations are in a funding crisis then that reflects a lack of interest by the public in purchasing its product. I have not purchased an Irish newspaper in the past four years as I find the agenda in those entities to act in the self-interest of the editors and journalists. There was a time when newspapers quite rightly had no friends and when there were many stories that made many people uncomfortable. There are few such stories now to be found on Irish newspaper pages. In relation to coverage of Government and the public sector, paraphrasing of official releases and briefings seem to be the norm. Why pay for those releases when you get them for free through other outlets? The other downside is the proliferation of opinion pieces. Opinion is cheap and plentiful. Why should we, the public, be forced to pay in the future for the navel gazing of, say, handsomely-remunerated Irish Times columnists? Finally, a cancel culture has developed among those involved and in control of media organisations. In recent years, this has cost Kevin Myers and George Hook their livelihoods. Such a culture would likely be exacerbated if editors and media owners did not have to worry in the future about the commercial consequences of dismissing staff through the availability of public funding.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

As per above, government subsidy and cornering of the media industry is not in the public interest. There will always be a market among the public for diverse views and independent investigative journalism. Government regulatory control or even funding would only have a chilling effect.



Record #633

David Mullins

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Government should leave media funding/competition to the markets

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Private Enterprises

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Codes of Conduct



Record #634

Damian Gavin



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that The Journal.ie which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #635

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I object to the extension of the television license to a household tax. I intentionally do not watch RTE as too many times we have been subjected to presenters and programmes that openly mock our catholic/christian beliefs, the most recent being the disgraceful and offensive New Year's Eve show and in the past allowed guests on the Late late show describe the Holy Eucharist as "magic bread". I do not wish to pay for the substandard content that RTE produce. Also the bias shown during recent referendums for example the abortion referendum is unacceptable. In my opinion there is never a level playing field when only one side is presented. I do not believe that a broadcaster which is funded by the government will ever show an unbiased argument. Therefore I would suggest defunding RTE instead of propping it up and forcing people who disagree with the agendas put forward to fund this organisation that holds our deeply held beliefs with such contempt.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Defund

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I do not have confidence in the BAI which is so biased against catholic beliefs. Standards should be much better for a regulator.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #636

[REDACTED]



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**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. They could be asked to vote for their favourite news media channel.

I think sporting and cultural events should be ring fenced as more and more are going behind paywalls.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.



Record #637

Niall Sharkey



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

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[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #638

[REDACTED]



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Record #639

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[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #640

[REDACTED]



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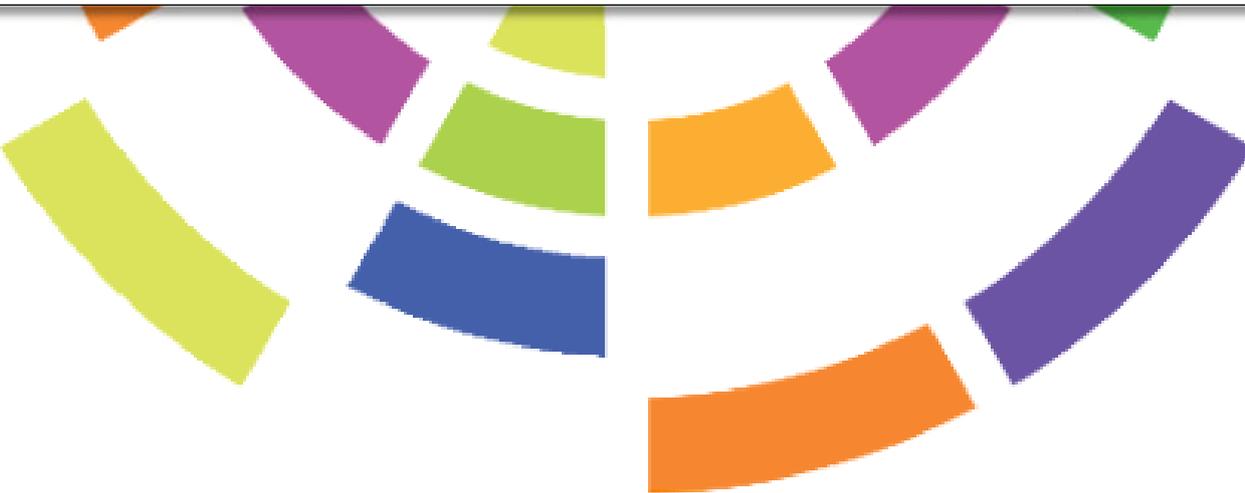
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Record #641

Mary Kenny



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Record #642



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[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #643

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

RTÉ should move away from light entertainment and become a high quality public service broadcaster. RTEs light entertainment programming quality cannot compete with The likes of Netflix.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #644

[REDACTED]



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Record #645

Rory O'Hanlon



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

What is referred to as Public Service Media has a reputation for complete lack of impartiality. In so far as there is any case for Public Service Media, it needs to be entirely impartial. If the government has any role whatsoever in developing public service media it should be to impose impartiality.

So-called public service media has evolved into a very one-sided medium that blatantly involves itself in political issues.

Any media that can't handle an "increasingly competitive market" is unfit for purpose and should definitely not be sustained at public expense.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Any media that persistently fails to be impartial should not be referred to as public service media and should not receive any public funding.

Any media should only be funded by voluntary subscription. Thus, if it fails the impartiality test it will lose subscribers and therefore its funding. This is the only way that impartiality could be ensured, or at least that those who oppose a one-sided media won't be obliged to fund it.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Any privileges or funding given to the media should come with very strict conditions, and in particular the requirement for impartiality.

The completely out of control partisanship of media and social media platforms can only be stopped by removing privileges, protections and funding.

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Record #646

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**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

In regards to the Media it is a big subject as most of the media are controlled by the government and this has to STOP. the media should be regulated through a separate board which does not have any political influence.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I think it can be financed through advertising , in this case I would be happy to keep paying my TV licence . it should be run as a company....

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

it should certainly not discriminate the catholic Faith . it should embrace it

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #647

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

They shouldn't fund media like RTE, they don't represent me

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I'm pro-life, I do not feel represented by the media, except Gript or Alive

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I'd like my taxes to go to Gript or similar



Record #648

Kathleen Kavanagh



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I resent my license fee being used to broadcast filth. I was so upset with the blasphemy on that Programme Christmas Eve

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

No

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #649

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

It must be unbiased, impartial. Allow debate. Welcome all viewpoints to participate in open discussion. Cover real news stories.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Advertising

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Respect human dignity, respect the moral values of the people, respect their religion.



Record #650

William O' Connor



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The taxpayer should have a say in deciding which media supplier(s) received public funding. RTE is often biased in its presentation of news and opinions. It is probably unconscious of this and so incapable of doing much about it. A more democratic arrangement would allow the public to judge and decide. The main guidance to the media supplier from the taxpayer can be the degree of funding decided by the taxpayer.

Broadcasting choice and standards can be maintained, and the funding model refined, by distinguishing categories of media content, such as news and analysis, debates on social issues, documentaries, sport, music and entertainment, culture and language. To a degree there can be separate funding models for each category, again with answerability to the taxpayer under each heading.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Just as ESB networks provides the infrastructure and then customers can choose who supplies their energy, so RTE could provide a communications infrastructure within which listeners and viewers have a choice of, for example, suppliers of news stories, news analysis, debates, as well as sports, culture, entertainment, etc. The public money could then be directed to those providing the best services.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The channels and mechanisms for hearing and dealing with complaints to the media should be simplified and made easier to use.



Record #651

David O'Neill



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

There should be four streams of communication. 1. Official government communication which is clearly identified as such. 2. Independent News and documentaries with a neutral governance structure to oversee impartiality, balance and standards including respect for the various communities in society. 3. Specifically Irish cultural content relevant to an Irish audience. 4. Light entertainment and tv programming.

The focus should be on the content and not the personality of the presenters and their specific biases. RTE has developed a tendency towards creating cult status around certain presenters and this should be avoided in future.

There should be more emphasis on Capital investment in quality broadcast equipment rather than on operations costs such as presenters salaries. Current picture qualities are noticeably poor compared to the BBC for example or online sources. DAB broadcasting is noticeably absent. RTE player quality is poor with far too much interruption by intrusive advertising.

More use should be made of Regional resources and locations to develop programming and the agenda for content rather than the Dublin skewed agenda being prioritised at the moment.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Funding could be via cultural grants for Irish cultural content. Government communications and News should be funded on a cost basis with salaries set by an independent commission to be in line with societal norms. Both of these should be funded via general taxation rather than license. Entertainment should be funded by advertising and subscription.

In this scenario certain programming would be free to air and certain broadcast and online content would require a subscription for the consumer.

The current license system should be scrapped or used to fund a centralised subscription system where people could make their own choices on who to subscribe to.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Irish Public Broadcasting has become subject to cultural capture as the ethos of public broadcasting has been left to the biases of RTE's management and presenters. An independent standards board drawn from a cross section of society with a hands on mandate along with a new set of guiding principles should be formed.

There should be guaranteed access to a percentage of broadcast capacity for minority viewpoints. A qualification mechanism similar to how we distinguish between individual politicians and parties could be considered to ensure that representative minority views rather than random individual views are given access.

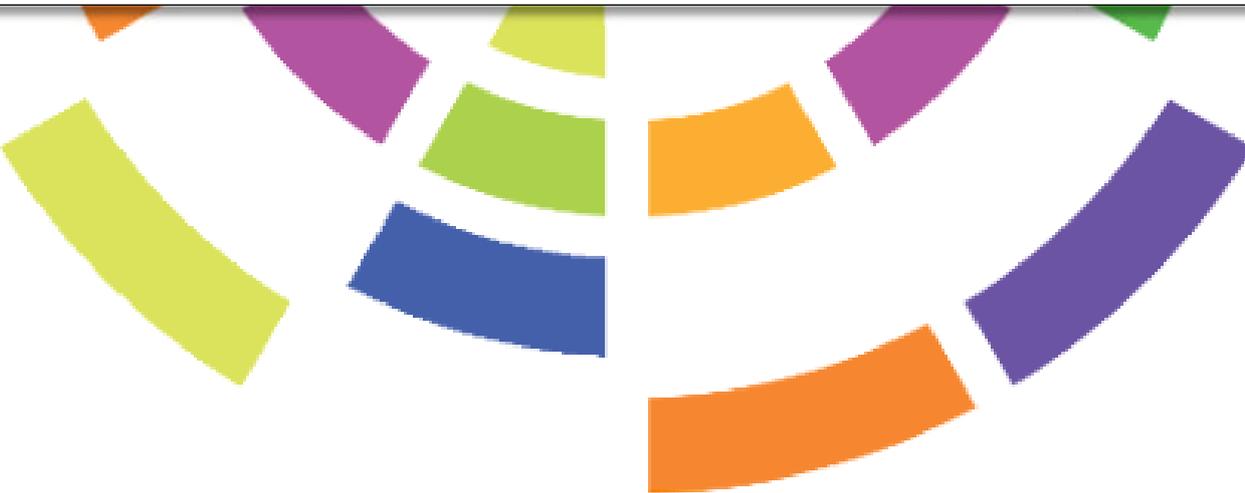
At the moment it is clear that RTE selects from a standard stable of commentators who conform to the approved views of the station rather than providing any real diversity of thought. This may be partly due to the tendency for presenters to monopolise a show once they settle in. More rotation of presenters should be built into governance of public broadcasting.

The current legislative framework does not seem to be effective at ensuring independent and balanced presentation. It should be reviewed by an independent group with lay representation rather than by government appointed individuals.



Record #652

Jude Clooney



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I feel the media should be independent of Government control but some control could be applied where the media is using its instruments to offend citizens.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The tax system whereby citizens pay a licence fee is working fine but no citizen should be forced to watch the kind of liberal content RTE are showing right now. Viewers should have options to choose reasonably what they are paying for. Right now viewers don't have a choice but to watch what can best be described as media agenda to change people's minds away from long standing values and principles.

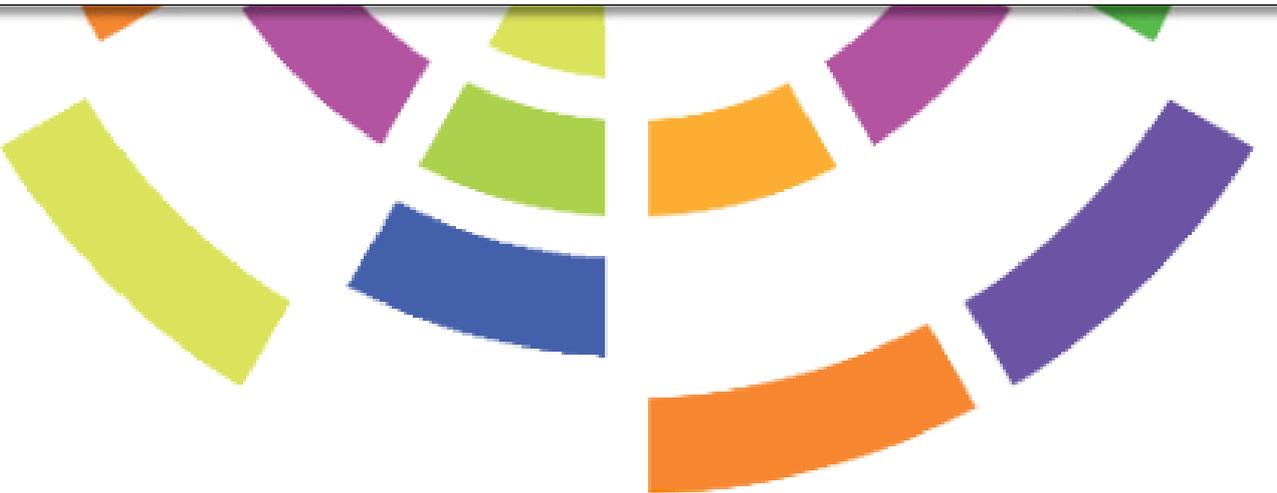
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I feel that the media should have some autonomy where possible but that it should not be allowed to promote values that undermine the moral fabric of the nation and its people. These are very different times we are living in and the adjustment has been all too much for a great many citizens. Perhaps a tightening of regulatory controls by a body independent of either liberal or conservative agendas but with age old family values at its core would be recommended. The citizen should have options and choices and not be forced to view programs with content and values they find offensive and do not agree with.



Record #653

Andrew T



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

RTE no longer can be depended for reporting the news. What we here from RTE is only the Government spin on the news. This is why Grypt should get funding from the Government

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Looking at the control of Facebook and other similar companies who proclaim they are not publishers, and yet use their power to censor Donald Trump because it goes against their political interests should not be allowed to carry out their policies in Ireland against the Protect the 8th Referendum and similar political arguments, in the future. This also applies to RTE

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media are not adequate

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #654

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government must ensure any publicly funded media is politically unbiased, which at present it is not.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Rte should be refunded as it is not impartial

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Not adequate at all and biased to the left in the extreme



Record #655

Sophie Brazil



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

As per the recommendations of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Climate Action in 2019, it should be an absolute priority that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland implement guidelines/measures to ensure comprehensive, honest and accurate coverage of climate the climate crisis and urgency of change.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Also taking from a recommendation of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Climate Action, the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland should have a ring-fenced percentage quota of programming devoted to the climate, biodiversity loss and ecological emergency, and climate justice (this would be additional to existing quotas in News and Current Affairs programming). The BAI should develop a code of practice to ensure advertisers and lobbying groups don't unduly influence media content.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

N/A



Record #656

Mary Kearney



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public media should ensure it raises questions that are of concern to the general public. They should not be constrained by government policy.

Media outlets should also ensure that government and public opinion is given fair sounding. It appears that outspoken members of preferred views get an inordinate level of airtime.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Government should continue to support media as otherwise it will be controlled by vested interest.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Proper content control and regulation must ensure unbiased reporting. We do not want a onesided media outlet

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Record #657

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**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Commercial enterprise like RTE should not be funded, Teach Irish like other languages are taught.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Public enterprise can be financed through advertising

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Introduce a censorship board. too much disrespect for our past culture, morals and decency.



Record #659

Henry Deane



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

All media should believe in Good and act accordingly

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Advertising is acceptable but shouldn't been aware of the probability of young viewers

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

By a well educated conscience

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #660

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Q1 Public service media should be factual only and give pros and cons in equal number for any question.

Q2 The control of bias in reporting, perhaps even animosity, should be rigorous.

Q3 Introduce the “high quality independent journalism” mentioned.

Q4 present Irish language and culture as a part of being European with distinction

Q5 Come out of that RTE introverted bubble and learn about people.

That you live among your own people and culture

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Q1 Beyond my competence. Study success .

Q2 as above

Q3 try honour, decency, competence, intelligence?

Q4 in proportion to their service particularly in a niche area

Q5 brainwashing rubbish

Q6 a wide open question. A flat rate provision of airtime on RTÉ for voluntaries?

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Q1 all such changes will negatively impact.

Q2 they'll obviously get worse.

Q3 decidedly and obviously not



Record #661

Lucia Kennedy



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

As a young university student I really want to feel I can trust the media to tell me the truth, so that I can understand what's happening around me in an increasingly confusing and polarised society. At the moment I really do not feel that what I'm seeing, even on National Broadcasters and newspapers can be relied upon. I would like the Government to pay attention to the ever increasing tendency of media personnel/providers to tell their opinions rather than the facts, and when facts are included they are usually specially chosen to give a certain slant on an issue or event, in order to manipulate how the viewers/readers think about this issue/event. I don't want to be told what I should think on an issue, that's for me to decide. What I want is more regulation of the media and media personnel, in order to oblige them to report bald facts without any or their personal slant or agenda included. Opinions are for the opinion columns, not for the the news.

Also I want the Government to pay attention to the movement in our national media to marginalise or attack groups (especially minorities) who the media providers and personnel don't personally like or agree with.

As a young conservative Catholic, I find my views and community under attack every time I open a paper or turn on television. This simply is not acceptable in a modern, open society. My peers and I feel as though we are completely excluded from representation by our national media, since they never cease to villify our community. I want the government to take steps to check this harmful trend in the national media of excluding and targeting minorities simply because of personal differences of opinion between media providers and certain groups.

If the national media is not obliged to give a fair and non-judgemental place, even to those they dislike or disagree with, we can abandon any hope of creating an equal and diverse society.

With regards to Irish, I would love to see more high-quality docu-dramas and documentaries being produced, as well as short films and ideally, television shows and films either dubbed or subtitled in Irish. There has already been good work done in this area and I would love to see it continued, in order to foster the recreational use of Irish in our society

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I think that newspapers and television stations should be self supporting, as this would allow people more freedom to effect change in the industry.

Understandably, Irish broadcasters may need state support.

In order to fund the national media with maximum economic efficiency the outrageously high salaries of media presenters such as Ray D'arcy, Ryan Tubridy etc should be reduced.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

See my first response

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #662

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The current service should be defunded as it presents a biased view concerning issues that much of the tax paying general public disagree with, particularly with regard to 'liberalisation', avoiding a fair airing of pro-life and faith views. An independent body needs to be in place that honestly represents the full range of views of the public.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #663

Fiona NW



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government should stay out of the media. Let it fail or succeed on its own.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

No tax payer funds should be given to any television or print or radio media. It should not be given any money from the government i.e. the Irish people.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Government are the reason of the declining plurality of ownership in the Irish market so again they should stay out of it.



Record #664

Geoffrey Territ



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Stop being so liberal and leftwing and stop presuming that everyone watching are left wing extremists!!! I'm constantly disgusted by the so called neutral main stream media in this country filling our heads with complete liberal views. To even suggest your are a more conservative person you are looked upon as if you have 5 heads.! Liberal equals anything and I mean ANYTHING goes ! No thanks I'll keep my faith in God thanks

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Abolish TV licence fee

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

By the people



Record #665

Hayley Reid



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I think they can start by changing their undoubted leftist bias by offering opinions/interviews with people of all opinions and by being fair and unbiased.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Stop using the media stations as a propaganda machine

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

No they are not. Big tech have way too much power and are tying in with the government to censor and control what they like.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #666

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Defund RTÉ

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

See above

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

See above

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #668  
[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

As a young person growing up in Ireland today, I am noticing more and more the bias of the media. I believe the Government should make sure the media is fair and balanced towards all sides of the community. For example, the prolife issue should be dealt with in a more equal way. At the present, the media leans strongly towards the left whenever dealing with this issue and many others.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #669

Jacinta Jones



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government should ensure that media outlets should report in a fair and balanced way on all sectors of the community. Unfortunately our print media and the national broadcaster RTE have shown themselves to be biased and to give their own slant on everything rather than just report the news. This slant is always in one direction, left, and is showing itself time and time again to disdain one particular group and religion, ie, Christians. This was evidenced yet again in RTE's offering on new year's eve where they ridiculed the beliefs of one sector of our community. I think the government needs to look carefully at a media watchdog that is fair and unbiased. I think the editors and producers of bigoted and biased commentary should have to answer for their bigotry. How the media sustains itself is a question of quality...people will pay for quality. What is happening in the likes of RTE is that viewers are tired of the same old presenters and the lack of balance and the rehash of out of date programmes! I think the government has to look carefully now at the outrageous salaries of the RTE presenters quite a few of whom are getting bigger salaries than the Taoiseach for talking absolute drivel!! Their salaries are unsustainable! [REDACTED] springs to mind!! Re. the future of the Irish language...I would like to see high quality documentaries in our native language, for example. Something that would make the language alive and interesting for all.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I think the government cannot keep subsidising a loss maker like RTE. It needs to get creative about funding and about whether we actually need a "national" broadcaster?? Think local radio, think private media. Then they would have to sustain themselves.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Not adequate



Record #670

Les Hill



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

It is absolutely ridiculous that tax payers are funding RTE to bring news to the nation. They have continually proven themselves left wing and incapable of bringing a balanced debate to any issue of national importance, whether it was the abortion referendum, [REDACTED] or any other issue that requires honest, open debate.

Proven fake news ought to be censored, but removing valuable debate that muses the populace is fascist ideology.

I do not personally believe that RTE has evolved with the changing morals of society, but rather it has led, by its programmes and reporting to support the decadence that has undermined our culture.

The Wall Street Journal is not a conservative publication, but it hires free lance journalists with conservative to offer another view point. It may not even the balance, but at least it is an attempt. Sadly, we have no balance whatsoever in Ireland

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

We live in a democracy that supports initiative and a form of capitalism. Government should not fund media, but rather it should operate in free market. UTV for years operated on advertising. RTE absolutely should not be funded by ads and government. I see not value in it whatsoever. There might perhaps be room for tax relief if they offer a genuine service to the community beyond what other TV stations are doing, but they should have to be able to prove themselves unbiased in their programming to qualify, if they are to represent the whole country

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

That is a difficult question. The regulatory body is a joke because they operate from a democratic point of view rather than from a constitution. In other words, programming can include nudity and profanity at any time of day as long as no one objects, or if the objections do not reach a quota. This is an anarchical approach. Instead, media should be held to accepted guidelines no matter who complains or not.

RTE just aired profanity which mocks the God whom our forefathers and drafters of our constitution revered. They are not ashamed and they deserve to be defunded. They did not remove their blasphemy from RTE player which proves their wicked intentions and lack of sincerity regarding apology. In a free market, with proper regulation, heads would roll!!

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #671

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Irish media, RTÉ, is too one sided in recent time. No information & all one sided views. Same as radio where they're all reading from the same sheet.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Too many corporations have a huge say in Irish life. Its for the people & not government or corporate affairs

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

All radio as well as TV are funded too much & they're all over paid. Especially when they only side with the views of the government.

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Record #672  
████████████████████



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Government should have no role in media. The state has enough financial obligations, without funding media groups. Rte should be sold off by the state and the proceeds should be used on renewable electricity capital expenditure. The state could create massive benefits for the country and for employment, using this approach

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Rte should be sold off to private companies- there is no reason for the state to be involved in the media business. Rte would be run more efficiently and effectively if it was part of a private company.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The media should abide by the laws of the state and no other regulations should be needed. People are intelligent enough to judge for themselves what they read and hear. People will then be free to read, write and see whatever they choose. They will then be free to fund only media they agree explicitly to fund



Record #673

Kate Lawlor



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The state should not be in the business of deciding what news is fit for consumption. It is noteworthy that The Journal.ie which has status as a Facebook fact-checker has run some very dubious fact-checks of its own. The same could be said of other publications, who are now likely looking for taxpayer funding. Media platforms should exist on their own merit, not at the favour of the government.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

RTÉ should be defunded. It receives €180 million from the taxpayer each year and utterly fails to give a fair hearing or representation to many people including those with pro-life views or people of faith, who are then forced to fund the station. Factual inaccuracies, usually being used to benefit the liberalising side of a public debate, have remained uncorrected. Most recently, in their New Year's Eve Countdown show, they accused God of raping Mary, mother of Christ in a deeply unfunny and hugely offensive sketch. An apology was only finally given after some 5,000 people complained and thousands more signed petitions.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

If this Commission is determined to persist in providing or expanding public funding for media platforms, then the funding model needs to change. The public, whose taxes are being spent, need to be involved. There are a great many people, for example, who would rather their taxes went to support Gript.ie rather than RTÉ. This could be achieved by asking the public to cast a vote for their favoured recipient from a list of news and analysis providers. The list would need to be genuinely open to all comers, and include all platforms who had an established presence. Cultural and sporting platforms or initiatives could have spending ring-fenced.

The present situation, where all taxpayers are forced to fund media platforms who have the favour of the government is undemocratic, unfair and cannot continue.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #674  
[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

There should be balance with media stations from both sides of left and right politics. Monopoly is always poor service

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

If the current model continues with government as ultimate backer Irish media stops being accountable

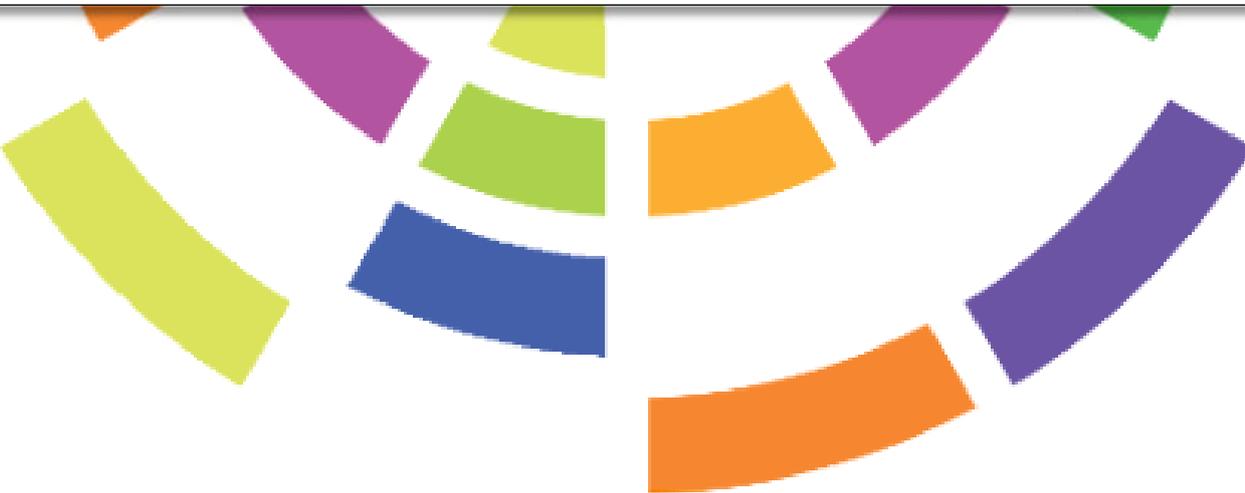
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

If media is biased to one political side then it should be left to be funded by thier party



Record #675

Gerry Martin



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

By supporting public service content across all providers

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

programmes supported across all providers by reference to their share of audience

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Legislate to include social media platforms as publishers

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #676

[REDACTED]



### **Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

\* Use Oireachtas TV channel to data stream public service announcements at the bottom of the screen (similar to Skype News) in English + Irish. \* At set times (every hour or so??) have a human announcer read (and sign language) relevant daily announcements in more detail - + giving information on where to find out further details - especially for weather warnings, school closures, Covid updates + restrictions, etc. \* Highlight + give set time to different Communities each hour/day? - where are they, what's happening there, events, services available in each Community being highlighted (with access available to see these clips/podcasts + info anytime), are there any jobs, RSS or Tús, or volunteer jobs available in communities, etc. \* have all of this available on public services website with an excellent 'SEARCH' system. \* Internships to work in public media in English + Irish for Transition Year students and College students. \* INDEPENDENT journalism EXTREMELY IMPORTANT \* make big media monopolies illegal - break them up \* FACT CHECK EXTREMELY IMPORTANT (get rid of 'fake news') \* FACT CHECK online advertising rigorously - huge fine €€€ for misleading/fake advertising or notices or clips, etc. especially false/misleading scientific/medical facts, e.g. I was deeply disturbed by some of the anti-abortion, anti Repeal the Eighth, anti Marriage Equality advertising - especially online - much was definitely misleading and fake!

### **Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

\* Q: What does the shift in advertising revenues towards big tech firms mean for the future of print, online and broadcast media? - See my answers towards end in questions 1. \* Get out of Dublin more - approx 1.5 million people in Dublin+ but over 3 million people outside of Dublin! \* Public Service media should be free and PAID for and made use of by EVERY Government Department \* to fill content (free) communities should be able to upload local scenic pictures, podcasts about communities, etc. \* allow vetted charities to advertise (PAID but cheaper rate) on public service TV site(s) - NO Religious (but see my note regarding the Angelus/12noon bells) and NO Political vested interests or Lobbying allowed! \* allow Irish Sporting Organisations to advertise (PAID - but much cheaper rate or free for smaller sports that get €0 or less than €20,000pa ?? from public purse in some form) on public service TV site(s) \* Charge Catholic Church (commercial rate) for Angelus/12noon bells ringing if this is continued (e.g. RTÉ) \* offer and charge Muslim Community 'Call to Prayer' 5 times daily bells similar to Angelus/12noon bells \* allow Irish businesses and multinationals operating in Ireland to place (paid) short infomercials on public services media sites - showing products/services available, where they are located in Ireland and what they do for the Irish people and Irish economy \* get EU funding for hosting EU public service media + EU branches /departments /organisations announcements /podcasts

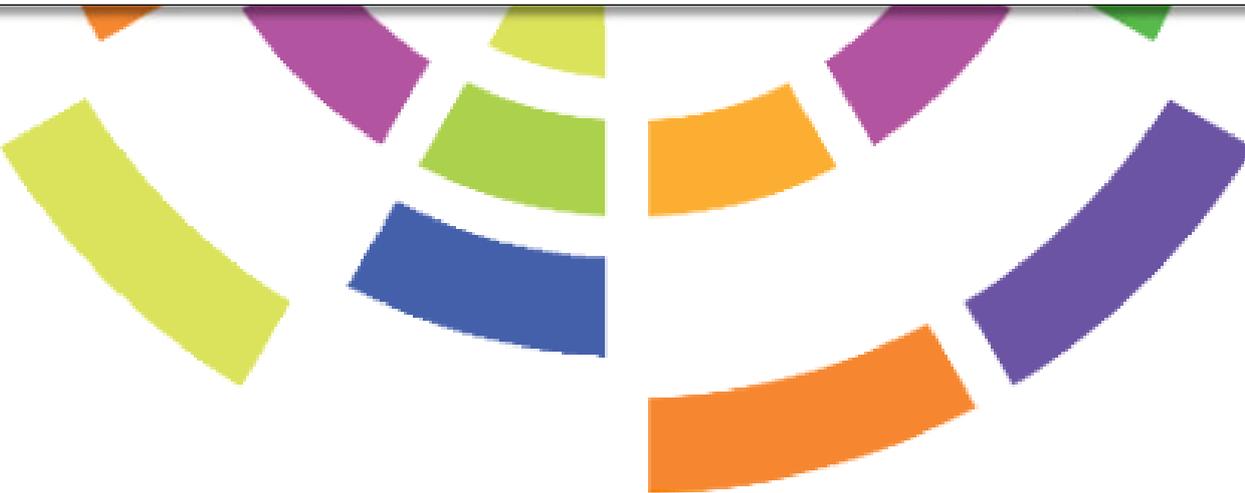
### **Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Q: Are current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media adequate? - NO. Make media monopolies illegal - break them up! \* much more transparency needed of who owns what including ALL interests owned in ANY other subsidiaries (not just media) \* Independent journalism extremely important. \* FACT CHECKING the MOST IMPORTANT now with huge fines €€€ for misleading or false media reporting AND advertising! \* make it compulsory that all sites with EU/Irish access must have their online 'cookies' settings automatically set to 'OFF' and if a consumer wishes to change 'cookies' that it will take less than 1 minute as some sites can take over 10 minutes to turn everything 'off' at the moment! \*enforce and strengthen GDPR rigorously (especially regarding personal information sent outside EU).



Record #677

Jonathan Pyle



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

No media is going to be truly independent as people as individuals have a worldview through which they perceive things, at present RTE is promoting a liberal and anti faith agenda which is obvious from the content it primarily airs.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

State funding should be completely removed from RTE.

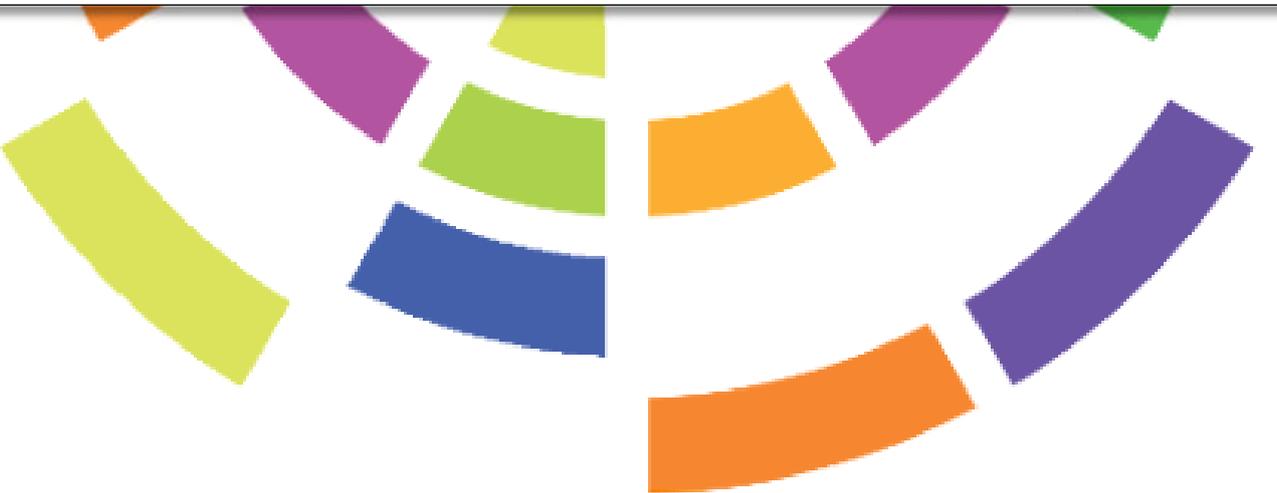
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I do not think the media in Ireland should be impacted by EU governance. Ireland when it joined the EU had a contingency built in that would allow it to follow its conscience (in terms of faith in God) and not be dominated by the secular regime in the EU.



Record #679

Robert Nugent



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

In an age when most people are getting their media online, we should not be funding state networks that don't offer value for money.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

It should be financed pay per view via existing streaming services. Let the viewer pay

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Same as today



Record #680

Jim Cormican



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Support should be on basis that fairness & balance applies - which it does not at moment- Media at present has their own favourite groupings, political movements & interest groups , which get more favourable treatment than what are perceived as older traditional groups , interest groups, political parties or religious beliefs. Eg - media were not impartial in last Presidential Election, Abortion referendum, nor are they impartial with individual politicians in current Dail. If financial support given, it must be on basis of fairness & impartiality.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

First Question - what is public service broadcasting.? It certainly is not "Eamon & Eileen", Amy Huberman or "Young Offenders". There must be some "Culture". -- there must be opportunity for talented people outside "the inside circle", who appear locked out from RTE etc at moment. I believe there are many talented people, better than what is delivered to us at present. If media cannot do better than a present, it does not deserve to be supported at all - certainly not Irish Taxpayers . I believe more stringent Financial Control/ Management is called for - look for Value for money, if State Support is given by Taxpayer - avoid overpayment of "mediocrity", when more talented are locked out & who would offer better broadcasting or art for much less.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Present Independent Broadcasting - but revamped - not older or "connected" individuals put there as reward for some past endeavours, & certainly individuals from outside "golden circle". This Authority must be - Impartial, Creative, etc. It must be open to "ongoing review" of - results, direction , impartiality.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #681  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Instead of answering the questions as written, I would like to make a statement to the board. I work for a community radio station, Near FM in Dublin, but I am making this submission as a private individual. I would ask the board not to forget about community radio. I have worked full time for Naer FM since 2005, I started on a CE scheme and I worked my way up to Production and Training Coordinator. Over the years I have produced international award winning programming and I have trained hundreds of people from all walks of life in radio production, often giving a media platform to groups of people where none previously existed.

In the 15 years I have worked for Near FM, my wages have been paid from a combination of diverse funding, much of it through the Sound and Vision scheme which is public money from the licence fee, but is not ring fenced and is an open competition. Meaning that community radios are competing with commercial, independent and state broadcasters for the same pot of money. Granted the BAI have brought in a special CR only round in 2020, but this funding is still piecemeal, and capped at 40k. Near FM have an average turnover of c.250-300k, with 2.5 full time staff needing to be paid directly from Near FM income.

If only a fraction of the new television licence fee (in whatever form it takes) could be ring fenced for CR then it would make a massive difference not only for people like me who must scramble for funding year upon year to keep their jobs sustainable, but also help retain and develop CE staff, interns and offer them a viable career path within community radio. If there was guaranteed core state funding every year, then the countless days and hours I spend on writing and administrating funding submissions could be much better spent producing high quality content, training volunteers and developing staff.

It is clear that CR offer public service media, it is just not recognised as such. It is there when you take a closer look, through their ethos, training, outreach and programming. This needs to be acknowledged and recognised in the work of the Future of Media Commission.

Thank you for taking the time reading this statement and I hope if you are not already familiar with the work of community radio in Ireland that you will seek it out and inform yourself about some of the great work that is being done. There is most likely a community radio station close to where you live. Please check out [www.nearfm.ie](http://www.nearfm.ie) as a starting point, to see just a tiny fraction of the high quality work undertaken in the last year.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Please see statement provided under Q1

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Please see statement provided under Q1



Record #682

Lorenzo Vocaturo



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I don't have a TV at home. I take my information from the internet and I don't trust public TV. I would watch a Government communication TV that does not go into interpretation, but just states facts.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The State should fund emergency and Public announcements only. This kind of TV should not be expensive. Anything else should be funded by the public, if interested

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Non public TV should only answer to be the law



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Our public service media should be significantly rationalised by privatising RTE with the exception of TG4 and Radio One.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Funding for the scaled down Public Service broadcaster should be from a reduced licence fee with very disciplined financial controls to ensure the profligacy of RTE is not repeated. This newco (TG4 & Radio One) should not be allowed accept commercial advertising, which would remain the primary source of finance for private media operators including the large part of the present RTE Corporation which I am proposing would be sold off or privatised.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I would see the main Public Service Broadcaster operating within a legislative framework with oversight by the relevant Department. There has been an inordinate propensity to set up Quangos for almost everything. They have in general become very costly bureaucracies bringing very little added value to the table. At Global/National level there will need to be significant laws and regulations to govern the influence and magnitude of corporations in the tech sector. Apart from risks to society they also bring geo political risks internationally in so many spheres. Governments cannot keep chasing catch up but must get ahead of the curve. The remit of a more slimmed and focused national broadcaster should be on an increased emphasis on Irish and European News, History, Culture and Sport. It should be primarily, but not exclusively, Irish and European centred. To encourage the private sector to also promote Irish culture and history 9effectively our identity as a people the balance of the licence fee revenue should be distributed by application based on the merit of programs proposed meeting a nationally spelt out criteria. Finally any suggestion to have a totally media licensing fee to fund all private media as well as public media including newsprint is a daft suggestion whether it comes from the Taoiseach or anyone else and I suspect will be resisted by the public. It could become our Poll Tax issue.



Record #684

Darach O Tuairisig



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The importance of public service media should be made apparent to the wider public from a young age and the government should, therefore, provide more funding to public service media content creation. This is more important now than ever in the age of 'fake news' and online media sources that appear to stem from reliable non-biased sources. Huge challenges lie ahead when informing young and old alike with valid and balanced media sources. As the lines between fact and fiction are continually blurred by attractive and loud alternatives, the opportunity to see and hear all sides of any argument is imperative if we are to maintain a balanced and fair society. The rise and consumption of social media content in the past 10 years is hugely significant. Social media, by its nature however, is divisive and the State, therefore, plays an important role in ensuring the public has access to nonbiased and impartial information. It is also of huge significance that audiences are not subjected to the commercial interests, political views of privately owned media outlets. However, as mentioned above, the benefits of such a service must be apparent to them. All citizens can benefit from such a service on tv, computers, laptops and phones and even if you are without any of these devices, you benefit indirectly from being surrounded by a balanced and well informed society. Continuous upskilling and training of the next generation of content creators and makers is vital to sustain high quality public media output.

Substantial funding would also allow for higher quality content. Significant value could be added to the national broadcaster TG4's output if it had enough funding to fill its entire schedule with Irish language programming and not be reliant on English language content to fill the gaps. This would provide the added benefit of creating a more diverse independent sector that speaks Irish daily and foster employment in areas that have traditionally struggled to retain young workers. We are strongly of the opinion that the country should have a dedicated children's channel in Irish giving voice to a unique identity and culture. Rather than all Gaeltacht children speaking English like Peppa Pig, ideally our young people would be exposed to high quality content made specifically for them in their own country laying a strong foundation for our future citizens and ensuring less cultural homogenisation. This would be a huge step forward for the State in the implementation of Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge 2010-2030 and would also help to create sustainable employment in Gaeltacht communities.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

A public service tax should be applied to all users of a public media service. This applies to anyone with a mobile phone, laptop, desktop, radio or TV. Society collectively benefits from good public media service from our youngest citizens to our eldest! The funding should be divided into various categories between radio, television, press, online etc with a split of 30% Irish language and 70% being reserved for English language content for example. A properly funded public service media will attract strong commercial revenue due to higher quality content for older/adult audiences. No commercial revenue, however, should be obtained from young people's programming and should be a safe space for our youngest most impressionable viewers/listeners. Although RTÉ Radio do have a junior element, Raidió na Gaeltachta should also cater for young listeners. It is imperative that young people hear and see themselves in the media sources they consume to foster confidence and a sense of unique identity. This is especially important in an Irish context, removing the idea that we should be somebody else something that is inevitable with the over airing of BBC and US programming. All of this will inevitably lead to a healthier and better-equipped media industry.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Many challenges lie ahead for public service broadcasting, created primarily by better-funded commercial organisations. It is difficult to compete with the speed that private companies can change and adapt to changing trends. How does a public media service compete with Netflix or Disney, companies that can create high quality content with an overwhelming level of funding at their disposal. It would be of huge value if the EU implemented a special creative public sector tax to fund public service content ensuring the fostering and upskilling of the next generation of writers, creators and talent. This of course would indirectly benefit the private media organisations mentioned above. This can lead to challenges for the State when large private companies take all the talent, leaving a deficit of skilled workers available to create public media content. Currently they have more money and longer running series, which results in longer periods of employment and higher fees. With regard to regulation, we believe the BAI is excellent at keeping an oversight and seems to have a well balanced and fair approach to regulation.

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Record #685

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**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Comparing to Al Jazeera, CNN etc, RTE & co need some way to go in terms of graphics, image and media delivery. The content seems targeted towards the older generation, one rather has not adopted latest trends. It does not take into account the more cosmopolitan society and young adults. A competitive benchmark analysis against other jurisdictions would be useful.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Financing - forcing the public to pay €160/= by way of coercion (fines+imprisonment) to provide financing for RTE etc feeds into the public disillusionment and erode support. Also, the content reflects the deep misogyny and biased media coverage. I would encourage RTE, TG4 or so obtain funding from private firms and from many charity organisations using RTE, TG4 to promote their economic and political agenda.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

No comments.



Record #686

John Stafford



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Media must be obliged to include a reasonable percentage of voices of dissent in debates generally and not only when obliged to during election time. Similar to broadcast media being obliged to have a certain percentage of News daily. There are many small groups/parties claiming to represent the best interest of Ireland and the people but we don't get an opportunity to hear them debate with the main parties.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

There should be a wider net of income generally along the lines of taxing fee for reception all media sources. I can't give a detailed model. However, there should be opportunities for people to deny contributions to particular programmes if they do not agree with them. I'm thinking personally of being obliged to pay taxes to fund abortion services. I don't want a reduction in tax liability in that case, just that the money would go to other services.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Any body set up to oversee the proper running of public media services and standards in media, in general, must include what I described earlier as dissenting voices to ensure balance.

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Record #687  
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**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public media should be independent of the Government. Don't want state interference.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Maybe partly funded by the tax payer, tax relief, subscription fee for on line content, big tech firms or any global business should have no input into content or pay for content.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Don't think they are. As a practicing Catholic I find alot of the coverage of my faith as being insulting. Regulation of content seems poor. Previous offences by the RC church is no excuse for disparaging remarks made main stream media. There should be more balance in the traditional vs Liberal view of life especially with regard to abortion.

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Record #689

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**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I think government should diversify who it supports in local and national media. And request accountability for how funds are used.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Government should limit funding if salaries exceed a certain amount. Rte for example spend 100,000s even millions of tax payers money each year on the salaries of a few presenters. Limit funding to those who choose to spend tax payers money on exorbitant salaries.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Have financial consequences for misconduct / wrongful reporting / low ratings. Ensure that all points of view are aired fairly.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #690

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Public service media should be financed via a ring-fenced fund from general taxation.

The television licence fee is regressive and unfair. It places a disproportionate burden on lower-income households. I don't own a television so I don't pay the licence fee but I acknowledge the important role public service media plays in society and I believe we should all pay our fair share, just as we all pay for schools, libraries, motorways, and other things we might not personally use.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Public service media plays a hugely positive role in Ireland but the glaring blind spot for the last two decades has been RTÉ's coverage of the climate emergency. As the Minister for Finance has said, climate change is the 'defining challenge of our generation'. RTÉ's failure to keep the public adequately informed about the climate emergency is one of the greatest failures in Irish broadcasting history and is a major obstacle to addressing the crisis. For years, RTÉ platformed cranks who denied mainstream climate science, in the name of 'balance'. To this day, they fail to give the climate crisis the attention it needs (in contrast with other crises like Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic, which RTÉ have covered very well). When they do cover climate change, RTÉ generally focus disproportionately on the costs of climate action instead of on the urgent need for action, and they give disproportionate (and often exclusive) weight to the opinions of industry representatives.

The Joint Oireachtas Committee on Climate Action (JOCCA) investigated this issue in 2019 and was "concerned by the relative lack of climate change content and dedicated programming on RTÉ". Things have not improved since then, and RTÉ's climate content is as derisory as ever. As far as I can remember, RTÉ only made two dedicated programmes about climate change in 2020. Entire weeks pass without any substantial coverage of the climate crisis. RTÉ have not acknowledged their failings in this respect and it is clear that management will never fix the issue unless compelled to do so.

JOCCA made a number of recommendations, which are included in Section 4 of their 2019 report, 'Climate Change: A Cross-Party Consensus for Action'. They recommended that "the BAI should, by the end of 2019, develop guidelines and measures around climate change broadcasting and on-demand service distribution to ensure comprehensive and accurate coverage of climate change, which should include the following:

- Amending all open rounds of the Sound and Vision Scheme to include themes on climate change, climate action and climate justice;
- Making provision in the Licensing Plan for Special Interest Broadcast and/or Community of Interest Licensing under the broad category of climate change;
- Reviewing all specific and general communication and compliance Codes for Licensees to ensure fair, objective and truthful climate content, whilst also providing for diversity of opinion and perspective in media;
- The Authority should also report to the Standing Committee on Climate Action to discuss Codes of Practice on advertising and provide guidance on mitigating undue influence of industry sector interests on media content; and

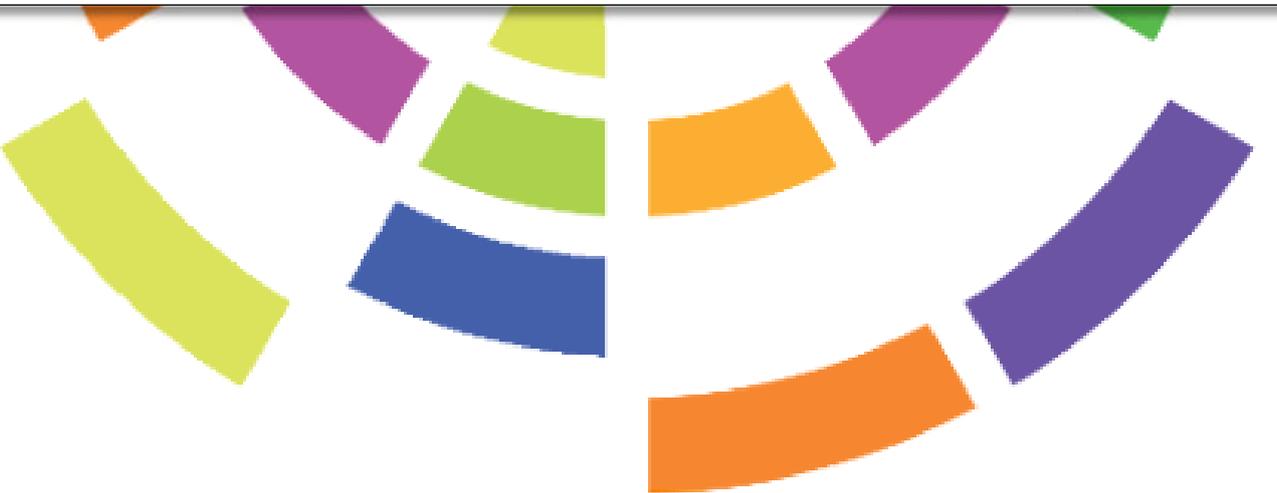
- Consider providing for a ring-fenced percentage quota of programming on climate change content, in addition to the existing quotas for News and Current Affairs Programming."

At a minimum, these recommendations should be implemented urgently. It is only by keeping the public well informed that we can build consensus for the difficult decisions that lie ahead. Public service broadcasters need to become part of the solution instead of being part of the problem.



Record #691

Seamus Enright



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I believe that very important moral issues like abortion should be dealt with fairly and openly on RTE with all sides of the argument being voiced. Unfortunately, heretofore, this had not happened. Either our broadcaster is a forum for truth and opinion or one for decree, I expect the latter.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I believe that due to tangible concerns over the bias of the national broadcaster, payment of licence fees may be declined by many people. I believe that RTE sponsors, like LAYA and Vodafone for example may lose business if bias on RTE is not redressed. In summary give all people a fair chance on RTE.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

There needs to be concrete corrective action plans coming from all substantiated complaints. Letters of apology and retractions without future learning and change are just tokens



Record #692

Jim Vesey



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Direct Government control of media should be strictly limited to support of cultural matters such as the promotion of usage of the Irish Language etc.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Any and all Government funding of the media should be minimised, and strictly accounted for in an open and public manner.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The media should be primarily governed by legislation and the Courts, with a monitoring agency policing the all media activities and reporting publicly on any breaches of legislation and codes of practice. The DPP and the Courts should then deal with such breaches. Individuals should also be entitled to legal protections.



Record #693

Art O Laoighre



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government should use the example of the recognised best broadcasting service in the world: the BBC, which is funded by the state, supported by a licence fee.

This need not exclude provision for independent commercial media, however, given the current environmental crisis threatening all forms of life on the planet, advertising of any products or services which contribute to the carbon crisis cannot be allowed (including fossil fuels, carbon-powered vehicles, plastics, consumer goods, methane producing products-beef&dairy).

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

By public taxation, supplement by subscription for more popular non-essential services (e.g European football, and other professional sports; soaps)

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The media should be regulated by a state appointed body which is primarily concerned with ensuring that media content particularly current affairs really addresses the climate and biodiversity crisis on the planet.

We can no longer afford to ignore this crisis, or assume that some government agencies will deal with it. We need a radical change in the way people live on their planet, which crucially means commercial activity.

And the media needs to be regulated to ensure it highlights this.

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**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public Service Media ought to provide a "parity of esteem" bar in its programming pertaining to matters pertinent to citizens or groups with varying ethos and culture...that mandates fair proportioning of its air time allocation so that the pluralist nature of Ireland is more recognisable than heretofore where neither staff nor airtime allocations do not adequately reflect or give voice to our diverse populations in proportionate measure. The evolution of programming in the last decade increasingly reflects that...be it in relation to our various party elected representatives or referenda issues as witnessed in the media coverage of the debacle of the children's Hospital site decision where representative of an evidence based alternative was given bytes only and the agencies if govt allocated generous air time.... Repeal referendum likewise. A fully informed Public is not possible when such biases exist leading to pertinent facts and subtleties being airbrushed out of the picture.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

"Universal charge" integrated into a domestic bill

T na G and r na G programmes to spill over to RTE 1&2 or merge a % as excellent programming on T na g with subtitles as currently to have greater conversational language & amenable to all regardless of level of Irish language acquisition .

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #695

James Ryan



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media needs to recognise that the majority of people are no longer relying on the media outlets that their parents and grandparents relied upon. The vessels upon which we relied upon for news etc remain rooted, personnel-wise, management-wise, and outlook-wise in the past.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

If public service truly wants to prove it's worth, put it behind a paywall where it can be voluntarily accessed by the general public if they so wish to engage, for their news and cultural content. Exorbitant salaries, low standards of example, and a sense of invincibility have permeated the corridors of our self-styled national broadcaster. Put RTE in a level playing field and force it to engage in the marketplace for its share of the funding available.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

No. Public service media has lost the run of itself. The average citizen bears witness in the public service media to obscene salaries, dubious programming, profligate spending, low standards of behaviour and a sense that the rules enforced on the general public do not apply to those employed in public service media.



Record #696

Michael Cooke

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

rte both radio and tv has become totally biased against the catholic church in its programs and reporting .It was obvious in the abortion referendum that most programs and radio were totally unbalanced in favour of abortion with unbalance of speakers and amount of time given to prolife speakers .The channels should represent a broad balance.Recently one of your programs provoked a catholic archbishop to censor the portrayal of god as a rapist which is totally unacceptable .The superficial apology of the director of programs was laughable -the feelings of the majority of country whether religious or nonreligious were effected . The censorship and control of programs reflects a poor management structure which needs to be reviewed .

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The standards and contents of programs has fallen so low that its advertising revenues have probably also fallen .I would suggest increase quality of programs .

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The answer to third question is a definite inadequate .One would have to look at management structures .A norwegian fishing saying -when a fish stinks it stinks from the head



Record #697

Elaine King



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government could take into account the need for plurality in media, diverse voices and representation. It could recognise the roles Community Media has played over the years and support the work it is doing on the ground to work with and engage local communities in media and media literacy. This social benefit feeds into a greater understanding of public broadcasting. The training in local communities supports greater inclusion in the media landscape, and works, in some way, to balance disparities in inclusion in media. Supporting the inclusion of the full range of social class in Irish culture and in particular more marginalised groups. Okto.tv in Vienna is a good example where Government funding has gone into a community television channel which educates and supports local communities and gives opportunities for diversity of voices. In Ireland programming is supported but not the broadcast of these programmes, this work is currently done on a voluntary basis. More support for this type of broadcasting would give more balanced local representation in an increasingly competitive market. The government already support Community Media through the BAI Sound and Vision scheme and the TV licence fee and there is an excellent catalogue of work, this should be continued and built on.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**



Record #698

Seamus Kennedy



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media should be especially careful to avoid fundamentalist (stemming from secularism or religion) views such as those which necessitated a recent RTE apology. Enforceable standards should be put in place to avoid inflammatory, irrational, offensive material. If this does not happen we risk damage to independent, objective, credible, quality journalism. We risk public service media becoming an ideological tool for particular viewpoints. Ultimately we may put innocent lives at risk such as happened recently in France.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I would imagine the vast majority of citizens would be happy to fund, in one way or another, a quality, unbiased, informative public broadcasting service. However I think many would ultimately withdraw financial support from a fundamentalist, ideology driven public service media.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

In the first place, regulatory changes need to happen at home, in Ireland. In the absence of a transparently unbiased public media many will turn to other media for their information, with all the risks this implies. Governance needs to include high level awareness of the various algorithms, artificial intelligence etc used by trans national corporations to monetise personal data.



Record #699

Catherine Kelly Desmond



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Government should ensure that a more balanced input by journalists should be made especially in relation to prolife issues. In terms of journalists' career advancement and inclusion the voicing of prolife positions should not hold them back. At present a silencing policy seems to be operating in Ireland. There has been no attempt to examine the huge number of abortions carried out since legalisation. Where is the journalists' role in this? Anti Christian bias in the media is blatantly obvious. The blasphemous RTE sketch on New Years Eve is another example of contempt for people of faith.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Personally I am now reluctant to pay my licence when biased media is so obvious in Ireland.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media are not adequate. The media does not reflect the views of traditional christians and our views concerning faith,prayer,hope, abortion, euthanasia. My eyes were opened in the months leading up to the referendum on abortion. Fear inducement and totally biased information were widely spread. People were not adequately informed. This threatens democracy and the trust people put in the media. I certainly no longer trust the Irish media to inform me about issues that affect moral decisions.



Record #700

Maria Theresa



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

whoever is in charge of public media to send out surveys from time to time to general public or a committee setup from different areas of professional life and personal life to compare and to discuss

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Public Service should be financed through profits or funding as ready made available through this

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Media should be governed by the public by setting up public speaking meetings in counties who then can send on a representative to attend a meeting from all other areas and concise the information accordingly



[Redacted]

Record #701

[Redacted]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I am concerned that only certain views are 'approved' of in the media in general in Ireland. And this includes the public service media. There is freedom of speech as long as the opinions agree with what seems to be the liberal or 'woke' agenda. Political correctness silences many too. Dissenting voices don't seem to get equal airplay/written space.

The public service needs to be financed in such a way that freedom of speech is restored and preserved. The notion of 'hate' speech is also being used to silence those with differing views. This should not be used to silence free speech. The irony again is that certain opinions are blocked for fear of causing offence to certain groups, whereas other opinions have free reign and approval from the media. Hoping free speech will be preserved at all costs.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #702

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

If the government is going to be involved it should demand unbiased, impartial reporting, even when that contradicts government opinion!!

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Independent editorial oversight is a laugh since it simply becomes opinion. There should be a real, independent mechanism for holding public service broadcasting to account, not the half baked "we regret," or "we incorrectly reported", but until government can be truly held to account, there's very little hope for true independence. Censorship by omission is rife in media, as well as direct censorship online simply if one disagrees with the narrative. If government were serious about free speech they would radically overhaul everything, including their own single narrative on so many issues

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Our media should be regulated within Ireland and her sovereign laws, not dictated to by Europe or global interests. Do you want to sell our country to the highest bidder. To solve point 2 above, make strict laws denying monopoly, and don't let global interests decide. Sadly, of course our politicians will sell us out, for global fame and money.

Point 3 above, the system is so corrupt that obviously systems are not adequate.



Record #703

Donncha O'Cathail



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The key in this area is the common good. This requires expertise in philosophy, ethics, truth-telling etc

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

All the above need to be considered. Decisions ought to be made that are consistent with the promotion of the common good.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

On the last prompt, clearly present controls are inadequate. E.g. While lip-service is paid to the inclusion of minorities' concerns, the voice of those who would stand up for the (human) right to life of some citizens ( i.e. babies who survive abortion in our hospitals and are left to die) have been almost totally silenced on public service media. This is a national disgrace.



Record #704

Siun Ni Rallaigh



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media needs to be redefined in Ireland. The landscape has totally changed with the advent on social media, which now seems to be a major source of news, and the advent of content platforms such as You Tube and streaming platforms such as Netflix.

A number of proposals need to be looked at but the objective is to ensure that we have reliable news sources and that we protect our language and our culture. Nobody else will do this for us and it is important that we take ownership of this as a nation.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The model we currently have no longer suits the changing nature of our media landscape. RTÉ needs to rethink how they operate. They are still holding onto a business model that no longer works.

Ireland has a small population base and so we need to be inventive as to how, whatever we define as public service media, is to be funded. Resources should go to content as opposed to establishments and such content should be easily accessed by all of the island of Ireland, meaning that we should have a national 'platform' that would house all public funded content, whether in part or in total, this could also double as an ongoing national archive. Broadcast and streaming are the ways to do this.

Some form of 'license fee' needs to continue and for those non Irish services/organisations who want access to Irish audiences and who take either subscription or advertising revenue from here, they should be taxed and that fund should go into the pot to fund public service content for Ireland.

Content should continue to be commissioned from the independent production sector, utilising publicly funded organisations such as TG4 and RTÉ as commissioning partners.

News output should be separate with both languages catered for.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Regulation should be transparent and independent with representation reflective of our multi cultural society. Whilst it is good to have access to global media it is also important that we make sure that our own voices are not silenced and pushed out of sight. We need to partner more with other territories e.g. UK, where there is already a long period of access to UK services. Also, other EU countries, particularly those who have a large representation of population here.

This requires a review of current legislative and regulatory controls

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #705

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

There needs to be an independent Body that monitors the media and that there is fairness and truth in what is printed and aired in our airways. There has to be a balance in public discussion on topics and not all one sided as has been seen in recent years.

Equally the truth has to be a priority and not half baked facts that make headlines. There needs to be more sensitivity in reporting of tragic stories as it brings a lot of pain to the families involved.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

It is a challenging time globally for media however there has to be some regulatory controls for public service and fair standards . It is essential that it remains an independent public service

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #706

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government should stay out of it and allow for fully independent media. In terms of public service broadcasting this should be just that- and stripped of ideology and position promoting.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Through the market and whatever means independent media choose to raise funds within the limits of the law

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

In the same manner as all other speech and expressions and in line with the constitution.



Record #707

Regina Perry



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

In the wake of the recent appalling lapse of taste and judgement on part of RTE in transmitting a blasphemous, puerile and most unfunny sketch on the New Year countdown programme, and indeed of the blatant partiality of most of its coverage of the debate prior to the legalisation of abortion in the Republic and in Northern Ireland, among other reasons, I feel our public broadcaster needs root and branch renewal. While I would concede that some of its output is excellent, in general, especially on RTE2, there is a debasing of our general culture in the choice of films shown, in its comedy output and in the reality show format and content of many of the programmes.

Our national broadcaster should have far fewer advertising slots, and less crass advertisement quality in general. There should also be less reliance on repeat programming and imported material of all kinds.

Our national public broadcasting, and especially our news and current affairs programmes, lack intellectual rigour and input from people with an excellent knowledge of philosophy, history, aesthetics, foreign languages and cultures, to name but a few specialisms. This results in a lack of perspective, and in a failure to achieve the objective of public broadcasting to educate as well as to entertain. Thankfully TG4 programs are of a very good quality overall.

Regarding the future of social media, given the globalised nature of its input and outreach, I think the discussion of this topic would be best done at European, if not at global level.

This submission would be better if I had had more time for a broader reflection, but since I only became aware of the request for input in the last few days and with deadline looming it is as it is.

Best wishes,

Regina Perry.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

See above

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

See above

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Record #708  
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**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I believe there should be no license fee as RTE have not proved themselves to be a neutral organisation but an organisation that is anti Catholic [REDACTED]. A public service media cannot engage in personal opinion. If so it cannot be publicly funded. Also I believe people should have a choice, there are many people who do not engage with public service media and yet are forced to pay for it.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

There are some quality service providers who are sustained effectively and demonstrate far more quality programming than RTE.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

A framework for service provision must ensure that breeches are dealt with severely to prevent an opportunistic approach to engaging in inappropriate behaviour.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #709

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

When dealing with important topics that will help shape Ireland's future, public service media have a duty to fairly present all sides of a debate.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Alternatives should always be sought to add to the funding mix so that no one - especially big tech firms - have too much influence on content. Bottom up as well as top down. Crowdfunding and local community engagement are essential for the future so that everyone gets to tell their story.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Regulation should uphold the rights of every group/'tribe' to be heard. No one group should be marginalised because of their stance/beliefs. A balanced debate is the benchmark of a mature media.



Record #710



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media needs to strive to be truly fair and impartial, presently this is not the case. Central to a democratic society and a balanced media is the free exchange of ideas. Airing commercial programming or that which is designed to bolster populist views is not public service broadcasting. There is a serious issue with groupthink and stifling consensus. Instead, there needs to be greater distance between Government and Public Service Broadcasting, the power that individual journalism lecturers can have on shaping and molding the small cliques of journalists susceptible to groupthink cannot be underestimated. There needs to be investment across all media that takes financial pressure off entities so journalists can do their job, not sitting at a desk in their small bubble but actually meeting people in person and taking the temperature on the ground. The current public service broadcasting model is broken and its remit and mission statement needs to be rewritten in terms of genuinely serving the public interest and the common good rather than serving the most popular Government line or narrative of the day.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

If RTE is to continue its current model then it should be a subscription service for those who enjoy its content, or like every other TV station they work within the advertising revenue that they raise. If there is to be a license fee these monies need to be clearly ringfenced and used solely for public service broadcasting, the type of journalism that is worthwhile but a loss leader - thorough investigative journalism that strives to seek all sides, whistleblower investigations, and the time and resources allocated that enables PBS to truly be the 4th estate in holding those in power to account, that isn't concerned with profit and the relentless 24 hour news cycle but in delivering truth and accuracy.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The increasing centralization of media power needs to be dismantled; it allows for a further homogeny of editorial lines. The media needs to be governed and regulated by a truly independent body with no vested interests. It is clear that current controls are not adequate, for example adequate fact checking and the basic rule of three sources has fallen by the wayside, there is no accountability for misrepresentation of the facts, in most publications, there is a blurred line between opinion pieces and news reportage. There have been little or no audits of fairness and balance, for example when you analyse various referenda over the last few years, independent audits have shown huge discrepancies in air time and column inches.

[Redacted]



[Redacted]

Record #711

[Redacted]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

By breaking the monopoly of RTE receiving all TV licence monies and making them apply like other organisations for funding on an equal footing with the likes of Virgin Media for example

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

By creating a communications fund whereby all media organisations can apply to for funds. This could be funded by a small charge being placed on the purchase of TV's, Computers, Radios, and other electronic communications equipment, similar to the recycling charge. Then only those who are availing of the services pay.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

By creating an 'Independent' body that would oversee communications and whose head would be appointed by an all party committee.

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[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #712

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public Service Media should serve 100% of the public.

There are left wing views, right wing views, liberal views and conservative views, there are libertarian views and they need to all be given a respectful voice.

The political correctness mode of the day should not override the freedom of speech, expression and opinion of others who may disagree and should be allowed to do so without fear of mockery and recrimination.

Those of religious belief need to be able to express the tenets and dogmas of their faith without being looked down on and mocked.

People of all views and beliefs need to be equally represented in Public Service Media and given equal opportunities to service their constituents.

Government can ensure this by having a commission that is elected rather than appointed. The election could take place on the same day as Council/EU elections

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Annual fee per address (personal, corporate and institutional)

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

'- Preserve free ability for every opinion to be expressed without fear of mockery



Record #713

Luison Lassala



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Support for the Irish language is very important, and more resources should be dedicated to it, especially Educational programmes.

There has been a consistent bias against traditional Christian values in the public broadcaster lately, to the extent that the prevailing wisdom leaves little room for dissenting views (e.g. pro-life position towards abortion, traditional views of marriage and celibacy, respect for religious views and persons of any tradition). This needs to be properly regulated by the Government so as to allow opposing points of views to be aired fairly and without bias.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

If public service media source finance from advertising then they should not seek further finance from tax (TV license, etc)

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I think the current regulatory controls are adequate, as long as proper penalties are imposed on breaches of regulation to prevent ensuing expensive legal actions

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Record #714

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**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland.

I do not believe that we the Irish taxpayers should any longer support media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of a large part of the population of our country.

We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians and Irish Catholic Citizens.

RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups.

Little or no programming is available on Catholic social, political or cultural issues, other than those of a dissenting nature.

Indeed as recently as 31st December 2020 RTE created a disgraceful controversy directly aimed at mocking Christianity, the faith which our country was built on.

It caused deep deep offense to people of the Christian Faith in our country. The same People who are funding indirectly these obscene programmes ridiculing their faith with their taxes.

Irish taxpayers should no longer be asked to pay for such simple minded drivel that is being presented to them.

In addition it is extremely apparent that Christian's and in particular Catholics are constantly selected for special treatment and derided by these Media bullies.

The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible.

Indeed even when complaints are upheld there appear to be no consequences at all for offending broadcasters.

Indeed and most bizarrely the BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island'.

At the start of this particular show a so called 'evil' priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".

This highly offensive mocking of the Christian faith is broadcast on a regular basis and goes on completely unchecked.

This is pitched as a project and funded by the BAI !!

In another example the Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on who are totally ignorant of the Catholic faith referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.

All of this from RTE and the BAI who openly proclaim themselves to be champions of equality, tolerance and fairness ??

Indeed it's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

This hypocrisy cannot be allowed to be funded any longer by the Irish taxpayer.

We propose the following:

1. Defund RTE and other biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax.
2. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership to include a greater cross section of Catholic representation.
3. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

RTE should be refunded until content better represents Irish society as a whole. This includes increasing content of Catholic nature without constantly representing the dissenting viewpoint from a small number of their own people.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Current controls are ineffective. We have one main taxpayer funded media outlet in Ireland with RTE.

RTE has consistently abused its position by constantly favouring the liberal anti Catholic bias. In some cases such as the new years eve countdown show this bias has been vitriolic and specifically targeted at the Christian community.

Little or no recourse has been available to the Christian and in particular the Catholic community to address their serious and founded concerns.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #715  
[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Media in Ireland seems to hold same opinion on everything. Fund new platforms, especially conservative ones.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Public funding should be decided by an online vote - maybe telephone votes for older people - lots of people don't watch RTE. I watch Gript, I'd like my taxes to support them.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Very little. I'm for free speech.



Record #716



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

A more balanced public service media is badly needed. Pro life catholic views are seldom represented while the pro choice liberal view is constantly broadcast. The only national broadcaster that allows any discussion from those against the liberal agenda is Niall Boylan

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I really have no idea how funding works so my views would not be helpful

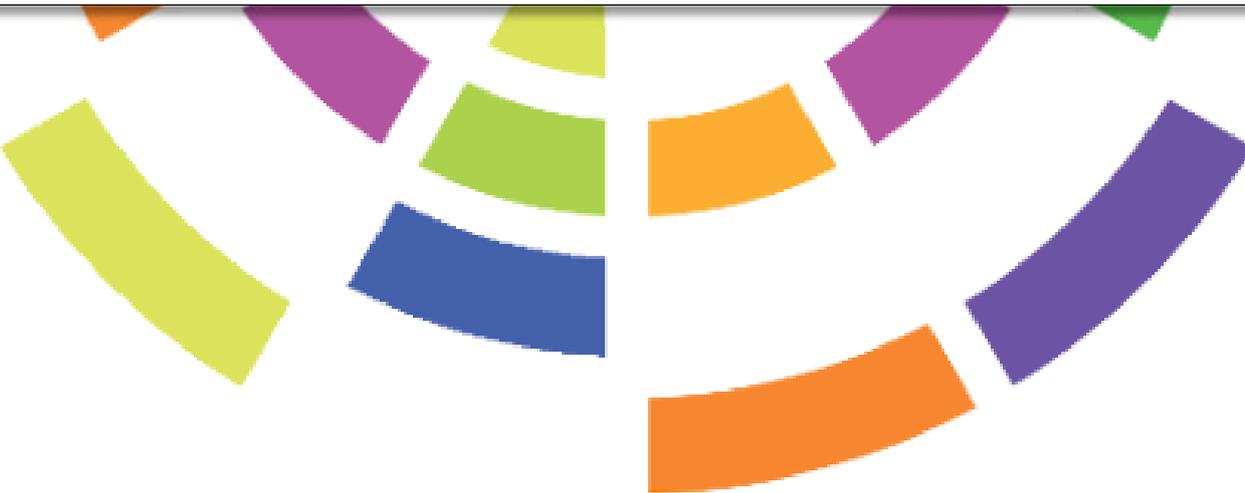
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

We need the our public service media to be totally independent and willing to have real debates. And the non liberal view to be allowed speak



Record #717

Timothy O'Connor



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

By researching and publishing a truthful account of any given situation.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

50 per cent government funding and the rest to come from advertising revenue.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Elect a watchdog committee drawn from all segments of society



Record #719

Martin Kelly



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

1. Stop viewing yourselves as independent of the public. The public / republic is the body you are part of and should be indivisible from. Public Service Broadcasting needs to respect the Irish Constitution and appreciate its responsibility to the whole nation and the health of the nation's constituents. Its first responsibility is the health and integrity of the whole nation.
2. Refrain from serving as a social engineer. Simply ensure representation through a spectrum of programming that serves the entire nation. Implement independent representative oversight in order to ensure politically impartial operation of the broadcast function.
3. Refrain from centralised concentration of operation in one geographic location. Refrain from concentration of power in concealed processes and opaque policy makers at odds with a transparent public service and vital organ of the republic.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

1. Stop competing with commercial services as if in a head to head market competition. Leave the market.
2. Enable 'program makers' , 'programmers' . Through educating practically the arts of production. Encourage participation in devolved programming made in the field. Technology can support the people in taking more of a role in their own services.
3. Encourage access direct from the people to production and generation of content curated and lifted from social media holding platforms. Educate the people in the processes involved in content generation. Create space for a direct channel from the nation back to the nation.
4. Funding models can and should coexist as options for program makers to obtain funding for their content. Public Service needs to acknowledge and facilitate confidence in the various funding models and provide outlet or at least signpost to outlet for the new programming opportunities enabled by accessible technology.

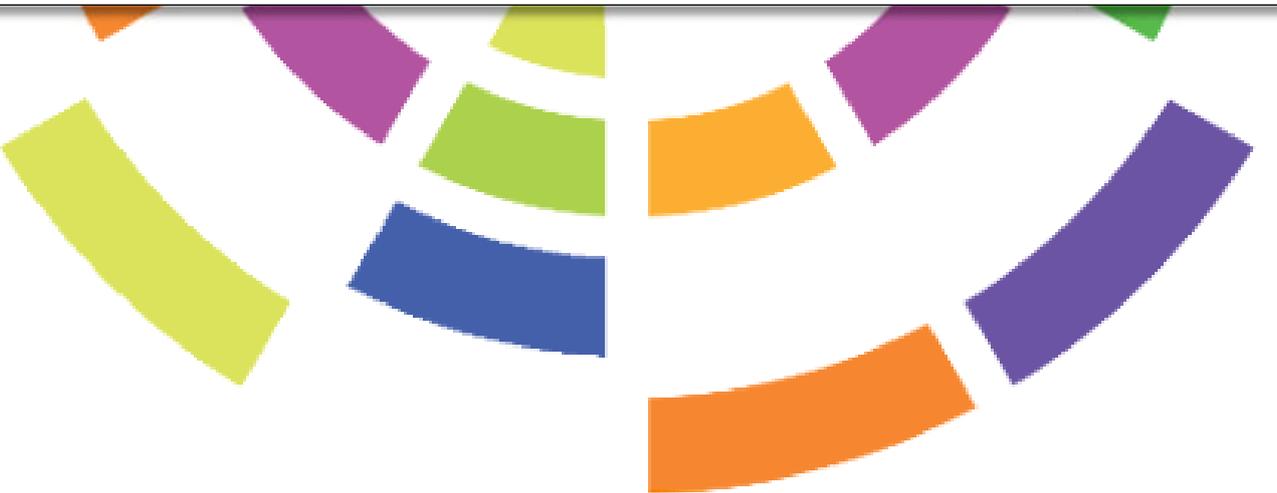
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Protect free speech. Ensure freedom afforded by the Irish constitution. Reject the abuse of power displayed by new media corporations in regard to imposing terms and conditions at odds with freedom of speech. Restricting speech, restricts thought.



Record #720

Thomas Hanly



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The government should support public service media by using TV licence funding equally across all public providers.

It clearly shows that RTE is biased in its broadcasting as certain journalists are members of political parties or have very close family ties to them or they go on to work for these parties. Thus, a public declaration should be signed by these journalists about their political affiliations.

Eradicate the TV licence funding and collect a small fee from the cable providers.

All journalists should be fluent in Irish. There should be dedicated time on Public service media for Irish lessons for all levels.

Be more transparent. Get all sides to a story and stop following the government line.

Listen to the people.

Once your report is complete. It should also be sent to the 'Citizens Forum'.

Put it to the people by way of referendum. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-43278646>

Funding: Pay per view for certain documentaries etc.

More independence on Media boards.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Abolish the TV licence fee and let people choose which public media provider they want to fund. Public funding also needs to be linked to the outrageous salaries of RTE journalists et al.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

All publicly funded media boards should have more independent citizens on them instead of former or current journalists/broadcasters or union reps. This will appeal more to the public if you implement a new funding structure as people are fed up with RTE et al.



Record #722

Mary

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media should be developed with the overarching aim to reach the highest ideals - programmes should be selected/made on the basis of their ability to inform and enrich the lives of the viewers. Content should be based on the actual events, nature and culture of the country, celebrating all the wonderful things that our people are undertaking. No content should be selected for 'entertainment' value only. Content that appeals to the base instincts of human nature have no place in public service media. Staged 'reality TV' programmes have no place in public service media.

The principal of what constitutes 'news' should be re-examined. Is it in the best interest of the public to inform them of every crime that is happening from Cork to Donegal? I believe it would be more useful to people to know some positive things that are happening and how that is actually impacting their lives on a local level. Every effort should be made to present all points of view of an issue to an equal extent without bias, with reference to basic physical and moral realities.

The lessons from the last decade of the media are that a dreadful emphasis on the negative, on the most shocking possible content has crept slowly in. This is not in the public interest.

Our public service media have become entirely biased on issues of morality and as such do not represent all the people who are obliged to fund it. Even the news programmes are fraught with bias.

Irish language:

some programmes that alternate between Irish and English (and maybe even translate) might encourage people with lower levels of language to watch/listen and gradually improve. Also, local interest programmes should be filmed in both languages.

Initiatives like 'learn a phrase a week' being incorporated into the ad time or introduction to daily English language programmes, adult programmes such as the news, and especially children's programmes, varying the phrase (or question and answer) every week.

Competitions advertised in schools, based on watching a certain programme as Gaeilge...

Sport: it would appear to me that there is no issue with Irish sport, it has a very loyal following.

Culture: broadcasting from Houses of Stories;

Broadcasting more Irish music sessions;

Irish music recordings from Scoileanna;

Programming that aims to teach skills, such as thatching, stonewall building, etc.

Public service media might respond to the needs of the public by having online questionnaires of each programme/article, like leaving a review on Amazon, with a link to the possibility to make a complaint.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I would vote for a system of subscription, on a programme/article basis. I.e. a citizen can subscribe to each programme/article individually, with reduction for multiple subscriptions up to a maximum for all content.

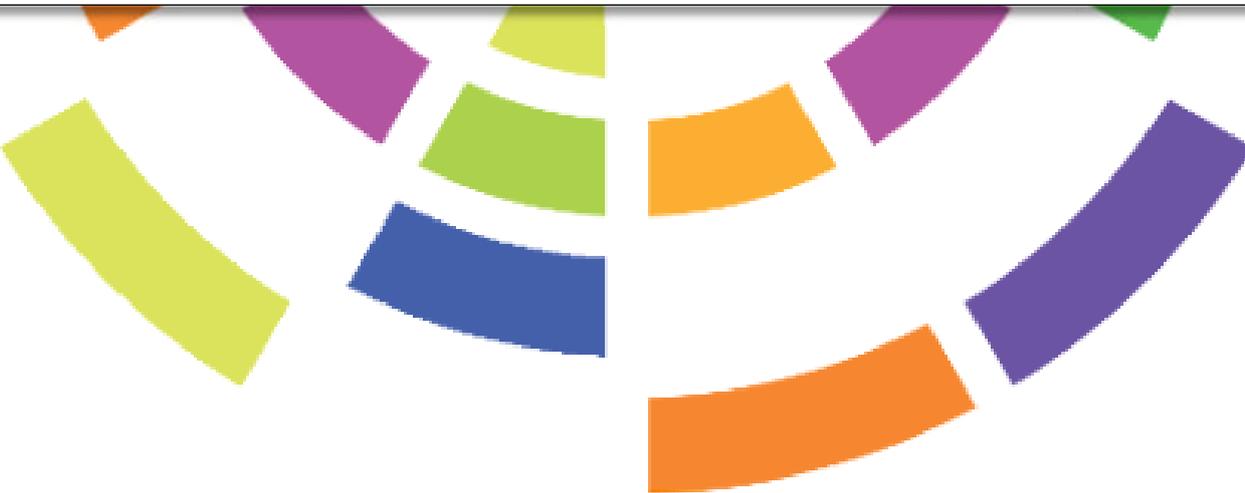
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Ireland should have autonomy over its own public service media. If it is providing content that people need and want (local, positive, critical information) and not depending on income from advertising, then competing with other players no matter how big and consolidated should not be an issue.



Record #723

Ann Dargan



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

We need more high quality independent reported funde by the government but independent in its reporting. Quality of life for ordinary Irish people is being eroded by mainstream popular views. Topics such as prolife including late term abortion and euthnasia need to be talked about in the airway and other media. These life or death topics need to be addressed.



Record #724



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

There should be some form of independent body that draws on a wide section of society, eg, age, religion, social background etc to monitor the partiality and relevance of the reporting, pay them for their time and bring their reports to some relevant Dail committee.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Personally, I cannot see the justification for the massive salaries Irish TV personalities earn. Over time, rather than being content to broadcast the news, they want to be the news. I resent having to pay a licence fee to an organisation that should have to function the same as any private broadcaster, namely get their revenue from advertising.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

My attitude to rte is, let them off and function in the real world like any self employed person.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #725

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The media is there to inform people of information. The media should give the truthful facts which must be unbiased and fair. The media should not be used to push an agenda to achieve a certain outcome. This is dangerous. Stricter laws and penalties should be brought in to ensure this is achieved. Tax payers money should not be used to fund public service media.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The tax payer should not have to fund public service media.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Stricter laws and penalties should be brought in to ensure that the public are provided with information which is true, unbiased and fair by journalists and the media. The media should not be used to push a certain agenda to achieve a certain outcome.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #726  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The govt should have in place legislation that ensures media is genuinely impartial and independent. Currently, many Journalists and Politicians swap between the two. There should be a cooling off period whereby a journalist is not allowed to become a politician / political advisor for 24 months and a politician a journalist for the same period.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The licence fee should be abolished.

RTE is not impartial on a whole raft of issues; excluding many conservative voices from debates on social issues.

TV and radio should be financed by advertising to make it more balanced and remove any risk of appearing biased to govt policy.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

By an independent statutory body with real power.

The BAI has no remit to tackle infringements of the Broadcasting Act online by RTE etc. This should be changed to include online breaches.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #727  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I think public service media is extremely important for the whole nation and across the whole age group But clearly and most importantly is the need for totally independent reporting clear /to the point/ truthfully written or spoken / valid questions/ unbiased and not influenced by the reporter ... In recent times it has become very difficult to learn real truths mainly by the constant interruptions of the interviewee which clearly upset the balance of thought oftentimes this is deliberate and non democratic A type of run with the hare and March with the hounds scenario... This was very blatant during the pro-life debacle.. and it still continues straight across the board A huge interest in people who want to criticise the church (all churches all creeds)Oh how wonderful it would be to see our media tell stories of all the wonderful unpaid work being carried out 24/7 by so many people in our communities schools parishes homes all the conscientious parenting never acknowledged... We need less dramatic sensational reporting AND our television reporters need smaller egos and realise they are just public servants like the rest of us and no matter what age one is we are all ultimately serving someone...I could keep going but I've decided not to Thanks for reading this if you take the time to do so and take care Goodbye Anon

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Every citizen should contribute to media by annual or monthly payments idealistic yes probably but it may prevent money corporate influence which often has nothing to offer in terms of what's best for the common good !!

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I cannot answer that question I do not know enough about current legal or regularity controls presently



Record #728

Sinead Dundon



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I think there was an unfair bias against pro life during the election.

Rte was wrong to broadcast an attempt at humour which was insulting to the Catholic population on New Year eve.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Examine the remuneration packages for broadcasters

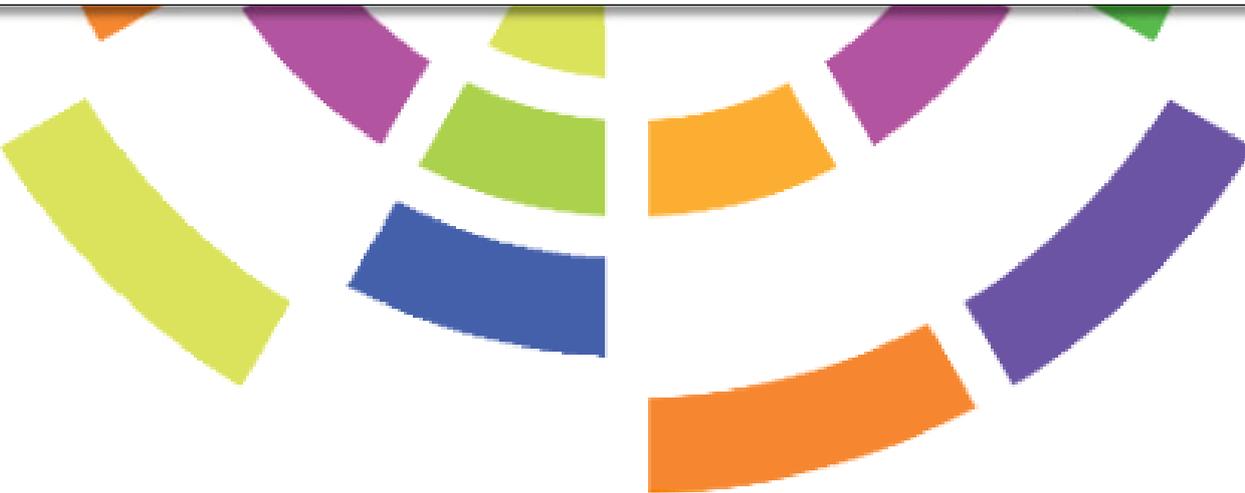
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Examine what other countries have done and follow best practices



Record #729

Eoghan Ua LAoighre



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The commercial agreement between the AA needs to be looked at severely, as it is frankly incontrovertible that it is a sponsorship deal, and sponsorship rules SHOULD apply, especially on the balance and air time given to a motoring lobby group over other transport (public transport /cycling lobbying) groups. Second is that the recommendations from the Oireachtas committee on climate action be taken on board, especially on the coverage of the climate emergency

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

N/a

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

N/a

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #730

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public Service Media should not be directly funded by the Government through the TV licence or taxation. Public Service Media should be funded through tax deductible voluntary donations from the public who use the media source and from advertising and other commercial income.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The approach which best supports independent editorial oversight, achieves value for money and delivers on public service aims is to fund Public Service Media from advertising, voluntary tax deductible donations and sales/subscriptions.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Public Service Media should be governed in a way that promotes and encourages free speech, while also ensuring that the public are provided with accurate, fair, timely, balanced and unbiased coverage of issues.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #731

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Ensuring that which RTE produce is strictly impartial. No way should regular hosts enforce their opinion on us- excluding the other side of a debate. Absolute public media impartiality is a demand and a right in a free state. RTE at present and for many many years is entirely opinionated and biased in its presentations, presenters and news- as is known to RTE. It is very difficult to listen to RTE for which we tax payers pay. It is absolutely essential that RTE is under strict regulations from an IMPARTIAL body.

To learn the opinion of RTE on a daily basis is absolutely sickening when intelligence Irish people want impartial news.

Learned from RTE over past decade: absolute need for impartiality and not the opinion of RTE only.

Systems to support and sustain:

Systems must demand professionalism of journalists and not just looking up opinions of their friends. Proper professional research with 2 sides to any debate.

Better respond to needs and expectations of the public:

Change and reform. Not functioning as a public service that is professional. CEO might need to go. Not a good service in years. Totally disappointing except to those who like what you say - not to those who want intellectual professionalism, and to learn something; not to come away with just the opinion of your presenter and RTE. Not good enough. We expect better.

Learn from others:

Think RTE need to look at themselves, not others. Know what is professional and do it.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Current funding not suitable as RTE is not impartial. Needs to go as publicly funded service as only represents a fraction of the population.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Current controls not adequate. RTE is not accountable.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #732

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

An oversight body who monitor that Presenting unbiased positions on matters of social and political importance is the core of impartial public broadcasting.

Public service is now being challenged by Social media platforms. People are not interested in "Opinions" of media and especially presenters as seem to be the new evolution in the last decade.

TG4 is the best channel in both content and its delivery of Irish language programming. Give it more money and more youth based programs to enhance the learning of Irish in a fun and relevant context.

The public expect fair and balanced commentary not the sort as evidenced during the Repeal the 8th campaign where RTE did NOT present fair and balanced views and some of its presenters couldnt help but show their own view publicly during programmes both in tone and content.

Truth is sacrosanct and not owned by any group or media outlet. Responsibility for public good by fairness and impartiality in presenting FACTS NOT OPINIONS is the remit of broadcasting being paid for by the taxpayers.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

There are issues around the future financing of RTE and TG4. RTE has damaged itself by the ridiculously high salaries it pays staff which is not sustainable long term.

It has damaged itself by the recent insulting sketch which was grossly offensive to thousands of Christians on New Years EVE. Licence fees may suffer as people refuse to pay for a broadcaster who insults their faith in the most despicable manner. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Once people turn away from RTE to local radio who would NEVER insult their listeners like this Advertising revenue will drop or go elsewhere. RTE are afraid to challenge or offend their Government masters. The licence fee needs to be scrapped and let RTE live off Advertising, Government subvention and the sale of Assets, reduced personnel at much reduced salaries.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

BAI should have all the power they need to give oversight and control on how the media operate. The public should have right to challenge RTE in a legal framework in the case of allegations against private citizens and must not have to be as wealthy as Declan Ganley to seek justice for defamation.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #733

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

More balanced reporting not their own agenda supporting liberdlagenda..support local radio not Dublin there is whole communities with different views..give money to local radio not to the fat cats who talk a lot of rubbish and trash. Promote real Irish culture not Imported rubbish..our own music language dance way of life.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Pay less to so called presenters..its a disgrace that licence keeps these people in a life style way above ordinary people

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

No they can do and say what they like



Record #734

Anita O'Connell



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The public should only have to pay for media that they want to read, listen to or watch. It should be subscription only, that is pay per view.

The media needs to be impartial in its delivery and not one sided as was seen with the abortion and same sex marriage referendums. Over the past ten years in particular I personally have felt that I was one of the thirty percent in this country that the media does not represent. Those who were in favour of prolife policies or in favour of traditional marriage were totally ostracised and marginalised. That is the reason I got rid of my TV and have not paid for a tv licence in the past five years. It is also the reason I have not paid for or subscribed to a newspaper in as many years.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Subscription only.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I don't think any media operation should be permitted to receive government funding of any sort. They should operate as private businesses. The problem with increased consolidation in the Irish market is that there will be no alternative voices. If all the media is state funded or has only one owner, we are looking at communism.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #735

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Close rte from 2am til 6m

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Reduce high paid salaries

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Question the high numbers employed.



Record #736

Geraldine Larkin



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

There needs to be calm, concise and fair representation in the media. It often appears that the response from the media is reactionary and hysterical which causes public anxiety.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Public services should be clear about being for all the people and not leaning towards a minority view.

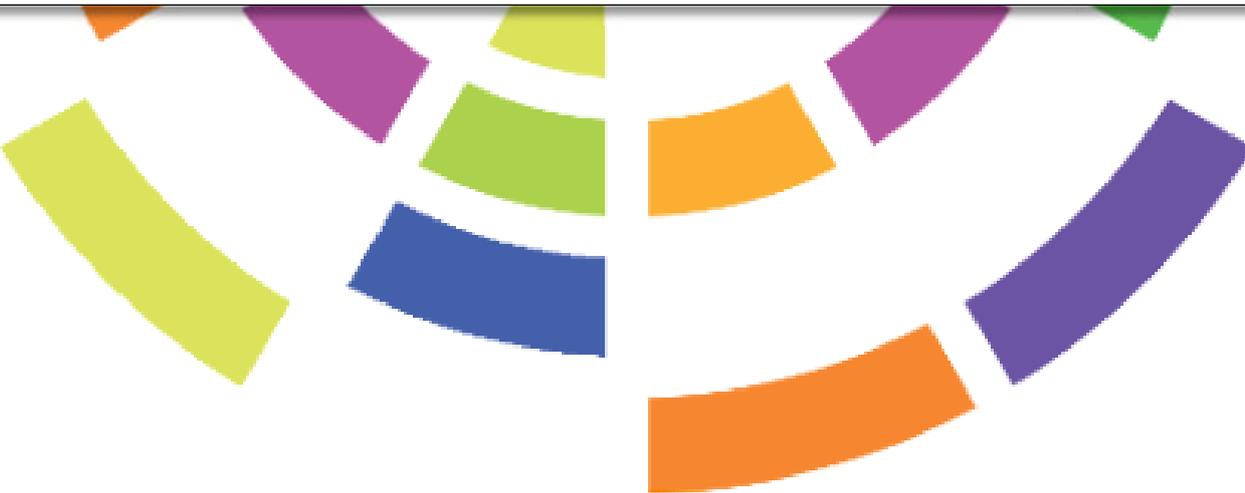
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

By a mixed panel of public and private persons who have knowledge of the subject.



Record #737

Michael Finnegan



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

There has been a decline in standards in public service media in the last decade. There should be a strict watch dog system in relation to content and balance. There should be real Irish culture and events shown across Irish media e.g. traditional Irish farming, music and dance. Irish sports rights shouldn't be sold to foreign TV stations. The media can better respond to the needs of the public by supporting traditional Irish values in relation to Catholic religion and the right to life of unborn children, and less time given to minority groups.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Current legislation and media controls are not adequate.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #738

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

It should give pro life issues a fair, balanced and equal amount of time

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

No one area of funding should be large enough to be able to unduly influence any content

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Media governance should ensure fair balanced reporting of issues. No body should be allowed to promote it own agenda without giving equal time to other viewpoints and or information



Record #739



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

1. To be public service it needs to be more responsive to the public rather than to just the Oireachtas. Hence ever election the public need to be asked if they want to keep funding it.

It's primary focus should be Irish language sport and culture. To reduce bias, no public service journalist should be able to take a public media - public relations time of work with any Ireland-based political entity until a minimum of 3 years after leaving the public service has passed. Public service journalists (from journalists through to programme producers) involved in any politics - related reporting or should declare publicly political conflicts of interest in terms of close family links to political entities or persons.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

State should fund only Irish language, sport and culture in public service content, and not any particular media entity as such. It should do this funding in whatever public media outlet it is being provided. No State or Government advertising should be done through the public service media. All such advertising should now be done through specific advertisement Government internet portals, e.g., publicjobs.ie.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

The key challenge for a vibrant, independent public service media is in fact maintaining independence. There are incidents which indicate a loss of independence, e.g., when a public service journalist decides to join one the political parties and seek election; or enter the employ of a political entity or personage. Employment contracts should ensure such cannot happen for at least 3 years after leaving the Public Service media. Loss of independence, bias towards particularly points of view and imbalance in national debates due to a tendency to alignment with the funding decision-makers is another problem. This has been seen in recent referendum debates, and in particular in the 2018 referendum to repeal the 8th amendment to the constitution, when significant imbalance for the pro-life side of that debate was seen. A separate 'balance adjudicating commission' could be put in place which needs to be active during referenda and during elections which will address complaints immediately and have reasonable powers to have complaints addressed timely, and to apply penalties for balance violations as appropriate. Its make-up could be akin to the present referendum commission.

Public service media funding budget should have its own Oireachtas debate before approval. The budget needs to be debated and voted on in its parts e.g., separate votes on the budget for sport, for Irish Language, for culture, and for general current affairs.

When public service media loses libel cases through court judgement or in a settlement reached before the court case is tried, the awards and costs figures should be published, i.e., the taxpayer should be informed of the liability to him/her. The 'balance adjudicating commission' should also adjudicate on the penalties to be applied to the persons responsible in the public service media for the incurrence of libel incidents and such costs, including dismissals. (Employment contracts should allow for such dismissals without incurrence of further costs.)

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #740

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Less government control /interference in media. Needs to be independent of gov institutions otherwise just a mouthpiece for govt policies.

Government should be confined to supporting media in areas of culture sport and language.

In order to be seen as fair and balanced all sides need to be aired in a even manner eg. Pro-life views marginalised in media

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Television licence should only be for those who want to watch RTE. RTE have become mouthpiece for govt policies that may not represent general public. What are 'public service aims'- are these decided by public or government?

Are offensive "skits" re God raping immigrant girls representative of public service?

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Free speech needs to be honoured in debate.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #741

[REDACTED]



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I feel that government should in fact hold the media to task on a range of issues. I feel of late that irish media outlets have a very anti catholic stance, the media has become biased in its views. The government needs to address how fairly balanced media outlets are. Take a stronger stance on blatant bias. There also should be a serious review of the public money that is spent in public funded media.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I feel like a review into the money spent by the groups is long overdue. The rate of pay on these institutions is grossly inflated. Given that less and less people watch rte, our national station, I feel it's only a matter of time before people refuse to pay their tv licence. Maybe with review of payments and a review of the contents and agenda that's promoted within the likes of rte would sort out any budgeting problems it may face.

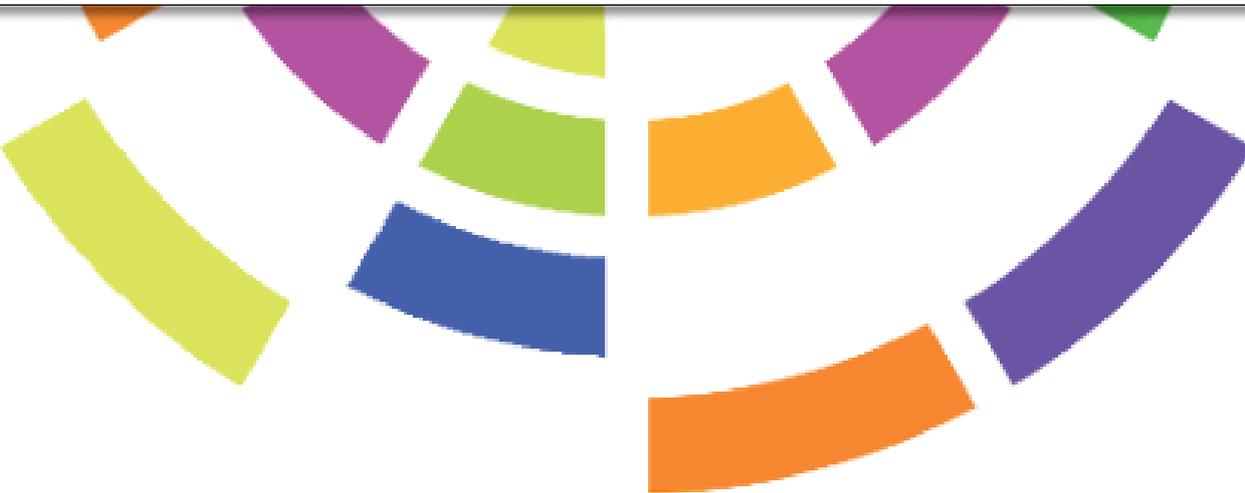
**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I think in regards to the likes of the rte, they pretty much do as they wish. After numerous different times where I felt rte were anti catholic I put a complaint in about new years eve show, I still, even though requested, have not received a complaint number. I feel like a proper independent board must be set up that can actually hold any media outlet to task for promotion of one sided views.



Record #742

Damien Birrane



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Non bias or clearly stating the bias in terms of news reports. The best alternative view provided in a link or something to that effect

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

The T.V licence is outdated compared with whats available elsewhere on the Internet, Netflix, etc

Perhaps a progressive approach will focus on revenue from popularity and advertising and other non taxable means.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

By in large the market will shape a new media format, however limitations on typical censorship should be kept in mind in a tactful way, taking efforts not to offend core values on faith, family, etc



Record #743

Phillip Ryan



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I writing in a effort to be heard! For a fair, open, intelligent and balanced service. One that allows all opinions to be voiced and listened to! You have thrown the baby out with the bath water. No longer is there balanced debate on issues, your journalists have become social commentators, we are not given news or current affairs we are just told what you want us to believe. In a highly educated land like ours our public service has become a public disservice... no more can people that hold traditional beliefs be heard! To be honest I only watch / listen to public service broadcasts for films or music.. the rest is too irritating!

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

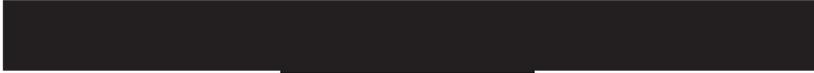
Private funds. No more license fee. Then we'll have a balanced playing field and they might begin earning a living

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Genuine independent regulation made up of people from all aspects of society with no vested interest



Record #744



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Journalism must be presented in an unbiased fashion which is most certainly not the case currently. The majority of the Irish population still consider themselves to be Catholic and this must be taken into account when broadcasting programmes.

If this is not possible, the public broadcaster should be done away with altogether.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Unsure

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Unsure



Record #745

Alan Whelan



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

We need high standards set by Government and implemented by a more effective BAI

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

We should not have to pay a licence fee to a third class RTE.

Let users pay by subscription and hopefully this will prevent present overpayment of mediocre entertainers, who seem to enjoy interviewing one another and creating bogus celebrities.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

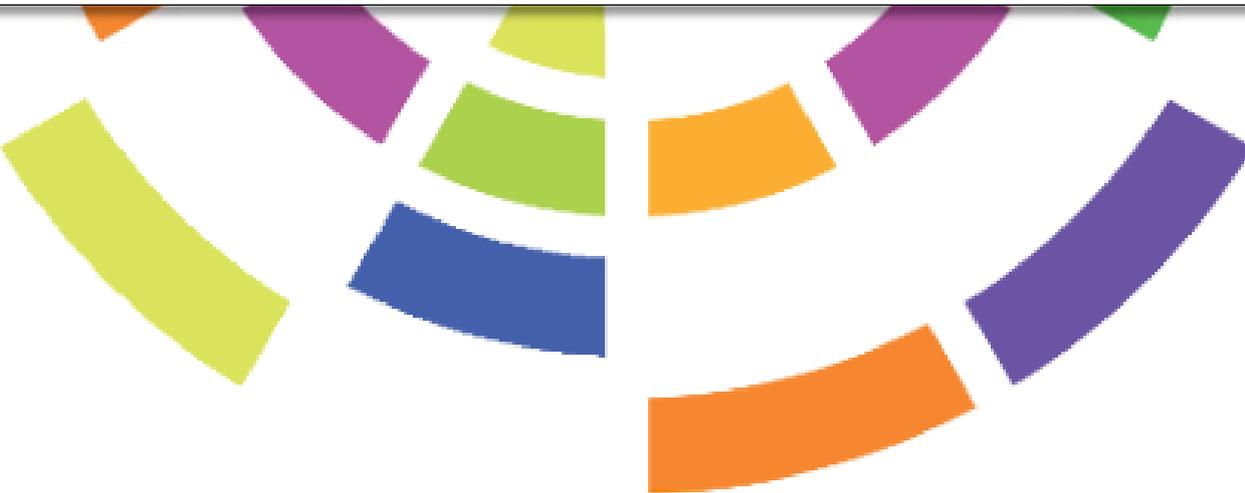
A better constituted BAI.

Drop present liberal PC agenda.



Record #746

Ray Clarke



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I would like to see more balanced reporting as I feel that as a country while we want to embrace all we are often denying or denouncing our strong Christian heritage as if it's no longer appropriate or acceptable. There is a large population who still hold to Christian values and while not wishing to impose them on others yet we are often denied the right to speak out. Embracing other cultures, values and religions does not mean denying our own values. There is a growing trend to denounce or dismiss Christian values on the basis that this promotes Bigotry but surely the Christian is as entitled to hold those views in the same way as others can hold their non Christian views without being derided or dismissed.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I'm not sure I have much to contribute here but funding should never be based on exploiting the message or the reporting. All funding must be applied without strings attached or conditional on a particular agenda being promulgated.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Independently and without bias by a broad and representative group reflecting the demographics for our country

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #747  
[REDACTED]

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service broadcasting should have a wider spectrum of opinions on current topics. Currently RTE is the only public service broadcaster but other private stations generally give voice to a wider cross section of opinion. RTE has become increasingly hostile to the Christian opinion on issues and there needs to be a facility that allows people to opt out of funding an organisation that regularly dismisses that viewpoint. A second publicly funded provider could address this and tax payers should not be obliged to fund an organisation that is hostile to their beliefs and values. Competition could help drive better balance. E.g.. pro-life issues are never treated on a fair and even-handed manner by RTE which is unacceptable for a publicly funded station

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

There is increasing censorship by big tech companies that need legislation at EU and national level to address before true freedom of speech is eliminated. Media is morphing into propaganda for one leftist secularist view only with dissenting opinions becoming increasingly shut down which is very threatening for a healthy democracy. States need to ensure that large media organisations truly respect freedom of expression and do not use their control to manipulate society in their own image rather than providing truly reliable independent reporting to the public

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Record #748  
█



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

2020, more than any other year, showed that public service media in Ireland can be biased, presenting narrowly defined points of view. Investigative journalism needs to be fostered, and this cannot happen when the government plays the overarching role it currently does. Who oversees the government, when the government 'oversees' the media. The public is not being served - there has been relentless fearmongering of a vulnerable elderly population during the Covid pandemic, which has led to the elderly switching off RTE in droves. That is one example. The by now infamous New Year's Eve sketch which denigrated victims of sexual abuse and practicing Christians is another example. Public confidence in the media is at an all-time low.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

As I understand it, RTE currently receives all, or most, of the TV licence fee. This doesn't seem fair, and, given that the service provided has come in for sustained criticism in recent years, the licence fee should be more equitably distributed to other media. A subscription model is one alternative, particularly for online media, which is already happening in some cases. Other funding models should also be looked at, as should how finances are spent be looked at. For example, wastage at RTE is legendary, particularly salaries of presenters which are far in excess of other jurisdictions, in addition to being far in excess of productivity. By the same token, TG4 is noted for running a tight ship financially - as well as far superior programming in many instances. RTE, given the lamentable quality of journalism and programming in many (though not all) instances, should be defunded, unless it starts to perform.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

A proliferation of independent media is necessary. Declining plurality of ownership means declining quality of programming and investigative journalism, as can already be seen in Ireland's mainstream TV, print and online media. There are far too many cosy relationships between those in the media and those in government, and this leads to the espousal of 'official' views, even when the evidence of people's eyes and ears patently contradicts what amounts to, in popular opinion, propaganda. Viewers and readers across the generations are simply no longer paying much attention to a media it knows does not serve them.



Record #749

Mary Walsh



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The Government should ensure that media is unbiased and gives a voice to all people. In my opinion RTE is particularly biased and just gives the very minimum hearing to voices whose opinions are not the same as theirs. They are particularly anti Christian as has been disgracefully displayed on NYE countdown. It is also grossly unfair that RTE should be supported by the licence fee when other media outlets are forced to go it alone

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

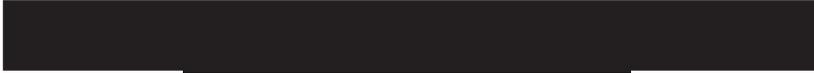
If public media is to be funded, then it should not be afforded to just one group ie RTE. In order to qualify for funding, they should have to prove their worth and the public should have some input into this

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Regulation should be monitored more closely. RTE for example break the regulations on a regular basis without any consequence. Perhaps if they were fined or denied funding they might think twice before insulting people.



Record #750



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service should recognise the true needs of the public and not focus on their own agendas.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Should only be financed by those who are happy with the service

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

By a carefully managed and fair independent body, not financed by corporations or other external influencers.



Record #751



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

The evolution of public service media has led to liberality and populism based on the beliefs of a small group of powerful broadcasters who are poorly trained to manage their unconscious biases and in many cases are consciously biased based on their own political, social and religious (mainly atheistic) viewpoints.

Public service media should serve the welfare and education in all regards of the public which assists their material, mental, spiritual, and physical growth.

There is an elite socialist bias in journalism generally which talks down to the public.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

Public broadcasters should be funded from advertising only or private subscriptions. There should be no mandatory licence fee. The public should have the right to choose who they pay for their media.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

EU influence on our media content and broadcasting should be kept to a minimum.

As a consumer I want quality programs that are relevant to Ireland, are biased towards our culture and history, sport and news. I can buy junk TV from any number of other online and cable providers.

Any strengthening or reform of legislation should focus on independence - our public service media should not be influenced by local or international political interests.



Record #752

Judy Osbourne



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

I would like to see the recommendations of the Oireachtas Committee implemented

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I would like to see the recommendations of the Oireachtas committee implemented

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

I would like to see the recommendations of the Oireachtas committee implemented



Record #753

Ellen Troy



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

There ought to be an auditing body independently checking up on all media outlets.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

I think social media is very dangerous and the truth what is real and what is fake is so time consuming to assess.

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

An independent body should audit and the reports should be transparent.



Record #755

Detta Molloy



**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

Public service media should be for the public. Not to be used to further the government's agenda and help to reach its objectives.

**Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?**

It should be financed from taxes paid for by the public

**Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?**

Media should be monitored by an independent body of people who have a legal background and who are proportionately representative of all religions and beliefs. See census details to decide on proportions relevant to each body. I feel I am being bullied and brainwashed constantly by our newspapers and television authorities who must think that the public are totally stupid to believe them.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #756  
[REDACTED]

# **Aighneacht faoi na meáin Ghaeilge chuig an gCoimisiún um Thodhchaí na Meán**

**Dr John Walsh, OÉ Gaillimh**

[John.Walsh@nuigalway.ie](mailto:John.Walsh@nuigalway.ie)

## **Réamhrá**

Tá sé d'aidhm ag an reachtaíocht chraolacháin atá i bhfeidhm le blianta fada áit agus spás a chruthú don Ghaeilge i dtírdhreach na meán cumarsáide in Éirinn. Leagtar na príomhdhualgais ar na craoltóirí seirbhíse poiblí RTÉ agus TG4 agus tá sainseirbhísí poiblí raidió agus teilifíse ann a chraolann i nGaeilge amháin nó den chuid is mó. Chomh maith leis sin, tá forálacha eile san Acht Craolacháin 2009 a bhfuil sé d'aidhm acu a chinntiú go gcuirfear méid áirithe Gaeilge san áireamh ar gach seirbhís chraolta sa tír a fhaigheann ceadúnas. Léiríonn taighde atá déanta agamsa agus an Dr Rosemary Day, Ollscoil Luimnigh, áfach, go bhfuil an teanga an-imeallach i ngnáthmheáin chumarsáide na tíre, taobh amuigh de na craoltóirí Gaeilge RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta, Raidió na Life agus TG4. Tá sé sin amhlaidh in ainneoin na bhforálacha in achtanna éagsúla craolacháin le 30 bliain anuas a raibh sé d'aidhm acu a chinntiú nach ndéanfaí dearmad iomlán ar an nGaeilge ar gháthsheirbhísí Béarla na hÉireann.

Tá cothú na héagsúlachta agus an iolrachais, le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge mar chuid de, ar cheann d'aidhmeanna straitéiseacha Údarás Craolacháin na hÉireann ach léiríonn ár dtaighde nach bhfuiltear á chur seo i gcrích sna meáin chraolta. San aighneacht seo, leagfaidh mé amach an chreat reachtúil agus rialála i dtaca leis an nGaeilge sna meáin atá i bhfeidhm faoi láthair agus pléifidh mé an taighde atá déanta agamsa agus ag Rosemary Day faoin gceist seo in earnáil an raidió. Pléifear chomh maith an taighde eile atá ar siúl againn faoi Raidió na Life agus déanfar moltaí maidir le treisiú na Gaeilge sna meáin chumarsáide amach anseo.

Ag teacht lenár dtaighde go dtí seo, cuirfear béim láidir ar sheirbhísí raidió/fuaime san aighneacht ach aithním nach féidir labhairt ar aon mheán chumarsáide ina aonar níos mó in aois seo na coinbhéirseachta. Tá mórathruithe ag teacht mar thoradh ar an Treoir um Sheirbhísí Meán Ciosamhairc de chuid an Aontais Eorpaigh agus tá sé i gceist go ngearrfar táille ar sheirbhísí sruthaithe idirnáisiúnta chun íoc as ábhar ciosamhairc Éireannach ar ardchaighdeán. Tá sé riachtanach go mbeidh áit lárnach ag an nGaeilge sa chomhthéacs claochlaithe sin atá amach romhainn.

## **Creat reachtúil**

Tá an tÚdarás Craolacháin agus a réamhtheachta, an Coimisiún um Raidió agus Teilifís Neamhspleách, ag feidhmiú faoi achtanna éagsúla craolacháin ó 1988. Is é an tAcht Craolacháin 2009 an reachtaíocht uileghabhálach is mó a bhaineann le hábhar faoi láthair. Cuimsítear san Acht sin forálacha sonracha faoin nGaeilge a bhaineann le dualgais an Údaráis féin agus le dualgais na gcráoltóirí. Leagtar na ceanglais is suntasaí ar na craoltóirí poiblí (RTÉ agus TG4) ach tá an Ghaeilge i measc na gcritéar a ndéanfar measúnú orthu nuair a bheifear ag measúnú iarratais ar cheadúnas do sheirbhís raidió neamhspleách.

Tá comhdhéanamh an Údaráis Craolacháin féin, na coistí reachtúla a thagann faoina scáth agus a chuid cuspóirí clúdaithe in Ailt a 9 agus a 25 den Acht (Oireachtas Éireann, 2009). In Alt 9 (1), tá forbairt na Gaeilge agus na Gaeltachta i measc na réimsí saineolais a mbítear ag súil leo ó chomhaltaí an Údaráis agus na gcoistí reachtúla. In Alt 25 (2) (h) faoi chuspóirí an Údaráis, scríobhtar go ndéanfaidh an tÚdarás agus na coistí ‘forbairt clár agus seirbhísí craolacháin Gaeilge a chur chun cinn agus a spreagadh’. Faoi alt 154 (1) den Acht, cuirfidh an tÚdarás scéim faoi bhráid an Aire chun tacú le cláracha i réimsí éagsúla lena n-áirítear an Ghaeilge. ‘Fís agus Fuaim’ a thugtar ar an scéim sin. Dar le hAlt 155 (1), cuimsíonn cuspóirí na scéime ‘clár ardchaighdeán a fhorbairt a bheith bunaithe ar chultúr, oidhreacht agus taithí na hÉireann’ agus beidh cláracha Gaeilge san áireamh ansin. Faoi Alt 156 (2), foráiltear go n-íocfar 7 faoin gcéad de ghlanfháltais i leith táillí ceadúnais teilifíse tríd an scéim sin agus go ndéanfaidh an tÚdarás forbairt agus bainistiú uirthi.

Pléitear na craoltóirí neamhspleácha in Ailt 66, 67 agus 69. Baineann Alt 66 le ról na Gaeilge sa phróiseas chun ceadúnais a bhronnadh ar sheirbhísí raidió. Cuirtear in iúl in Alt 66 (2) (d) go mbeidh ‘aird’ ag an gCoiste um Dheonú Conarthaí ar ‘líon, cáilíocht, réimse agus cineál na gclár Gaeilge agus méid na gclár a bhaineann le cultúr na hÉireann a bheartaítear a sholáthar’ nuair a bheidh cinneadh á dhéanamh aige faoi cheadúnas. Cuirtear in iúl in Alt 66 (3) go mbeidh ‘aird ar leith aige ar bhuanú agus cur chun cinn na Gaeilge mar theanga labhartha’ nuair a bheidh cinneadh á dhéanamh aige faoi cheadúnas i gcás ceantair a bhfuil limistéar Gaeltachta san áireamh ann.

Déantar plé ar leith san Acht ar chraoltóirí seirbhíse poiblí na hÉireann, RTÉ agus TG4. In Alt 82 (1), tá ‘nithe a bhaineann le forbairt na Gaeilge’ agus ‘gnóthaí sóisialta, oideachais nó pobail nó gnóthaí Gaeltachta’ i measc na réimsí saineolais a mbeifear ag súil leo nuair a bheidh comhalta bhord RTÉ á gceapadh. In Alt 102 (2) (b) cuirtear in iúl go bpléifear an

Ghaeilge, i measc ceisteanna eile, i ráiteas bliantúil RTÉ ‘i dtaobh gealltanais feidhmíochta’. Leagann an tAcht dualgais shuntasacha i dtaobh cláracha Gaeilge ar RTÉ. Faoi Alt 114 (2) (a) scríobhtar go léireoidh RTÉ cultúr uile na hÉireann agus go mbeidh ‘aird ar leith aige ar na hairíonna a shainíonn an cultúr sin agus go háirithe ar an nGaeilge’. Faoi Alt 114 (3), cuirtear in iúl go gcaolfaidh RTÉ réimse leathan cláracha i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla, nuacht agus cúrsaí reatha san áireamh (Oireachtas Éireann, 2009).

Cé nach mbaineann sé go sonrach leis cúrsaí na meán, tá impleachtaí ag Acht na Gaeltachta 2012 don cheist seo chomh maith. Ritheadh an t-acht sin mar thoradh ar an *Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge 2010-2030* agus bhí sé mar aidhm aige tús a chur le ‘próiseas pleanála teanga’ sa Ghaeltacht agus i mbailte eile ar fud na tíre chun cur le labhairt na Gaeilge sna ceantair sin (Rialtas na hÉireann, 2010). Faoi Acht, caithfidh ceantair áirithe pleananna teanga a chur le chéile ina mbeadh spriocanna maidir le neartú na Gaeilge (Oireachtas Éireann, 2012). Is féidir úsáid a bhaint as na meán chumarsáide (go háirithe an raidió/podchraoltaí áitiúla) chun tacú leis an bpleanáil teanga sin.

### **Creat rialála**

Clúdaíonn an *Ráiteas Straitéise* is déanaí ón Údarás Craolacháin an tréimhse 2017-2019. San áireamh ann tá cuspóir chun cláracha ardchaighdeán i nGaeilge a chothú agus a chur chun cinn. D’fhoilsigh an tÚdarás *Plean Gníomhaíochta don Ghaeilge* in 2019 agus deirtear ann go bhfuil ról sonrach aige i gcur chun cinn ábhair Ghaeilge sa tírdhreach meán trí chéile. Chun é sin a bhaint amach, luaitear cúig chuspóir sa phlean, ina measc cothú cláracha/stáisiún Gaeilge trí thionscnaimh éagsúla, comhpháirtíochtaí Gaeilge a chur chun cinn, taighde a fhoilsiú, eolas a bhailiú agus monatóireacht a fheabhsú (ÚCÉ, 2019: 3). Faoi bPlean sin, bunaíodh Coiste Comhairleach Gaeilge ar a bhfuil ionadaithe ó chraoltóirí, léiritheoirí, Foras na Gaeilge, eagraíochtaí Gaeilge agus an tÚdarás féin.

Sa *Straitéis um Sheirbhísí Craolacháin* a foilsíodh in 2018, fógraítear gurb é seo ceann de chuspóirí an Údaráis: ‘Cláir Ghaeilge d’ardchaighdeán a chothú agus a chur chun cinn agus forbairt tionscnaimh Ghaeilge a spreagadh ar fud na hearnála craolacháin’ (ÚCÉ, 2018: 14). Deir an tÚdarás chomh maith go bhfuil sé ‘sásta cineálacha eile seirbhísí, seirbhísí nideoige raidió agus seirbhísí trí mheán na Gaeilge ina measc ... a iniúchadh’ (ibid: 5 15) agus go gcuirfidh a chuid pleananna ceadúnúcháin le héagsúlacht agus le hiolrachas, ábhar trí Ghaeilge san áireamh (ibid: 16).

Le blianta fada, tugann an tÚdarás treoir ghinearálta faoi chláracha Gaeilge do stáisiúin agus iad i mbun iarratais ar cheadúnas. Iarrtar ar iarrthóirí ar cheadúnais phobail nó tráchtála ráiteas a dhéanamh faoi líon agus cineál na gcláracha a chraolfaidh siad i nGaeilge nó go dátheangach ach ní thugtar aon treoir chinnte faoi íosmhéid uaireanta an chloig, rud a fhágann go bhfuil éagsúlacht an-mhór sa soláthar Gaeilge ar stáisiúin éagsúla.

Sa Bhille nua um Shábháilteacht Ar Líne agus Rialáil na Méan a foilsíodh roimh Nollaig 2020, moltar go scorfaí an tÚdarás agus go gcuirfí Coimisiún nua ina áit. Beidh impleachtaí aige seo do go leor gnéithe d’obair an Údaráis, craoltóireacht na Gaeilge ina measc (An Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir, Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus na Meán, 2020).

Mar chraoltóir seirbhíse poiblí, tá dualgais reachtúla ar RTÉ i leith na Gaeilge le fada an lá agus, ar aon dul leis na craoltóirí neamhspleácha, déanann an tÚdarás Craolacháin rialáil orthu faoi théarmaí an Achta Craolacháin 2009. In 2015, d’fhoilsigh RTÉ plean cúig bliana, *Meáin Ghaeilge RTÉ*, chun cur lena aschur Gaeilge. Baineann an chéad aidhm sa phlean le leathnú na Gaeilge trí sheirbhísí uile an chraoltóra:

Cuirfear leis an méid Gaeilge a chloistear ar an raidió, beidh níos mó cláracha Gaeilge agus ábhar dátheangach ar RTÉ Radio 1, RTÉ 2fm agus RTÉ lyric fm. Cuirfidh RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta béim faoi leith ar an lucht éisteachta a fhairsingiú trí uilechuimsitheacht agus ábharthacht a chinntiú de réir mar a thagann athrú ar nósanna éisteachta raidió (RTÉ, 2015: 4).

Déantar cur síos ar aidhmeanna sonracha faoi fhorbairt na Gaeilge ar na seirbhísí raidió uile sa phlean agus chomh maith leis sin, geallann RTÉ go ndéanfaidh sé forbairt ar sheirbhís nua raidió don óige (RTÉ, 2015: 10). Ní dhearnadh aon dul chun cinn ar an gceist sin ó shin.

### **Taighde ar úsáid na Gaeilge ar an raidió**

Go dtí seo (Eanáir 2021), foilsíodh dhá chéim den taighde a rinne mé féin agus an Dr Rosemary Day ar úsáid na Gaeilge ar stáisiúin raidió nach stáisiúin Ghaeilge iad, i.e. seachas RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta agus Raidió na Life. I gcéimeanna 1 agus 2 den taighde a foilsíodh, rinneadh anailís ar sceidil stáisiún mar a fógraíodh ar a suíomhanna idirlín, de réir na gcatagóirí seo a leanas:

- a) Cineál stáisiúin;
- b) Uaireanta agus nóiméid i nGaeilge gach seachtain;
- c) Teideal an chláir;
- d) Úsáid teanga (Gaeilge nó dátheangach);
- e) Am craolta;
- f) Eolas breise, i.e. an bunábhar atá ann nó cláracha roinnte;

g) Aschur iomlán.

Rinneadh teagmháil leis na stáisiúin ansin agus iarradh orthu an anailís ar na sceidil a dhearbhu. Tugadh ualú 1.0 do chláracha a bhí i nGaeilge ar fad agus ualú 0.5 do chlár má dúirt stáisiún gur chlár dátheangach é. Fuarthas amach i gCéim 2 gurb ionann na cláracha Gaeilge nó dátheangacha agus 03:12 uair in aghaidh na seachtaine ar an mean, athchraoltaí san áireamh. I gcás na stáisiún a chraolann 24 uaire an chloig in aghaidh an lae (an chuid is mó acu), is ionann é seo agus timpeall 2 faoin gcéad den aschur iomlán, céatadán an-íseal ar fad. Ní raibh na torthaí mórán níos fearr i gcás stáisiún a bhfuil limistéar Gaeltachta ina gceantar feidhme, in ainneoin na bhforálacha breise san Acht Craolacháin faoi sin. Bhí aschur íseal ar stáisiúin RTÉ (seachas Raidió na Gaeltachta) chomh maith agus ba mhinic é faoi bhun na n-uaireanta a chraolann stáisiúin tráchtála nó phobail. Bhí éagsúlacht mhór sna figiúirí ó líon réasúnta ard uaireanta ar roinnt stáisiún go dtí fíorbheagán ar stáisiúin eile (Walsh, Day & Fogarty, 2018). Tá torthaí iomlána an taighde ar fáil ag: <https://audioresearchcentre.wordpress.com/research/>. Foilseofar Céim 3 in 2021.

### **Taighde ar Raidió na Life**

Tá taighde déanta agamsa agus ag an Dr Day ar an stáisiún lán-Ghaeilge Raidió na Life chomh maith. Rinneamar scagadh ar thuiscint rannpháirtithe ar aidhmeanna an stáisiúin agus ar na spreagthaí a bhí ag na saorálaithe le páirt a ghlacadh sa raidió pobail in aois seo na meán sóisialta. Bunaíodh Raidió na Life in 1993 chun seirbhís raidió a sholáthar don phobal labhartha Gaeilge i mBaile Átha Cliath, comhthéacs teangeolaíoch ina bhfuil an Béarla chun tosaigh. Bhí sé d'aidhm ag an stáisiún spiorad pobail a chothú i measc na ndaoine sin agus tuilleadh misnigh a thabhairt dóibh as a dteanga féin. Trí ghrúpaí fócais leis na craoltóirí deonacha, rinneamar scrúdú ar spreagthaí a bhí acu agus ar a dtuiscint ar aidhmeanna Raidió na Life. Ba léir go raibh an stáisiún thar a bheith tábhachtach dóibh mar mhol sóisialta agus lárphointe teagmhála eatarthu féin agus lena lucht éisteachta a raibh caidreamh láidir acu leis. Ní raibh tuiscint an-domhain acu ar aidhmeanna bunaidh an stáisiúin agus níor fhéach siad orthu féin mar ghíomhaithe Gaeilge, ach ní raibh amhras ar bith orainn ach gur éirigh leo líonraí sóisialta, cultúrtha agus teanga a thógáil trí chraoltóireacht agus trí úsáid na meán sóisialta ar a gcuid cláracha. Bhain siad an-taitneamh as an rannpháirtíocht shóisialta sin agus spreagadh iad le leanúint ar aghaidh mar chraoltóirí deonacha. Dar linne, ba fhianaise é sin ar rath Raidió na Life tar éis dóibh 27 mbliana a chaitheamh ar an aer agus go raibh aidhmeanna an stáisiúin á gcur i gcrích go hindíreach ag na craoltóirí (Day & Walsh, 2020).

## Moltaí

Bunaithe ar an taighde thuas, ba mhaith liom na moltaí seo a leanas a dhéanamh maidir le neartú chraoltóireacht na Gaeilge amach anseo. Measaim go bhfuil a leithéid de dhíth má tá an ghné riachtanach seo den éagsúlacht agus den iolrachas le cosaint i dtírdhreach na meán cumarsáide in Éirinn amach anseo:

1. Is gá Straitéis do na Meáin Dhigiteacha Ghaeilge a fhorbairt chun an earnáil seo a fhorbairt go córasach amach anseo. Ba cheart go dtitfeadh an cúram sin ar Fhoras na Gaeilge i gcomhair le heagraíochtaí Gaeilge, le craoltóirí, leis na meáin dhigiteacha agus leis an Údarás Craolacháin/Coimisiún nua.
2. Is gá na forálacha san Acht Craolacháin 2009 faoin nGaeilge agus an earnáil raidió agus teilifíse neamhspleách a leasú ionas go mbeidh níos mó den teanga le clos agus le feiceáil ar mheáin chumarsáide na hÉireann. San áireamh anseo tá an earnáil phobail, an earnáil tráchtála agus RTÉ. Ba cheart go mbeadh ar gach craoltóir a fhaigheann ceadúnas ar a laghad bunchlár Gaeilge amháin dá chuid féin a chraoladh/a scaipeadh go ditigeach.
3. Ba cheart don Údarás Craolacháin/Coimisiún comhpháirtíochtaí a fhorbairt le hinstiúidí oideachais (dara agus tríú leibhéal, le béim ar leith ar Ghaelscoileanna/scoileanna Gaeltachta) agus le heagraíochtaí Gaeilge chun oiliúint i scileanna sna meáin a fhorbairt trí mheán na Gaeilge. Mar chuid de sin, ba cheart inniúlacht ar na meáin a chothú trí Ghaeilge, ag tógáil ar obair Media Literacy Ireland.
4. Ba cheart mol digiteach do na meáin Ghaeilge a chruthú mar lárphointe teagmhála ina bhféadfaí ábhar ardchaighdeán meáin i nGaeilge a chruthú agus a scaipeadh. D'fhéadfaí Raidió na Life a fhorbairt ar an mbealach seo, rud a láidreodh tábhacht na seirbhíse sin i dtírdhreach na meán cumarsáide Gaeilge in Éirinn. Tríd an *Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge*, d'fhéadfaí moil dhigiteacha eile a chruthú don Ghaeilge in áiteanna ina bhfuil an phleanáil teanga ar siúl.
5. Ba cheart na moil dhigiteacha sin a mhaoiniú trí bhuiséad na pleanála teanga sa Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúr, Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus na Meán agus tríd an tobhach ar ollchomhlachtaí idirnáisiúnta cumarsáide atá molta sa Bhille nua um Shábháilteacht ar Líne agus Rialáil na Meán 2020.

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# **Submission on the Irish language media to the Future of Media Commission**

**Dr John Walsh, NUI Galway**

[John.Walsh@nuigalway.ie](mailto:John.Walsh@nuigalway.ie)

## **Introduction**

The broadcasting legislation in force for many years aims to create a place and space for the Irish language in the media landscape in Ireland. The main duties are imposed on the public service broadcasters RTÉ and TG4 and there are specialist public radio and television services which broadcast in Irish only or mainly in Irish. In addition, the Broadcasting Act 2009 contains other provisions which aim to ensure that a certain amount of Irish is included on all broadcast services in the country which obtain a licence. However, research carried out by myself and Dr Rosemary Day, University of Limerick, shows that the language is very marginalised in the country's mainstream media, outside of the Irish language broadcasters RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta, Raidió na Life and TG4. This is despite the provisions of various broadcasting acts over the past 30 years which have aimed to ensure that the Irish language is not completely forgotten on the normal English language services of Ireland.

Promoting diversity and pluralism, including the promotion of the Irish language, is one of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland's strategic aims but our research shows that this is not being achieved in the broadcast media. In this submission, I will set out the legislative and regulatory framework for the Irish language in the media currently in place and discuss the research that Rosemary Day and I have done on this issue in the radio sector. The other research we are carrying out on Raidió na Life will also be discussed and recommendations will be made regarding the strengthening of the Irish language in the media in the future.

In line with our research to date, the submission will place a strong emphasis on radio/audio services, but I recognise that in this age of convergence it is no longer possible to speak of any communication medium individually. The European Union Audio-visual Media Services Directive is introducing major changes and it is intended that international streaming services will be charged for high quality Irish audio-visual content. It is essential that the Irish language has a central place in that future transformational context.

## **Statutory framework**

The Broadcasting Authority and its predecessor, the Independent Radio and Television Commission, have been operating under various broadcasting acts since 1988. The Broadcasting Act 2009 is currently the most comprehensive and relevant legislation. That Act contains specific provisions about the Irish language which relate to the duties of the Authority itself and to the duties of the broadcasters. The most significant requirements are imposed on public service broadcasters (RTÉ and TG4) but the Irish language is one of the criteria to be assessed when assessing applications for a license for an independent radio service.

Sections 9 and 25 of the Act (Oireachtas Éireann, 2009) cover the composition of the Broadcasting Authority itself, the statutory committees under its aegis and its objectives. In Section 9 (1), the development of the Irish language and the Gaeltacht is among the areas of expertise expected of the members of the Authority and the statutory committees. Section 25 (2) (h) on the Authority's objectives states that the Authority and the committees shall 'promote and encourage the development of Irish language broadcasting programs and services'. Under section 154 (1) of the Act, the Authority will submit a scheme to the Minister to support programs in various areas including the Irish language. This scheme is called 'Vision and Sound'. According to Section 155 (1) of the Act, the objectives of the scheme include 'the development of high-quality programs based on Irish culture, heritage and experience' and will include Irish language programming. Section 156 (2) provides for 7 per cent of net television licence fee receipts to be paid through that scheme and will be developed and managed by the Authority.

The independent broadcasters are discussed in Sections 66, 67 and 69. Section 66 deals with the role of the Irish language in the process of granting licenses for radio services. Section 66 (2) (d) states that the Contract Awards Committee will have 'regard' for 'the number, quality, range and type of Irish language programs and the volume of programs relating to Irish culture proposed to be provided' when deciding on a licence. Section 66 states (3) that it will 'pay particular attention to the preservation and promotion of Irish as a spoken language' when deciding on a licence for an area which includes a Gaeltacht area.

The Act deals specifically with Irish public service broadcasters, RTÉ and TG4. In Section 82 (1), 'matters relating to the development of the Irish language' and 'social, educational or community or Gaeltacht affairs' are among the areas of expertise that will be expected when an RTÉ board member is appointed. Section 102 (2) (b) indicates that the Irish language will

be discussed among other issues, in RTÉ's annual statement 'on performance commitments'. The Act imposes significant obligations on Irish language programming on RTÉ. Under Section 114 (2) (a) it is written that RTÉ will reflect the whole of Irish culture and will 'pay particular attention to the defining characteristics of that culture and in particular to the Irish language'. Section 114 (3) states that RTÉ will broadcast a wide range of programs in Irish and English, including news and current affairs (Oireachtas Éireann, 2009).

Although not specifically related to the media, the Gaeltacht Act 2012 also has implications for this issue. That act was passed as a result of the *20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030* and aimed to initiate a 'language planning process' in the Gaeltacht and other towns throughout the country to increase the use of Irish in those areas (Government of Ireland, 2010). Under the Act, certain areas are required to compile language plans which include targets for the strengthening of the Irish language (Oireachtas Éireann, 2012). The media (especially local radio/podcasts) can be used to support this language planning.

### **Regulatory framework**

The latest *Strategy Statement* from the Broadcasting Authority covers the period 2017-2019. It includes an objective to foster and promote high quality programming in Irish. The Authority published the *Action Plan for the Irish Language* in 2019 and it states that it has a specific role to play in the promotion of Irish language content in the media landscape as a whole.

To achieve this, the plan states five objectives, including the promotion of Irish language programs/stations through various initiatives, promoting Irish language partnerships, publishing research, gathering information and improving monitoring (BIA, 2019: 3). Under that Plan, an Irish Language Advisory Committee was established comprising representatives from broadcasters, producers, Foras na Gaeilge, Irish language organisations and the Authority itself.

In the *Broadcasting Services Strategy* published in 2018, it was announced that one of the Authority's objectives is to: 'Foster and promote high quality Irish language programming and encourage the development of Irish language initiatives across the broadcasting sector' (BIA, 2018: 14). The Authority also states that it is 'willing to explore other types of services, including niche radio services and services through the medium of Irish ...' (ibid: 5 15) and that its licensing plans contribute to diversity and pluralism, including content through Irish (ibid: 16).

For many years, the Authority has provided general guidance on Irish language programming for stations when applying for a licence. Applicants for community or commercial licences are asked to comment on the number and type of programs they will broadcast in Irish or bilingually, but no definitive guidance is given on minimum hours, which means that the Irish language provision varies greatly on various stations.

The new Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill published before Christmas 2020 recommends the dissolution of the Authority and its replacement by a new Commission. This will have implications for many aspects of the Authority's work, including Irish language broadcasting (Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, 2020).

As a public service broadcaster, RTÉ has long had statutory obligations in relation to the Irish language and, in common with the independent broadcasters, is regulated by the Broadcasting Authority under the terms of the Broadcasting Act 2009. In 2015, RTÉ published a five-year plan, *RTÉ Irish Language Media*, to increase its Irish language output. The first aim of the plan is to expand the Irish language through all the broadcaster's services:

The amount of Irish heard on the radio will be increased, there will be more Irish language programming and bilingual content on RTÉ Radio 1, RTÉ 2fm and RTÉ lyric fm. RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta will place particular emphasis on broadening the audience by ensuring inclusion and relevance as radio listening habits change (RTÉ, 2015: 4).

The plan outlines specific aims for the development of the Irish language on all radio services and in addition, RTÉ undertakes to develop a new youth radio service (RTÉ, 2015: 10). No progress has been made on that issue since then.

### **Research on the use of the Irish language on radio**

To date (January 2021), two phases of research conducted by myself and Dr Rosemary Day have been published on the use of the Irish language on non-Irish language radio stations, i.e. those other than RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta and Raidió na Life. In phases 1 and 2 of the published research, station schedules were analysed as advertised on their websites, according to the following categories:

- a) Station type;
- b) Hours and minutes in the Irish language each week;
- c) Title of program;

- d) Language use (the Irish language or bilingual);
- e) Broadcast time;
- f) Additional information, i.e. existing source material or shared programs;
- g) Total output.

The stations were then contacted and asked to confirm the analysis of the schedules. Programs that were entirely in Irish were given a weighting of 1.0 and 0.5 for a program if a station said it was a bilingual program. It was found in Phase 2 that the Irish or bilingual programs were equivalent to 03:12 hours per week on average, including repeats. For stations which broadcast 24 hours a day (most of them), this equates to approximately 2 percent of total output, a very low percentage over all. The results were not much better for stations with a Gaeltacht area in their functional area, despite the additional provisions in the Broadcasting Act for that. RTÉ stations (excluding Raidió na Gaeltachta) also had low output and were often below the hours broadcast by commercial or community stations. Figures varied widely from sometimes relatively high numbers on some stations to very few on others (Walsh, Day & Fogarty, 2018). The full results of the research are available at: <https://audioresearchcentre.wordpress.com/research/>. Phase 3 will be published in 2021.

### **Research on Raidió na Life**

Dr Day and I have also researched the all-Irish station Raidió na Life. We screened participants' understanding of the station's aims and the volunteers' motivations for participating in community radio in this age of social media. Raidió na Life was established in 1993 to provide a radio service to the Irish-speaking community in Dublin, a linguistic context in which English dominates. The station aimed to instil a spirit of community among these people and to give them more courage in the use of their own language. Through focus groups with the volunteer broadcasters, we examined their motivations and their understanding of the aims of Raidió na Life. It was clear that the station was extremely important to them as a social hub and a focal point between themselves and its listeners with whom they had a strong relationship. They did not have a very deep understanding of the station's original aims and did not see themselves as Irish language activists, but we had no doubt that they succeeded in building social, cultural and linguistic networks through broadcasting and the use of social media on their programs. They really enjoyed the social involvement and were encouraged to continue as volunteer broadcasters. In our view, this was a testament to the success of Raidió na Life after 27 years on air and the indirect achievement of the station's aims by the broadcasters (Day & Walsh, 2020).

## Recommendations

Based on the above research, I would like to make the following recommendations for the future strengthening of Irish language broadcasting. I believe that this is necessary if this essential element of diversity and plurality is to be protected in the media landscape of Ireland in the future:

1. It is necessary to develop a Strategy for Irish Language Digital Media in order to develop this sector systematically in the future. This should fall to Foras na Gaeilge in conjunction with Irish language organisations, broadcasters, digital media and the Broadcasting Authority/new Broadcasting Commission.
2. The provisions of the Broadcasting Act 2009 on the Irish language and the independent radio and television sector need to be amended so that more of the language is heard and seen in the Irish media. These include the community sector, the commercial sector and RTÉ. Every licensed broadcaster should be required to broadcast/digitally distribute one of its own original Irish language programs.
3. The Broadcasting Authority/Commission should develop partnerships with educational institutions (second and third level, with particular emphasis on Gaelscoileanna/Gaeltacht schools) and with Irish language organisations to develop media skills training in the Irish language. As part of this, media competence should be fostered through Irish, building on the work of Media Literacy Ireland.
4. A digital hub for Irish language media should be created as a central point of contact where high-quality Irish language media content can be created and distributed. Raidió na Life could be developed in this way, which would strengthen the importance of that service in the Irish language media landscape in Ireland. Through the *20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language*, other digital hubs could be created for the Irish language in areas where language planning is taking place.
5. These digital hubs should be funded through the language planning budget of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and the Media and through the levy on major international communications companies proposed in the new Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill 2020.

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**6 January 2021**

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #774

[REDACTED]



## Submission to the Future of Media Commission

8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Firstly it should be stated that RTE is no longer fit for purpose, it's stated mission to “ be outward looking, creative, respectful, sustainable and accountable, collaborative and transparent” has been long ignored & replaced with a biased behemoth that is a waste to taxpayers money.

It should be de-funded and the TV licence fee scrapped.

Instead a Media Commission should offer a grant system to any Irish media to produce culturally significant documentaries.

This should include much grant aid to TG4 to continue to produce quality programming in the Irish language and should similarly offer grant aid to other independent stations who want to also produce quality programming in Irish, similarly promotion of Irish music & music in the Irish language should be supported.

Besides this, all media should be independent of State funding & allowed to compete fairly.

Advertising: the Media Commission should oversee all advertising, in particular to make sure adverts are fair, honest & aired at appropriate times and have powers to remove adverts and fine as appropriate.

All media need to be overseen by this Commission to be certain that advertising can not influence news pieces in any way.

Large Media Groups: At the moment large media groups have unfair & unreasonable influence on news production & reach. Our media is seen by most as biased & often self-interested & this needs to be addressed.

The situation where one group (e.g. Communicorp) controls so much of our national and local airwaves, should not be allowed to continue as it allows undue influence over programming and news reporting.

Transparency in ownership of medium to large media should be enshrined in law & no single group should be able to have ownership over more than 20% of the national or local airwaves (by listenership and excluding the national broadcaster if they continue to exist).

Politics & media: at the moment there is no real oversight of political influence in media (& vice versa) & this needs to be urgently changed and policed.

All registered political parties need to see that they get fair & reasonable time on air & column inches in national & local media (based on their votes in recent elections) and this also needs to be policed by the new Media Commission.

Music on the radio – music stations should not be forced to have so much news – 2-3 minutes per hour is more than enough.

Social Media monopolies need to be legislated to stop their control over what people hear & see.

The new Media Commission: Firstly this needs to be totally independent, with all members drawn from outside of media groups.

For preference, all or most members drawn by lottery from a list of all interested candidates would be best, with 1 and 2 year seats. It should be governed by strict rules to remain fair & impartial in all areas.





Record #776

Peter Crowley



## Future of Media

Two extremes:

Presumed Origins of RTE: To broadcast Irish created/influenced content to Ireland other than BBC.

Government takeover/control of Russian TV: To be able to manage content on Russian TV instead of billionaires &/or foreign agents.

Presumption: That the State has more right and responsibility to oversee, manage or influence the content consumed by it's citizens than foreign entities do, whether these are corporate, governmental or a combination of both.

Future of Media in Ireland Suggested Goal: 1) to have some measurement / knowledge of the content streamed in Ireland from major providers. 2) to be able to influence & tax this content. To use these taxes so support the monitoring of this content & to support the creation of content that furthers the aims of the state (e.g. Irish language, music, culture, awareness of more local/irish based influences.

- 1) My idea would be to create/support the creation of categorised systems for much of the content streamed into Ireland. This would include a responsibility from the steaming company to provide aggregated viewing figures on a regular basis in a manner that makes it feasible to collate viewing figures for all major streaming companies.. This would be Country of Origin, Language, the pre-existing content categories for items like ratings (age, sex, violence etc.), other categories (movie, documentary, romance, etc).
- 2) Start taxing the streaming companies. Netflix subscribers in ireland: 550,000 (1/8/2020 Extra.ie) at €1 per month = €1 x 12 x 550,000 = €6.6 million, with little or no collection costs. This could be rebated off of the main TV license. Or create a token system so TV license holders would be exempt this content tax.
- 3) Alter the tax based on the content they stream: Simply put the more irish content the less the tax. This would be initially for the streaming company possibly also for the individual. More subtly: By analysing the big data tags the state can take back some control or be able to influence the streaming companies.

A scary dystopian future is at hand - you the commission are in charge of it. Which is worse? a) The State rewards the individual to watch certain content. b) foreign entities are in total control of the content presented to the consumer.

At the moment entertainment wise RTE TV seems to be  $\frac{1}{4}$  Irish sourced,  $\frac{1}{3}$  UK,  $\frac{1}{3}$  US. Here I talk about soaps, serials ,movies - Mainly licenced content. Yes there is news and other local content. Whilst I find these figures worrisome the streaming companies have little or only by chance local content. There should be more locally sourced content on the streaming services, the state should mandate/incentivise that the companies make efforts in this area.



Record #777

Simon Maher



**Submission to Future of Media  
Commission**

**Simon Maher**  
**January 7<sup>th</sup> 2021**

**Music Radio**

### **About the Author:**

Simon Maher is Managing Director and a shareholder in 8Radio Vision Limited which operates multi-format Alternative Music radio station 8Radio.com. The station operates from Dame Street in Dublin 2 and is distributed online via its Smartphone Applications, TuneIn Radio, Smart Speakers, Internet Radios and its own website at [www.8Radio.com](http://www.8Radio.com). The station also broadcasts on FM via Temporary Licence from the BAI for 30 days a year covering the cities of Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway.

Simon is a tutor in Media and Broadcasting at Ballyfermot College of Further Education which has been involved in the delivery of high quality Media courses for more than 30 years. He also contributes to Arts and Popular Culture programmes for RTE Radio 1 and RTE 2FM as well as providing training and consultancy services to broadcast and non-broadcast clients.

Prior to 2011, he was General Manager, Director and Presenter on Alternative Rock station, Phantom FM and has been involved in the Radio Industry since 1991. Simon previously made submissions to the BAI Broadcasting Services Strategies in 2011 and 2016 which are referenced within this submission. Simon was also part of a group that made a submission of Interest in an Alternative Music service for Dublin in 2015.

This submission is from Simon Maher in a personal capacity with the declaration of Interests as set out above.

Contact: Simon Maher



## **Introduction:**

By way of introduction, it is important to set out where the Radio industry is at present and where trends would appear to be leading. This submission has a particular focus on *Music Radio*:

1. Radio listenership in general in Ireland is in decline. This decline was previously limited to the 15-24 age group looking at the JNLR statistics but more recent listenership figures have suggested that this decline is spreading to older age groups (15-34 in particular). While radio listenership remains reasonably high at 81%, the decline among Dublin audiences (down to 73%) and younger urban listeners (62% of 15-34 and 56% of 15-24 year olds) will soon make itself more evident in the overall figure. By way of comparison, the figures for the UK (based on Rajar Q1 2020) are 89% of all adults listening to Radio in the last 7 days. *The more that this decline is left unchecked, the harder it will be to slow it down once steps are taken, if indeed they are.*
2. The availability of, and influence of, other Media (particularly digital) in recent times has altered the Radio environment forever. This is true from both a commercial and a consumption perspective. Radio stations will not in future survive on a one size fits all model in operational terms or in a world of 30 second ad spots and Sponsorship and promotions revenue. This effect is showing itself in more specialist areas initially but will inevitably make itself felt in all areas of Commercial music radio sooner rather than later.

Interestingly, there is still very significant revenue in the market but a lot of it is being sucked up by the digital players and away from Radio and linear television. The pressure from Digital outlets (both commercially and in terms of listener time) will continue and this is the new reality. Radio will be one of a basket of media selections for consumers and the key is to try and make sure that Radio maintains a viable share of consumer choices and most importantly, consumer time. *Radio has the ability to make a unique connection between listener and broadcaster and that link should not be broken for the sake of regulation or administration.*

3. Music Listeners are moving away from “traditional” radio, particularly those in younger demographics. Music radio faces serious challenges from streaming services such as Spotify, iTunes Music, Deezer, Youtube etc. and will struggle to adapt. Yet more listeners are moving from Music radio to Podcasts and it is no coincidence that the consumption of Podcast content is so high in Ireland. *Neither the radio industry, or the Regulators can afford to sit back and deal reactively with this threat.* Nor should radio (whether that is from the Regulatory or Industry side) resign itself to its fate. Music radio listenership may continue to decline but that decline can be slowed dramatically or even be stopped if services are made available to satisfy listener demands. Music radio can and should survive and indeed thrive in the new reality but it needs to be equipped and willing to do so.
  
4. Consolidation within the Industry (both in the area regulated by the state and in “new” media) will continue and will have an effect on employment, diversity, plurality and economic models for Radio. A small number of players now control much of the urban radio market as well as the National outlets and these players will inevitably argue against the facilitation of other competing outlets arguing catastrophic consequences. *The only catastrophic consequences will come from allowing these players to set the agenda.* Future regulatory models cannot be built around merely sustaining the status quo as it exists in 2021 with falling listenership and revenues for existing players.
  
5. The existing regulator, the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, has taken a particular view on the protection and development of the Radio Industry which is significantly at variance with the regulatory model being practiced elsewhere, most locally by OFCOM in the UK. Further details and suggestions are set out in the body of the submission below but this variance can best be encapsulated by the statistic that while several hundred Radio stations have been licenced by OFCOM in the UK on both analogue and digital (DAB) platforms in recent years, **no** commercial radio stations at all have been licenced by the BAI since 2008 on any platform.

6. An opportunity presents itself to change the regulatory and licensing model to fit this new reality to facilitate the growth of Music radio in Ireland. *The status quo will inevitably lead to a continuing decline in the fortunes of Music radio and the possible disappearance of niche music services on terrestrial radio.*

Providing a range of music services through Radio (on whatever platform) at a minimum provides an Irish outlet for talent both musical and broadcast but the model adopted in terms of regulation and business model must allow these services to operate in a viable manner and adapt to suit conditions as the landscape changes. *This may well lead to significant changes in both the culture of Broadcast Regulation and in the manner of licencing services but realistically is the only way forward if we want to have a thriving Music radio sector in the 2020s.*

This submission covers mainly Question Three in the Public Consultation focusing on “How should the media be governed and regulated” and is particularly focused on the future of Music radio:

In a 2011 submission to the BAI Strategic review at the time, Simon wrote:

“The BAI more than anything needs to be constantly aware of broadcasting trends and ideas on an ongoing basis. *The slowness of the BAI to have a policy on, for example, Digital Radio is quite worrying and the lack of ability to be flexible to stations and the markets needs is also something that needs to be examined.* There is in my view no question over the intention of the BAI to see Broadcasting in Ireland develop and flourish but the current heavy regulatory burden and slow pace of adaptation is causing difficulty for existing and aspiring broadcasters alike.”

As can be seen from the above quote, from 10 years ago, there was an opportunity for the BAI to make itself far more adaptable to both trends in Radio and across media generally as well as working to ensure that Radio was at the cutting edge of advancements both technologically and editorially. Since 2011, streaming services have taken off significantly, particularly since the 2012 launch of Spotify and Deezer. Digital Radio Listening in the UK has risen to more than 58% of all listening, with 89% of all adults still listening to linear Radio every week. The UK model is far from perfect but it is demonstrably succeeding in slowing the decline in linear radio listening far more effectively than here in Ireland. Recent developments such as the Small Scale DAB mux rollout are helping to keep Radio as the “go to” place for Music in the UK Market.

The current system of regulation seems focused on a single sustainable model of large Commercial operators and very small Community operations with still no real attempt made to provide services in the “middle ground”. Everything from the lack of any commercial licencing on FM in well over a decade, to the still prohibitively expensive Section 71 contract fees for Digital carriage (still 300% more expensive than the UK) to the above mentioned lack of progress on Digital Radio meaning that we still have no permanent non-RTE DAB Mux operating in Ireland.

The barriers to entry constructed by the now long-outdated FM licencing regime and the lack of engagement with either potential operators or indeed the general public will need some serious attention if sustainable models are to be found for Music Radio in the 2020s. Standing still in the forlorn hope that the commercial model of the 1990s will somehow work again in the 2020s is both pointless and bizarre.

If the policy in the 2020s is to be that there is no sustainable model for that “middle ground” and that these services are to be let go either Online or to services made available from abroad then that should be made clear at the earliest possible opportunity. As stated above, the opportunity exists to build a healthy and sustainable model (or indeed set of models) for Music radio services in Ireland. However, if we find ourselves in the same position, operating under the same structures in 2021 that we were in when the submission above was written in 2011 or indeed in its follow up in 2016 then niche music broadcasting services at the very least may find themselves consigned to non-broadcast platforms which is in nobody's interest.

## **Suggestions and Conclusions:**

The majority of this submission is focused on the challenges facing Music radio, and specialist music radio services in particular. A number of brief suggestions are set out below:

- 1) A call out from the Future of Media Commission asking potential Radio operators to submit proposals for any services whether they be on FM, digital or both. No restrictions, no cumbersome forms. Encourage potential operators to suggest their own business and operational models.
- 2) On the back of that call out, a forum of those seriously interested in providing services to come up with a licencing plan and set of business models. Frequency co-ordination etc. to operate alongside this process.
- 3) New services to be advertised and preferably licenced under a low cost, straightforward application and operational plan in 2022.
- 4) Swift licencing of a permanent DAB Mux Operator(s) in areas where demand exists. Aspire to have at least 50% of the MUX available for new services outside of the current ownership pool to encourage diversity of Ownership as well as plurality of services (again with reference to Question three in the Consultation).
- 5) Dropping of fees for Section 71 licences – suggest free for first 3 years encouraging uptake followed by a nominal fee thereafter. Similarly, minimal cost for applications for FM services.
- 6) Promotion of Radio as a sustainable and valuable platform for Music Radio. Sustainability for Music Radio will come from compelling content and there is no reason that this sustainability cannot be aided by regulatory authorities and broadcasters working together to promote the platform, often using the digital platforms that are the current “threat”.

## **Appendix One:**

As part of the preparation of this submission, the Author asked a number of Media Students at Ballyfermot College the simple question of “How does traditional radio make itself relevant in the future”. Below are a small sample of the unedited answers to this survey which was conducted in a classroom environment:

- ^ Integrate radio with Social Media/Phone technology
- ^ Link successful podcasts/podcasters with linear radio
- ^ Provide diversity of content/viewpoints
- ^ Target younger audiences credibly
- ^ Provide specialised services undiluted
- ^ Have younger people participate in programming decisions
- ^ More human interaction than Streaming services
- ^ Professionalism of output
- ^ Variety of content – linked with streaming services/YouTube
- ^ More controversial debate
- ^ Better content
- ^ Non mainstream music content
- ^ Less careful, less controlled
- ^ Remove “traditional” from debate. Radio is just radio.
- ^ Restructure ad breaks.
- ^ Better social media interaction – not just calls to listen
- ^ More inclusive – communicate with audience
- ^ Public contact, removing wall between stations and listeners
- ^ More use of “live rooms” and multimedia content
- ^ Improved use of interaction channels.

**References:**

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JNLR Data: [https://info.ipsosmrbi.com/assets/files/jnlr/user\\_information/19-101973-JNLR-Nov'20-Press%20Release-Final.pdf](https://info.ipsosmrbi.com/assets/files/jnlr/user_information/19-101973-JNLR-Nov'20-Press%20Release-Final.pdf)

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #778

[REDACTED]



Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTE's losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

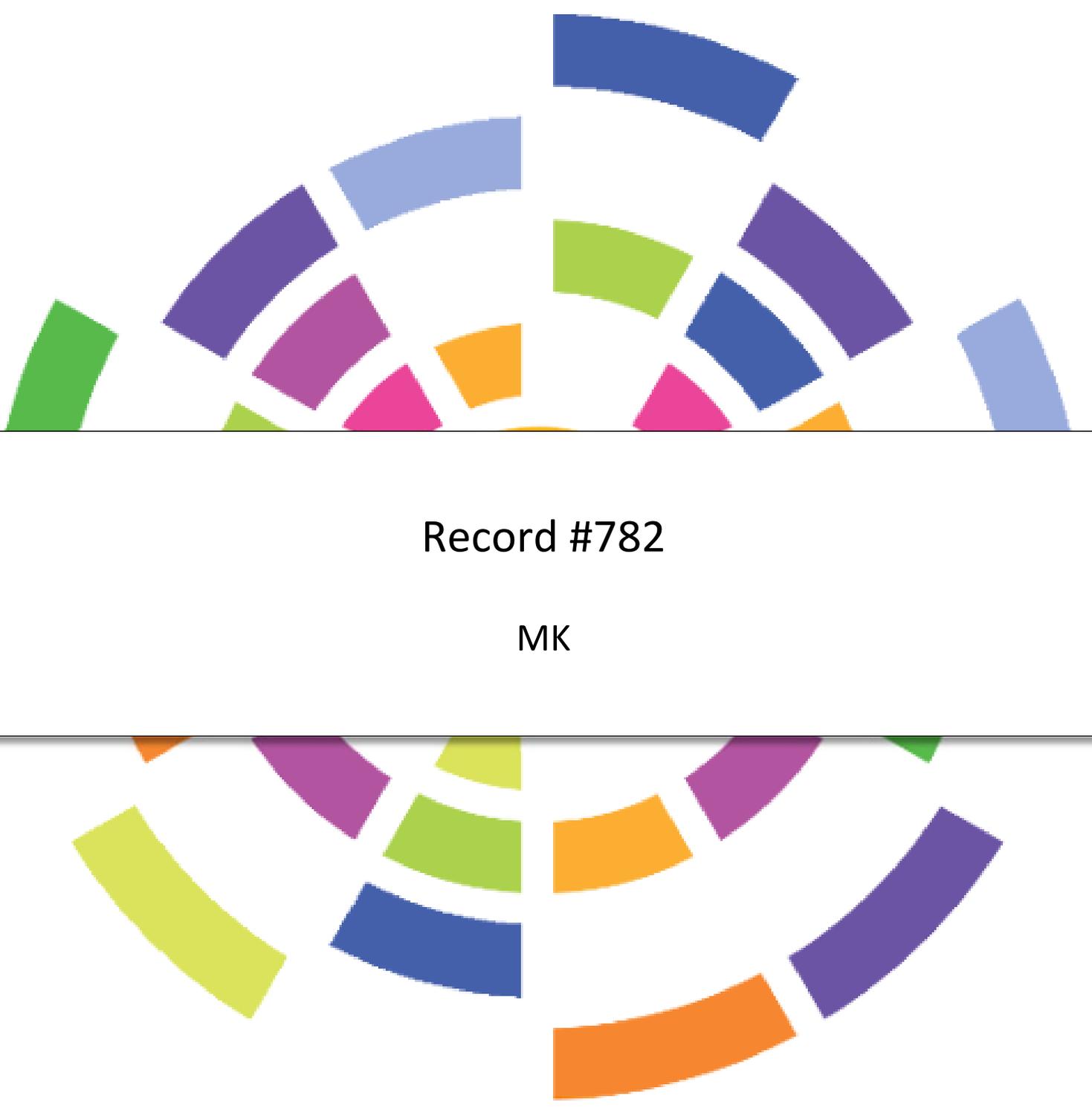
I do not believe either that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

- RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.
- The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]
- The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.
- The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".
- In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.
- The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.
- While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]



Record #782

MK

Thank you for taking the time to read this submission.

A review of modern media is overdue and while purpose, funding and governance are fundamental attributes of improvement, I will approach them through the themes below.

## **Discourse**

Since the time of the Irish Press media has been owned or used for political purposes. Unfortunately much media is dependent on provocative clickbait for ratings and or tracking users for their advertisers. This happens while many traditional readers, viewers and listeners turn away as their views are at best dismissed and at worst demeaned. Irish media norm was once catholic, nationalist and a self-reliant economy. Today the media has seeks profit ia a new norm of woke, globalised and neo-liberal. Neither reflect an impartial and objective media that attracts and serves a broad society.

Journalists have no time for researching and often release editorialise press releases as reports. Looming censorship laws threaten the reporting of facts and will limit expression. There is a need for radical reflection, reform and transformation away from the NGOs' press releases. Media demeans society when presenters are political activists striving to warp public perception and opinion for their personal ideological benefit. A generation ago Gaybo could have achieved the opening of minds just by exposing the public to "obnoxious and offensive" condoms more than any ranting op-editor of today. It is only through diversity of opinion delivered to a highly engaging standard that the future of media in Ireland can flourish.

## **Production**

Once RTÉ disbanded is children's production unit it no longer had an income stream from production. Production sales is the only credible source of funding for a Public Media Service.

Broadcasting charges are more toxic than water charges as they could fund untrusted private and public media. The introduction of a broadcasting charge would easily take down any government.

One of the alternatives is a progressively levied Corpoation Tax. Levying digital corporations based on turnover:market size or turnover:avg. PRSI is fair and reasonable' and could fund RTÉ in perpetuity as the system matches inflation. However, when has a government ever been reasonable. Levying prevents tax avoidance via intra group royalty payments to tax havens. Taxes as levies are certain and provide political accountability at the Public Accounts Committee, which could not happen with charges.

The BAI's 'Sound and Vision' scheme is not viable going forward. NGOs and private outlets use tax payers money to push agendas that are counter to the views of those tax payers and thus undemocratic. 'Sound and Vision' should be incorporated into a 'for purpose' company that returns a profit, akin to the company 'Patagonia'. Start up capital could be via the 'free money' that the ECB is handing NTMA/ISIF. Once studios are created they can be leased for profit, but where a public good/interest production it would get priority access to the studio for minimal charge. 'For profit' production could have reduced rates via sharing holding in the production company. The public could buy 'public media pension bonds' and invest in the 'Sound and Vision' company. An official 'Sound and Vision' crowdsourcing fund could be available for investigative research, which insures that the public direct funds into issues that vested interests find uncomfortable. The state could invest a small percentage of PRSI via NTMA/ISIF into capital assets for this system. The

purpose is for the public to put their state pension funds into this corporate so as they have a vested interest in purchasing and promoting Irish content on streaming services. This can in turn expose international audiences to more and more Irish produced media and create a virtuous cycle. The return on investment funds state pensions for the audience and media personnel alike.

RTÉ needs to produce and licence content on streaming platforms or to international media outlets. However it has lost most production capability and capacity. RTÉ needs to join with others (including private companies) via BAI's 'Sound and Vision' to produce commercially successful and also publicly useful content. This needs to be its primary source of funding as it should exit the advertising arena and cease paying more than a Taoiseach's salary for a public broadcast presenter.

Private media outlets are exposed to market pressures of ratings and advertising, and so should never be considered a public service, nor receive public money. This is the market which they entered. If a solution is to be used it is progressively levied corporation tax by market size and category e.g. 50% of the national print newspaper. This means that writing off (entertainment & consultancy) expenses against profit is curtailed. This allows smaller new entrants to profitably enter the market. More breakaway journalists need to set up niche media outlets. Economic evidence shows that a market should have no less than five comparably capable competitors to be a functioning market.

A diversity of media outlets can help prevent media becoming a political platform. Be it for political leaks to test public reaction or pulpit demagogues issuing their dogma. One is particularly drawn to the example of media outlets that campaigned for the tumultuous closing of the leaving certificate examinations in 2020.

I agree with Ruth Bader Ginsburg on quota representation by identity grouping, be it on media outlet productions or the U.S. Supreme Court, as capability and diversity of opinion are the important characteristics. "When I'm sometimes asked when will there be enough [women on the Supreme Court] and I say, 'When there are nine,' people are shocked. But there'd been nine men, and nobody's ever raised a question about that." - Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Media literacy campaigns should not be led by NGOs and especially not by corporations like Google or Facebook. They should be organised by public servants and lead by citizens as was done with the constitutional convention. See 'jury democracy' in the transparency section below.

## **Accessibility**

Public access to a free press is a fundamental of democracy. Governance should never be of content, but of opacity. Accessibility should consider how the public can access valuable media, how more media outlets can access the market and how media personnel can access the industry.

Content purchase by the public is the weakest link in the funding model for media outlets. Subscription systems have low uptake and readers and viewers want to be able to return to purchased content. The gift card system that litters the tills of the multiples appears to provide a solution. The wheel does not require reinvention as the one4all card system is a transferable card with a unique identifier and PIN. The cards can be gifted or transferred, subscription logins can be removed and anonymous access allowed. The card's credit can be used to access selected articles from multiple media outlets in perpetuity.

There is new wave of “necessary” cookies for media websites. From an exclusively technical stance these are truly unnecessary. Ending this and requiring media providers to anonymously access a website, unless it is to login to a paywall should be legislated. Also having a standard and detailed view of cookies on media websites is important, politico.com has a fair cookie disclosure systems. Free standardisation aids new small entrants, which benefits the public.

Public media service needs to be networked in an era of diminishing resources. The Local .it .de .ch... is one such system. Airlines are networked and it is time for public ‘for purpose’ media service outlets to do likewise. A network including Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Deutsche Welt, Al Jazeera, Channel 4 and may other outlets are credible and offer in-depth reports on their national issues and positions. Journalists could be swapped between outlets temporarily to improve perspectives and the network would self monitor, allowing an outlet could leave or a group of outlets to eject a foul player.

In the public service content provider market new entrants should be facilitated. This limit on aggregate or sectoral ownership of media outlets of 25% needs to be reduced to 15% and vigorously applied via the courts. This may require editing the companies act to modify the status of companies from ‘personhood’ to ‘artificial legal entities’ so as a holding company’s property rights are less than that of natural (human) persons.

Improving access to the jobs market by media personnel is important. Media personnel often are paid poorly and rarely risk job security for a challenging story. Journalists, producers and editors should be facilitated to have a safe and mobile career. A career where they can enter and exit and re-enter as they wish. This particularly helps journalists that rub the editor up the wrong way or editors that clash with owners. This is done by a favourable state backed pension scheme which NTMA/ISIF operates as the pension provider and the state operates as the manager, thus removing the management costs which destroy pensions. Alternatively there could be ‘media industry’ pension bonds issued via An Post. It is worth discussing this with Josephine Feeily at the pensions commission.

## **Transparency**

Many media outlets, like Bloomberg, list authors and sources. In the age of editorialised articles this combination is rare in Irish media. Often people do not know if they are looking at an ad, an opinion piece or fact based journalism. The agenda and position of outlets, editors, producers, reporters and presenters is difficult to decipher.

It appears that people turn to social media as traditional media does not appeal, represent or reflect their often non-conformist views and opinions. This is evident by those that those no longer buy newspapers or use commercial media platforms. One possible solution is to set standardised and gaudy labelling of advertorials, editorials, op-eds and non-impartial articles. These could be legislated as forewarnings like on tobacco packets. Only media outlets using press passes, of a minimum reach and staff size would be subject to this law. Any unlabelled article can be submitted by the public to a media register where the author, editor and outlet are recorded for public shaming – most likely by a competitor media outlet. A logarithmic fine for each incident by an author, or editor, or outlet can be set out on annual basis. First offence €1, thirteenth offence is €2048, but this is reset on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January.

Political agnosticism is required for fairness and equality in airing society’s diversity of opinion, otherwise it is groupthink and conformity propaganda. Shaming, guilting, chilling or excluding people for their obnoxious or offensive opinions should discouraged of all media. It is only by

listening and in turn understanding how people got to their position can society care and show compassion for those that have been damaged. Mentally ill people are no longer attacked and shamed on the street, nor should those with diverse opinions.

Take a leaf out of the 'health insurance authority' which imitates <https://switcher.ie/gas-electricity/comparison/> (certified by the Commission for the Regulation of Utilities). The public should know the political position of an outlet, editor or reporter be it generally, or by topic, or by issue.

The comparison system could be outsourced at a technical level while owned by the media commission and remaining within Irish servers. The collation system could be similar to PPI system where radio stations submit their playlist, media outlets (of a certain reach) submit their all published material automatically. The categorisation of positions could be by competing academics. The judging of individual articles could be by jury democracy.

Jury democracy: All courts process jurors, but hundreds of jurors are unselected and are waiting in room for four hours each day. Use an audience response tool like slido and issue a time limited code to the court service to put up in jury waiting rooms each morning. Potential jurors read five articles for free and then rank them according to the categorisations offered. They have no choice in the article and have to rank it to read the next one. This is a democratically legitimate system where everyone benefits, especially bored jurors reading articles that are normally behind a pay wall. It may even encourage jury duty.

Fact checking for fake media has become the hot button topic. So much that media outlets often report mis-information they assume to be true as it fits the narrative or is click bait. In house fact checking by media outlets is of little or credibility and is routinely disputed by readers that are experts in the field.

On topics and issues that are of serious impact, a media oversight authority should be able to instantly call on a vast international pool of researchers. This is akin to a pool of uber drivers, but who are unbiased reporters in third counties who want to be paid to build journalistic research skills and knowledge. Two or three do research on the topic and identify sources listing credibility by objective metrics. This will allow journalists to research new stories rather than compromise their credibility by being op-ed writers in the morning and fact checkers after lunch.

## **EU obligations**

The Audio-visual Media Services Directive goals of preserving cultural diversity, safeguarding media pluralism & guaranteeing the independence of national media regulators directly conflicts with combating racial and religious hatred.



The "legitimate" restriction of speech in Ireland legitimises the "political" restriction of speech in Poland, Hungary, Singapore, across the middle east and China. Some goals will have to be (de)prioritised to insure that good work is not used to support bad. Exemplified by Ireland's previous blasphemy law and constitutional amendment being used as a beacon of democracy by Pakistan to legitimise the suppression offensive representation of religion with court mandated corporal punishment (public whipping).

Suppressing enmity is unhealthy and expressing thoughts is a European fundamental enlightened ideal listed within the 'Charter of fundamental rights of the European Union'. Restricting incitement to violence and verbal assault may be reasonable. Asking a multiple rape victim not to publicly express her honest opinion of hate towards all men seems un-European and politically incorrect. And what about religions that advocate criminalisation of homosexuality, that carry out female genital mutilation, that cultivate paedophilia or according to RTÉ 'did god rape Mary'?

Just imagine how China will misuse any media or speech legislation where China is criticised on any issue. "Citizen journalist jailed over Wuhan virus reporting" for "picking quarrels and provoking trouble," - RTE 28 Dec 2020.

The EU Directives, similar to the Chinese law (above), clearly strive to achieve what Noam Chomsky puts as "The smart way to keep people passive and obedient is to strictly limit the spectrum of acceptable opinion, but allow very lively debate within that spectrum...."

All future speech legislation that could impact the media should exclude the word "hate" and be precise in what is lawful. This is to prevent vague application of law that could affect the civil rights of any journalist, be they citizen or professional.

Current and all future legislation should encourage all, especially the media, to push the boundaries of speech - free from fear of possible repression or censorship.



Record #784

Declan Hurley



Dear Members of the Commission,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit my views on the future of public service media (PSM) in Ireland.

Guiding principle for a discussion on the future of PSM in Ireland

1. PSM in Ireland is an **essential service**. The words “essential service” require deep reflection and precise definition by the Commission, and should be a guiding principle in all discussions concerning the future of PSM in Ireland. I suggest that if at any point in the discussions of the Commission there arises uncertainty concerning the role and function of PSM, the principle of “essential service” should be invoked.
2. **“Essential”** evokes all that is necessary for the good of society. It points to what is essential for the wellbeing and betterment of the citizens of Ireland, and for the positive development of the culture. It suggests that which is important for citizens to know so that they have the knowledge to be able to safely, legally, and successfully navigate their lives. It also evokes that which is necessary for the positive development of the individual in his/her humanity. The object of what is essential for PSM is both the individual and society at large.
3. **“Service”** evokes a relationship between the organs of PSM and the citizens based on respect, helpfulness, concern, solidarity, loyalty, and love. It suggests a relationship where the PSM is solely motivated towards the good of the individual and the society. True service cannot be motivated by profit, but neither should it be wasteful of the resources provided by the people it is called to serve. Nor should it model itself on other media services that exist for the purposes of profit or the advancement of a particular ideology.
4. PSM in Ireland successfully fulfils the role of an essential service in many ways. The various radio, television, and web platforms are a positive indication of how PSM seeks to provide such a service. I submit that serious problems that have arisen for PSM in recent years (e.g. reporting on Fr. Kevin Reynolds and Garda Maurice McCabe) are rooted in a systemic loss of a sense of essential service. The subsequent enquiries into the handling of such matters have always pointed to a culture within the organisation that allowed such matters to be pursued without challenge or question. Other matters that have caused offence to sections of the public stem from the same systemic culture that does not have a humble awareness of its duty to serve.
5. There is an opportunity now to create an essential service that is a real alternative to the commercial / ideological models. Like every essential service in our society, it deserves to be publicly financed in a transparent manner, and in a manner independent of vested interests.

I wish the members of the Commission every success in their endeavours.

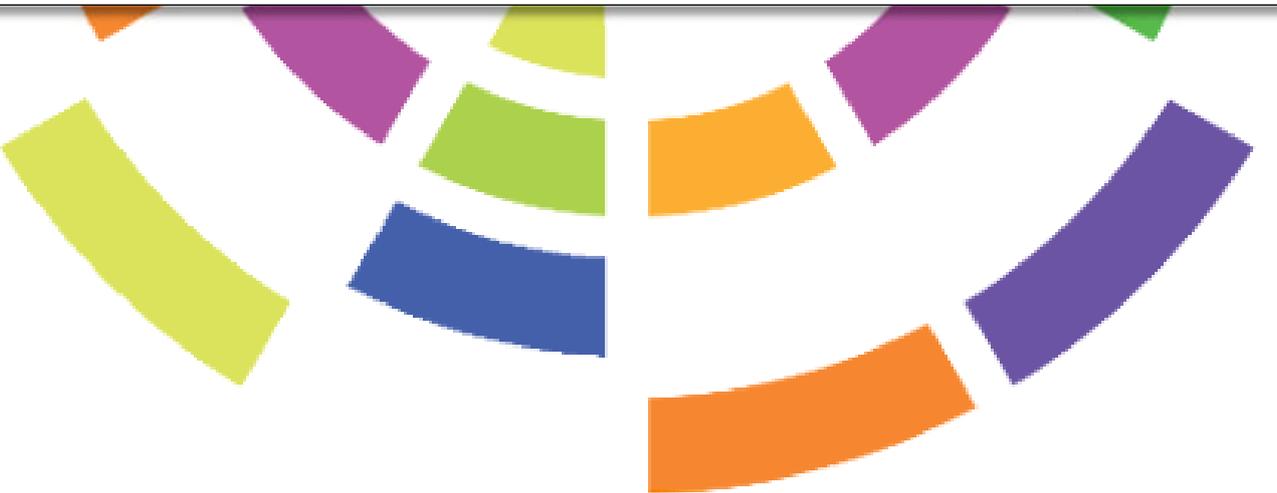
Declan Hurley

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Record #787

John Donohoe



Submission to Future of Media Submission,

By John Donohoe, print media journalist

January 2021

As a means of introduction, my name is John Donohoe, and I have been operating in the local media sector for some 25 years.

In this submission, I am going to reflect on my quarter century in full time work in the regional newspapers, simply because it coincides with the boom to bust situation that the industry has experienced, from the expansive days of the 1990s and 2000s and then the subsequent economic bust of the late noughties.

I am offering it as an on the ground view of where the regional newspaper industry is at at the moment, from the point of view of a typical worker in a provincial newsroom.

I have worked in three local newspapers, beginning with the Meath Weekender newspaper in 1996 (I started full time journalism work on that day in June 1996 that saw Veronica Guerin killed on the Naas dual carriageway, so I can recall the day vividly); followed by Eugene McGee's Longford Leader, and then the Meath Chronicle.

Each position was not a vacancy – it was not that somebody had left, but it was that the newsrooms were expanding, taking on new reporters to their existing cohort. Such was the strength of the local newspapers at the time.

These were exciting times – in Meath, John Bruton was Taoiseach, the footballers were winning All Irelands, it was busy; similarly in Longford, Albert Reynolds was still a TD, albeit on the way out the door of Leinster House, but it was a midlands county that always took its politics, sport and local newspapers seriously. Arriving at a function in north or south Longford in the Longford Leader van, you were treated like royalty. Eugene McGee had built it up to be one of the most highly regarded titles in the country, one of the first to introduce IT into the production process.

Jack Davis and the Meath Chronicle was another far-seeing company, not just from the newspaper side, but with a major printworks in Navan which printed everything from the Gay Community News to An Phoblacht, with Hot Press and a number of daily titles like The Star and the Mirror in between. He invested hugely in a new printworks and led the way in newspaper publishing and production for decades.

So successful were these titles that the British buyers came looking for a slice of the action. While I was at the Longford Leader, it sold for €9 million to Scottish Radio Holdings; some six months later when I was back working at the Meath Chronicle, it sold for over €30 million, to another Scottish firm, Dunfermline Press, with the advertising revenue on the back of the property boom a major attraction in a lot of these purchases.

Dunfermline set up another company, Celtic Media, to run its new stable of newly acquired newspapers – the Meath Chronicle, Anglo Celt, Westmeath Examiner, Westmeath Independent, Offaly Independent.

Then, came the crash. Suddenly, all these newspaper companies ended up, a la Manchester United and the Glaziers, with huge debts.

The restructuring of these companies due to the recession, combined with the advent of the worldwide web, meant that the industry was in a very weak position when the Covid crisis struck, a mountain which has still to be climbed in recovery.

I am looking at this turmoil from both sides, as a local rep for the National Union of Journalists, and as a news editor, with experience of trying to maintain a smooth running news room as part of my duties. However, I am taking no particular slant on the situation, just presenting straightforward observations.

Let's look at the title I currently work for, the Meath Chronicle, which I joined in June 2002.

Back then, it had a newsroom consisting of an editor, a deputy editor, four full time news reporters (I became the fifth), three full time sports reporters, a production dept of seven (including a photo editor/librarian), a part time journalist, various specialist contributors and columnists (motoring, music, etc). There were proof readers, a photographer, other admin and advertising staff.

We were producing a 60 page, three section, broadsheet newspaper, a substantial product.

The first to go was the production department, but more as a result of new technology rather than financial difficulties. However, their expertise built up over a lifetime, and some of their work, such as photo desk and updating websites, moved over to the newsroom staff.

However, continuing cutbacks meant a shrinkage of the staff, and more work being loaded onto those remaining.

Meath is a big county - lots of towns, villages, parishes, courts, councils, schools, events, activities, happenings, sports clubs and competitions, most of which was being covered at one stage.

Recession and redundancies saw a retreat into the office and an increasing dependency on email and material being submitted, rather than getting out and about in the old fashioned news gathering style. It may be old school, but it's still the best way.

The simultaneous growth of online and social media didn't help the situation. Various websites like Donedeal or Buyandsell took our classified advertising, daft.ie and myhome the property advertising. Entertainment venues find they can set up their own Facebook pages and websites to promote themselves. So advertising revenue was constantly being affected.

Then, sports clubs and community organisations find that they can set up their own online presence and social media to communicate with the public, their followers, friends etc, and more and more the need for the local newspaper is dwindling. Sales are now being affected as well as revenue.

The passing on of a generation of newspaper buyers also has to have an impact.

The former *Washington Post* president and publisher Philip L Graham is credited with being the first to describe journalism as "the first rough draft of history."

This is especially true of local newspapers, a unique product in themselves recording all the happenings of a locality that would not necessary be regarded as news by a bigger publication.

An interest of mine is local history, which I studied in Maynooth University. One of the primary sources for anybody researching the history of a club, parish, family, event, is the local newspapers of the era. This is slowly being lost with the decline of the print newspaper industry.

So, regarding the print newspaper industry, and specifically the regional sector, where are we at the beginning of 2021?

We are in very uncertain territory. People constantly say to me : “The Chronicle is going well, you are doing well, etc.”

It is assumed because we are there in the shops, because we have a website presence, that we are still in existence, that we are “doing well”.

But we are not. The truth is, in 10 years, our circulation has dropped by 10,000 a week. That is a stark figure.

Those that are seeing us on the shop shelves may not necessarily be buying us. They are reading the stories being posted on our website. Following us on Facebook. There is very little revenue for us on that. It is free to view.

Our advertisers are still mainly using the print product, thankfully. Celtic Media is pushing a ‘digital first’ policy, building up an online presence and audience in an attempt to swing the advertisers over there.

But with a reduced staff trying to serve two masters, a print newspaper and a rolling news website, this becomes very pressurised, particularly in this world where everybody expect their news instantly on a rolling basis, and what’s news today is history tomorrow, and certainly is by the time the newspaper is printed.

These days, we are chasing ‘likes’ rather than readers.

Another point to note is that when I went into Meath Chronicle in 2002 I was its youngest reporter. Apart from filling vacancies that arose since, we have not been able to recruit any extra young blood of the next generation of new media savvy journalists as resources have not been there. Two part time employees came to us through Jobbridge, a government initiative of the last recession. One positive is that the company has invested in a publishing system that allows easier transfer of stories from print to online.

Where are we now, in 2021? We find ourselves at a crossroads. The future for the regional newspaper sector in its present format is very uncertain. Is there a future for it in its present shape?

There is a future, of course, always is, for journalism and writing. There are still courts, councils, politics, current affairs, community events, sporting competitions and activities taking place, births, marriages and deaths to record. There is a need for the fourth estate to investigate and highlight wrongdoing.

I notice a proposal by the Road Safety Authority recently to name and shame motorists disqualified from driving - surely the RSA is not ignorant to the fact that local newspapers across the country have been reporting on such cases for as long as courts exist, which many already regard as a "naming and shaming"!

I note with disappointment that the original Commission named had nobody with knowledge of the regional press included, and that a representative was only added after an outcry by the industry and members.

Then, of course, there is the relationship between the media and politicians. It is a type of 'Love/Hate' relationship, where they need each other to survive, or did in the past, but like groups and organisations mentioned earlier, politicians may find they can survive on their own online presence too, and depend less on the established media. However, every politician recognises that a healthy media is a sign of a healthy democracy.

Taoiseach Michael Martin is quoted in the Irish Times as saying journalists need to be better paid. This is true. It was never seen as a highly lucrative career, very much a vocation, with many journalists dedicated to their locality and its people.

Meath Chronicle in the Davis era was one of the better paying newspapers, when compared with our colleagues in other regional groups, but unfortunately we have suffered pay cuts since the last recession which will now, as a result of Covid, never be restored, while we now wait to see what the outcome of the pandemic will be on our current salaries. Indeed, it was only by government wage subsidy and advertising revenue that we have survived until now.

There is a very timely piece by Conor Brady in the Irish Times on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January, in which he discusses the future funding mechanism of the print media.

He talks about the creation of a fund or a series of funds that could provide ongoing support for journalists in their training and development. I will add to that by saying that a fund should be set up to provide for the transition to digital media, and the employment of new young journalism graduates with new media expertise to complement existing news teams. That, combined with Mr Brady's suggestion of some sort of upskilling for existing journalists, could help the situation.

At the moment, if nothing is done, I fear very much for the future of local media, and a career that I have devoted a great deal to, the majority enjoyable, but now looking so uncertain.

There is very little to disagree with in Conor Brady's piece. I am going to finish this submission by including it here (and also, following it, details of an interesting initiative launched by Facebook last year).

**Conor Brady: Funding journalism is a good idea, but what is the best way to do it?**

***Journalists could benefit from State financial support for training and development***

Resources for investigative journalism should be “ring-fenced,” Taoiseach Micheál Martin told Colm Keena recently in this newspaper, outlining the task of the Commission on the Future of Media, chaired by Prof Brian MacCraith. The suggestion has been floated before. But what the Taoiseach then added has not been articulated previously by any major political figure.

“Journalists need to be better paid,” he declared. “Young people in college who aspire to be a journalist need to have a clear, meaningful pathway before them.”

The reality is that young men and women now aiming to make their livelihood in the news media are, for the most part, facing into careers that will offer them short-term contracts, poor pay, unpredictable work schedules and not many opportunities for personal development. Even within the big national newspaper groups and broadcasters, work is increasingly casualised.

Editors are under pressure to choose content that costs less to generate: celebrity gossip rather than hard news

Formerly solid news organisations are now struggling because the internet has destroyed their business model. Publishers and broadcasters have cut back on quality controls. The sub-editor is almost extinct. Editors are under pressure to choose content that costs less to generate: celebrity gossip rather than hard news; polemic rather than researched analysis.

But the Taoiseach’s suggestion on the funding of investigate journalism throws up immediate questions. Who would decide which topics or subjects or news organisations, or indeed, individual journalists, should be designated for support? What happens when an investment of time, money and energies yields no result? How does one differentiate between the work of a team of researchers and, for example, the results achieved by a freelancer who is simply brilliant at what he or she does and who has the knack of uncovering scandal?

Any funding here would be desirable. But devising a working model for the process would not be easy. So if the commission, due to report by next summer, is to take the Taoiseach's views on board, it is going to have to do some radical thinking.

It is possible to conceive of some sort of standing committee or authority that would adjudicate on funding applications. But any such body would operate in a most unenviable space. Inevitably there would be winners and losers. Disappointed applicants would challenge decisions. Claims of bias, favouritism and discrimination would come thick and fast.

If Prof MacCraith's Commission is to respond to Mr Martin's proposal, it has to find ways to channel funding to media organisations and to practitioners whose journalism is serious, researched and issues-focused. But the greater challenge is to take up the Taoiseach's wider concerns about the career of journalism. It has to be restored as a calling that can offer reasonable security, adequate pay and career development opportunities to its entrants. Too many bright and idealistic young people are walking past it or out of it, knowing that most of the jobs likely to present themselves offer none of these. They are putting their skills to work in public relations, media consultancy, IT and other areas where they can be more sure of making a solid livelihood.

There are a number of ways in which the financial health of the news media could be improved. No doubt the commission will be examining the initiative announced by the Australian government last month, requiring Google and Facebook to start paying news organisations for their content.

Few media companies make any investment in training for their employees

It would certainly be a game-changer. But there are other options. For the newspapers, the first and most obvious step would be to remove VAT, bringing the industry into line with practice elsewhere in Europe. For the broadcasters, the first necessary step is to replace the licence fee with a universal media charge.

Costs and damages

The punitive costs of litigation constitute an enormous burden. Irish publishers and journalists operate in a much more punitive legal environment than their counterparts in the UK or in the EU. Meanwhile costs and damages in the courts here generally dwarf those elsewhere. To add insult to injury, those who publish

harmful or defamatory content on social media are effectively beyond the law, although this is changing.

One option that could be considered to help underpin serious journalism would be the creation of a fund or series of funds that could provide ongoing support for journalists in their training and development as their careers advance. There are many third-level institutions in Ireland offering qualifications in journalism and media studies. But few media companies make any investment in training for their employees. And while journalists often refer to their “professional” standards and practices, the truth is that once they get their basic degree, few take any further training.

Just as grants and bursaries can often enable those in the arts or in sport to sustain themselves, financial supports for training and professional development could enable journalists to stay in journalism rather than having to go elsewhere, while also enhancing their work-skills. Supports could cover training in everything from ethical decision-making, to law, to languages, to interview techniques, to research methodologies, to resource management. The list can go on. Would it be too cynical to suggest that grammar, punctuation and spelling might also be useful for some?

Society, as Mr Martin says, needs “independent, free media that is well-resourced, not patronised by government, but which has a mechanism that enables the funding of the media into the future.” It also needs journalists who are continuously trained as their careers advance, who can develop their professionalism, who are better-equipped to question and improve on their own standards and performance.

A scheme along the lines proposed here could help deliver on both sets of objectives.

*Conor Brady is honorary Professor of Journalism at NUIG and chair of CALIBER AI. He was editor of The Irish Times 1986-2002.*

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## **Facebook invests \$3 million in new European Journalism COVID-19 Support Fund**

*Applications open on Thursday 16th April for news organisations in Ireland and across Europe to apply for COVID-19 funding*

The news industry in Ireland is working under extraordinary conditions to keep people informed during the COVID-19 pandemic. People are turning to local journalists more than ever for critical information on how to keep their friends, families and communities safe, during these challenging times.

Today the Facebook Journalism Project (FJP) and the European Journalism Centre (EJC), a non-profit organisation, are announcing the European Journalism COVID-19 Support Fund to help journalists in Europe to support their businesses and ongoing COVID-19 reporting in local communities.

With \$3 million invested in the European Journalism COVID-19 Support Fund by Facebook, the EJC will direct emergency funds to small and mid-sized news organisations and journalists across Europe who need it most. Grants can be used for initiatives such as launching a dedicated COVID-19 newsletter, lifting a paywall, hiring more freelance journalists, or creating community groups, local-focused data reporting, online events – as well as basic continuation of work.

Commenting on the launch of the support fund, Adam Thomas, Director at the European Journalism Centre said; "All over Europe, local news organisations are facing a battle for survival. Deeply affected by the commercial impact of COVID-19, journalists are providing essential coverage with minimal resources. Without urgent support, local and community media will be unable to fight misinformation and inform citizens. The European Journalism COVID-19 Support Fund is designed to protect journalists who are working closely with their communities during this crisis."

Applications for the European Journalism COVID-19 Support Fund will open on Thursday 16 April. To get updates on when and how to apply for the grants, subscribe via [europeanjournalism.fund](https://europeanjournalism.fund). There are three types of funding:

**Engagement Fund:** €5,000 grants to help local media engage communities and their conversations with short-term or one-off COVID-19-related initiatives. For example, these grants may be used to launch a dedicated newsletter, create a community group, undertake local fact-checking, engage in community data reporting, produce short-run print material, or set-up online events. Freelancers and/or groups of freelancers may also apply.

**Emergency Fund:** €10,000 and €25,000 grants focused on providing specific financial support to address immediate and critical business needs. These grants may be used to replace lost sales revenue, fund alternative print distribution, cover key organisational costs, and hire freelancers to replace staff during illness.

**Innovation Fund:** €50,000 grants to facilitate innovative and useful technological journalistic coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic or technical news organisation projects with potential to scale. These grants may be used to facilitate collaboration between local publishers, for in-depth data journalism projects, to organise help within communities, to fill local TV coverage gaps, and to develop apps to engage local communities.

To hear more about this initiative as it evolves, please [sign up for the Facebook Journalism Project newsletter](#) and visit the announcement at [Facebook Journalism Project](#).



[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #789

[REDACTED]



This is my submission to the Media Commission.

I apologise if I might have wandered off the topic in places but I have made as honest a submission as I can make. Just a small bit of background on myself: I am almost 60 and in a professional job. I consider myself a conservative with regard to politics, a Christian and feel that the concerns and problems experienced by men are not been addressed in mainstream media. Nothing in the following is a personal criticism of anybody but I do think that Irish media is in a very bad place.

- Question 1 How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?

The Government should in no way develop and support our public service media, commonly known as the mainstream media as it currently operates. The government should immediately cease all support for mainstream media as journalists are no longer trusted by the public at large. This mistrust has been attributed to, we are told by the mainstream media, the onset of social media. This is not the case. Journalists are no longer fearless advocates of the truth, if they ever were, but rather a cohort of people who value their own opinions very highly and have no problem inserting these opinions in their pieces. They are also misrepresentative of the people at large, and seem primarily to be liberals educated to a college degree and often beyond. I could mention hundreds of articles and broadcasts here but have no desire to refer to individual journalists and broadcasters.

Alarmingly public service media are not interested in democracy if it doesn't coincide with their world views. For instance, American people voted for Mr Trump in 2016 and also for Brexit. These votes were not respected by Irish journalists or broadcasters, in fact quite the opposite. Voters were dismissed as either stupid, misinformed or both. Both votes can be seen as a mini-rebellion against the ruling classes, which include the media. Many of the articles on President Trump descended into disgusting personal attacks on his appearance and inability to use big words. If these same articles had been written about a woman dismissal would have been instant.

Mainstream media are vehemently against social media as it provides a platform for other views contradictory to the views that journalists and presenters have held unchallenged for many years. Mainstream media in Ireland is a safe space for liberals and feminists to air their views, often with agendas at work. Should mainstream media be agenda led, or should it provide facts? Personal agendas and agendas that cater exclusively for one sector of society, for example feminists, are detrimental to society at large. There is a multiplicity of women's organisations in this country and they use the media as a tool (a willing and unquestioning tool) to fulfil their agendas. Feminists are not interested in poor girls that work in shops and supermarkets but are interested in increasing their already high levels of pay and of taking over elite jobs through the use of quotas. However, quotas don't apply to the many lucrative areas of the public service where women dominate. The media are also predominately anti-Christian and nothing

appears out of bounds, whereas other religions are not subjected to the same vitriolic attacks. Most priests and nuns are and have been very good people, but to read the papers and listen to the media you would think the opposite. Another example of mainstream media abusing their powers to distort perceptions. There is no balance or fairness at work here.

The point I am making here is that diverse opinion is not catered for. Quite the opposite. Look at the voices that are silenced (often through sacking). George Hook was one of the best broadcasters of our time or any time and was sacked for having an opinion that I have heard uttered by many mothers, even on local radio stations. Kevin Myers has also been silenced as he dared to criticise the feminist meme that is prevalent in the liberal media. John Walters is another voice silenced, because he has the temerity to fight for fathers and unborn children. Ivan Yates is the latest, we are told it was his decision to leave Newstalk, but nobody believes that. Suffice it to say someone that would challenge, albeit only half-heartedly the agendas, is gone, and no longer do we hear the words snowflakes etc on Newstalk. These are examples of the thought police in action where only one view is tolerated. I have focussed here on feminism, but it could just as easily be climate change or 'woke' politics, to give an example of where how one cohort of society is allowed dominate our airwaves. Some issues that are totally ignored by the media, which in an era of victimhood is difficult to explain, are fathers not having access to their own children, the criminalisation of men in society, rural loneliness and deprivation by successive governments, the rights of unborn children etc etc.

Question 2 How should public service media be financed sustainably?

The public should no longer support public service media by means of a licence fee, government handouts or any other means. If they are not self-sufficient it means the public have tuned out and are unwilling to cough up. Why should the public pay when, for example, in RTE the number of people earning salaries over £100, 000 is scandalous? Why should they when only a liberal elite viewpoint is been conveyed and any dissenters lose their job? Why should they when partisan opinions form the basis of most articles and facts are only a device to be manipulated with? Why should they when men, especially white men, are demonised and children, especially unborn children are dismissed? Why should they when everything from a local flood, to a sunny day, to a rainy day, to a black and white cow, is being blamed on climate change?

Question 3: Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?

I suspect that the reason for the inclusion of this question is so that submissions can be used as a tool to regulate social media.

Finally, I am college educated to degree level, and I imagine, that most of the people who make submissions will be the same or even higher educated. This, of course, immediately dismisses a huge cohort of society from being involved. I have read the questions and sub-questions and some of them took some comprehending.





Record #792

Stephen Corrigan



To the Future of Media Commission,

My name is Stephen Corrigan and I have been working as a news journalist in a regional newspaper in Galway for the past four years.

For the purposes of this submission, I am writing in the main of the situation in regional print media, with some reference to the broader situation of all media in Ireland.

The arrival of Covid-19 in 2020 has brought into focus a situation in print media that has been developing for the best part of 20 years. With declining readership, a collapse in advertising and following years of cuts and redundancies, the pandemic's arrival simply deepened a crisis that was already raging.

The work of this Commission is welcome and will hopefully present our industry with a blueprint of what is required to ensure the longevity of public service media long into the future.

To the forefront of the Commission's work should be a focus on the journalists, the very people who provide that public service. While they perform as part of news organisations, it is their work that shines light where there is darkness and their commitment to holding power to account that gives media its *raison d'être*.

As a result of Covid-19, we have seen a renewed understanding of the importance of independent and impartial journalism, based in truth and committed to facts.

Over the past 20 years, there has been a dearth of investment in editorial content, with news organisations opting to cut back against a background of falling revenues. This, in turn, has led to a stagnation of pay for journalists and, in many cases, a decline in pay. This is an untenable situation which the Commission should seek to address.

Investment is crucial. While I will discuss below some of the crucial work carried out by journalists, none of this would be possible in the future without a renewed impetus on adequately funding news gathering. Our media is utterly dependent on advertising and it is a funding model that is no longer fit for purpose. With the arrival of social media and online advertising, payment for advertising space in traditional media has become an exception rather than the rule.

This has led to the cutting to the bone of newsrooms in regional newspapers, increasing stress levels among journalists and demoralised staff hit hard by declining working conditions. It is imperative that the Commission remembers that without a committed and enthusiastic body of journalists, public service media ceases to exist.

At the core of any proposal to fund media into the future should be the enhancement of workers' rights and the proper treatment of the people we are reliant upon to fund a service which nobody can dispute is absolutely required for the functioning of our democracy.

In terms of the work done by local media which undoubtedly falls under heading of public service media, I will detail the two areas which my own work is most closely related to: local authority meetings and courts. While there are countless areas that exemplify why local newspapers are part of the fabric of society, whether it's the coverage of sports, the arts, community work or local identity, but I will limit my contribution to these two particularly important functions.

Local newspapers have covered court for centuries and remain the only news outlets that provide broad coverage of courts at all levels, from District right up to the High Court – and even the Supreme Court on occasion.

Key to the success of our democracy and the proper functioning of courts is that justice must be seen to be done. Court proceedings cannot and must not be allowed to take place in darkened rooms, behind closed doors. No replacement has ever been found for the vital service local newspapers provide in court coverage, and I am confident in saying that it is unlikely that there ever will be an adequate replacement.

In my capacity as a regional reporter, I regularly cover Coroner's Court – once a staple for newspapers that, as a result of shrinking newsrooms and increasing workloads, has become a rarity in any media outlet.

Without getting bogged down in detail, a recent case which I covered involved an alleged assault that was believed locally to have led to a man's death. Following a post mortem, that was proven not to have been the case. As I reported this in a local newspaper, the rumour and injustice that had plagued an individual's life was removed. It is cases like this that highlight the importance of covering Coroner's Court, and yet I am the only reporter ever present to hear those inquests.

It is one of many areas that have suffered because of cutbacks in news gathering. Another such area is the coverage of local authority meetings. In Galway, there are two local authorities, the County and City Councils. Both meet on a monthly basis; they hold Special Meetings regularly; there are several Strategic Policy Committee meetings held monthly; and each Municipal District holds as monthly meeting.

Add to this Regional Health Forum Meetings and Joint Policing Committees and you are left with quite literally dozens of meetings every month, all of which are of huge public interest and all of which require coverage as part of our public service media remit.

But, because of cuts to newsrooms, editors are now forced to be selective in what is covered, left with a staff that is far too small to cover such a workload. And as a result, society suffers.

If you examine that list, those are the meetings at which our planning laws are set; they are where hundreds of millions of euros for the services we all use every day are allocated; they highlight inadequacies in our health service; and they report on the crime in our area. It should never be the case that those meetings happen

without the eye of a journalist on them, and yet we have reached a situation where that is now the case in far too many instances.

With all that, a solution must be found. The NUJ has recommended a Government-funded Journalism Foundation on numerous occasions. I believe this would go a long way in addressing that problem.

My personal belief is that if local newspapers were allocated funding on the basis that they would fulfil those crucial public services of covering court and local authorities, it would not only make for a more certain future in the industry, but also address a significant problem where a lack of coverage exists.

However, referring back to my earlier sentiment about the importance of those who provide the news, no organisation that has recently cut pay or made staff redundant should not be eligible for such a scheme. Likewise, they should not be permitted to do the same for some period after such funding is received. Every effort should also be made to ensure that companies in receipt of State monies are bound to recognise their staff's trade unions. You will find that those outlets that seek to treat their staff with disregard and who fail to meet the demands of public service journalism are often the ones who refuse to engage with their staff through their union representatives on a meaningful basis.

Social media is one area of growth that has directly contributed to the further deepening crisis in media. Their usage of traditional media's content without any recompense for those producing it is damaging the sales of newspapers, while also undermining their ability to secure advertising.

Couple this with the vast amounts of misinformation and conspiracy theories that social media not only generates but also actively enables, and you go some way in understanding just why the crisis in traditional media is worsening at such a rapid rate.

Tech giants must be taxed and that tax must be ring-fenced to support reliable and independent media in Ireland. There are no two ways about this. Without forcing these corporation to pay for the material that they gouge from news outlets, there will soon be very little for them take.

While it may be beyond the Irish Government to tackle this, it is certainly not beyond the European Union, and our Government should be among those to take a stance that tech giants must pay for what they take through a windfall tax, similar to that which has been introduced in other countries such as the UK.

I will conclude by discussing new entrants to journalism. I graduated from university in 2017, the first in my family to go to third level. My class in college had no ethnic minorities and very few from low socioeconomic backgrounds. That is an appalling fact for an industry that should represent its consumers more than any other.

And why? Because journalism as an industry offers very little to those who are seeking to better their financial situation. For me, it meant selecting a career that

offered no certainty then, and after four years working as a journalist, offers possibly even less today.

The Commission must seek to find ways to make journalism an attractive career for people of all backgrounds. By ensuring that big tech is taxed and that income is ring-fenced; by funding newspapers to cover local authority meetings and courts; by ensuring employers in this industry pay their staff adequately; and by finding a funding model that is sustainable, good-quality and independent media can thrive.

The sad reality is that, for many existing journalists, despite their commitment to their work and passion for what they do, the lack of certainty has left them looking for a way out. We have already lost far too many good journalists and we stand to lose many more, and to add insult to injury, by failing to act, we will stifle many more from every pursuing it as a career.

The Commission will likely examine many funding models, including crowd-sourcing, but I would put to the Commission that while this may be a viable model for one-off stories, or a series of stories, it does not give journalists certainty; it relies heavily on people wanting to read/hear about something rather than needing to; and it risks missing stories that might not set the world on fire, but could be hugely in the public interest.

State supports will be required, in my opinion. In order to retain those who currently make news and to attract other to do the same, certainty is a necessity. Newspapers remain the only media in Ireland to receive no State funding and that situation must be addressed. Whether it's done through a re-organisation of the distribution of the Licence Fee or through an entirely separate fund, it is ultimately what will be required to prevent the collapse of countless print titles that have served their readers for centuries.

We cannot afford to lose them and we cannot afford not to invest in the future of media in this country.

Thank you for taking the time to read this submission.



Record #793

Colm Ward



## Submission to the Future of Media Commission Public Consultation

January 8 2021

The regional newspaper sector has been experiencing significant decline for several years. This has been further exacerbated by the COVID 19 crisis which has seen dozens of skilled journalists being furloughed or made redundant in the past year. Urgent intervention is required if the future of this essential public service is to be protected.

Regional newspapers have been, and continue to be, an essential component of Irish life, providing coverage of important events and issues that would be otherwise ignored by national media and giving a voice to communities and minority groups that may not otherwise be heard. Reporting by locally-based journalists on courts, local authority proceedings, public health and other matters of vital public interest are an essential tool in keeping their communities informed about important issues and in holding public bodies to account. Many of the most important national news stories in recent decades have had their origins in regional media outlets, and it is these same outlets which have provided a training ground for many of our leading national and international journalists.

The past decade has seen a continuous decline in the readership of local newspapers. This has been driven by a number of factors, including increased competition from digital media and by changing audience habits. The decline has in many cases been exacerbated by lack of investment in news gathering operations as individual titles are bought up by large media owners with little or no connection to the local market. This has led to wave after wave of restructuring and redundancies across the sector with the result that now most regional titles employ just a fraction of the journalists they did even ten years ago. Despite the sterling efforts of those journalists and editors who remain, this has inevitably led to a decline in quality which in turn has fed the vicious cycle of falling readership and reduced advertising revenues.

But, this decline is not inevitable. There are steps which can be taken to reverse it, and maintain a strong regional media sector. These include the following:

- Establish a fund to support regional journalism, similar but at larger scale to that which exists for broadcasters through the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland. Such a fund should be accessible by individual journalists and media organisations seeking to carry out reporting on matters of public importance and interest. Funding for this could be provided by a universal broadcasting/media charge which could replace the existing television licence which is no longer fit for purpose.
- Provide financial support for individual journalists and media organisation for investment and training in new technology. Many regional news organisations have moved online with varying degrees of success but they are fighting a losing battle against the tech giants such as Google and Facebook on what is far from a level playing field. Funding for investment in new technology could be funded by a tax on the revenues generated by these large digital media organisations, many of which have their European bases in Ireland.
- Incentive measures such as these must be supported by a strong regulator with a remit to ensure organisations availing of such funding comply with employment law and sign up to ethical guidelines, such as the Press Council of Ireland's Code of Practice.

- Finally, the Commission should support the introduction of a formal media literacy programme at second level, to encourage greater understanding of how media outlets work and equip young people with the tools to become engaged, informed media consumers.

Local newspapers have long played a central role in Irish life, informing, enlightening and entertaining communities both urban and rural throughout the country. Through the work of generations of committed and professional journalists, they have remained a central pillar of our democratic society. While their continued survival is under threat as never before, it is not too late to intervene and help preserve – and develop - their important role. A strong, independent regional media sector can continue to act as a bulwark against fake news and to provide a platform for the kind of reasoned, informed conversation that is essential to a functioning society.

I thank the Commission for considering this submission.

Kind Regards

Colm Ward BE, H.Dip (Applied Communications)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #794  
[REDACTED]



As someone who has been out of Ireland from 1991-2018, spending time in academic life in the US and US, I must say I have been disappointed with the quality of public media content in Ireland since my return.

I am usually a little doubtful of the motivations for such commissions and consultations, as there is a strong risk of these being tick-box exercise to provide cover for poor performance later. Also, the narrow field of members in this commission (I do not recognize any of them as being particularly representing my life) does not bode well for this exercise; where all protected characteristics of the public represented? I wonder whether a stray poll would show significant diversity of their views on let's say the last several referenda in Ireland? No doubt these 10 individuals will find it hard to see the issue of public media beyond the perspectives of their own personal lenses.

I guess I need to be careful not to compare media systems in a small country, like Ireland, with so few (and hugely over-exposed) main movers & shakers that appear rather narrow in their schools of thought; essential inhabiting the same left-leading socially-liberal terrain), versus the two aforementioned jurisdictions that have long had diversity of thought in their TV, Radio and printed media, and which are 'kept honest' via constant challenge to groupthink.

My experience so far in the last 2 years of returning home to Ireland is that the content and quality of Irish media, especially of RTE TV and radio, reflects an echo-chamber inhabited by a rather jaded elite. I think the significant drift away from 'consuming' mainstream Irish media content has in part been largely driven by the sheer narrowness of the media agenda in Ireland. This is particularly true for the 35y+ age group, who like me now access daily content more often from BBC, Sky News and others instead of from Irish media, which has become all too monochrome.

**Question 1. How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?**

*How should Government develop and support the concept and role of public service media and what should its role in relation to public service content in the wider media be?*

This should move away from current assumption that the people need only hear content from the minds of a middle-class, socially/politically left-leaning, anti-religious, anti-tradition, hyper-secular liberal self-styled elite. After all, these characteristics are not 'written in the stars', so a government that claims to represent the people in general should foster a much boarder range of perspectives. Also, if that were to happen, the public would want to be convinced of the bona fides of this decision, so that it was not viewed as lip service.

*What can be learned from the evolution of public service media over the last decade?*

We have replaced on orthodoxy with another i.e. from a restricted hyper-Catholic approach to a full pendulum swing to another equally stultifying orthodoxy of hyper-liberalism, anti-Catholic, left-leaning politics and cult of the individual.

*What systems may be required to support and sustain public service content, e.g. high quality, independent journalism, in an increasingly competitive and consolidated market?*

Better standards, which are more completely and consistently met (note recent debacles) are now needed. There needs to be inbuilt sanity checkers in all editorial processes, and to properly pull up failings and transgressions (comparison here between RTE and BBC is embarrassing). There is a real impression of arrogance, hubris (and for me commonly gombeenism) in those running the show,



I feel that the horse has probably bolted on this one (in part due to the jaundiced views of the many currently forced (upon fine/jail) subscribers. But urgent issue is to move funds from RTE to other players in this market, as RTE has in my view become obese, lazy, arrogant and hubristic.

*What opportunities exist to develop and implement business model and organisational changes within the public service broadcasters (RTÉ and TG4)?*

To reach all the Island, including Unionists in the North. I would like to see TG4 further developed (appears to me to be good value for money), as I feel there is a genuine hunger for education and entertainment through the medium of the Irish language. RTE (and the State in general) has had a dismal record in driving Irish language education – could we not even have had the 9 o'clock news readers wish us Happy Christmas or Happy New year in Irish once in every 12 months – extraordinary stuff.

How might content commissioning, including by RTÉ, TG4 and the BAI Sound and Vision scheme, be adjusted/improved/reformed to better achieve public service aims?

Editorial control of commissioning needs to be maintained by RTE and not simply as a platform for content commissioned from others with often dubious consequences. Clearer and transparent tendering process (at national level) needed or explained to us if also in place.

*How should public funding or tax reliefs be apportioned to Public Service Content providers?*

I think there is a real perception of bloated salaries in RTE – this makes it difficult for viewers to feel comfortable with the licence fee, which becomes even more galling when the highest earners do not reflect their personal values to any significant extent.

*What does the shift in advertising revenues towards big tech firms mean for the future of print, online and broadcast media?*

This was inevitable, as people drifted away from the likes of RTE to streaming and web based content. Print is likely to finish; when I moved back home I tried several broadsheets, but in the end felt that they were constantly editorially-ranting at me, rather than reporting the news. Felt treated like a child or a blank-brained adult needing their proselytizing (another example of replacing on old orthodoxy with a new one). I don't bother with print media, and can't see myself returning to that format now. In summary – move away for editorializing and treating viewers/readers like they need to be converted to something; a misplaced missionary zeal.

*What role is there for alternative funding models for Public Service Content providers – voluntary, cooperative, crowdsourcing, subscription?*

Funding needs to be formulated in a less irritating manner. Could be in a VAT model; sector by sector model (i.e. sport vs current affairs vs entertainment) where one could pay for the content you used.

Question 3. How should media be governed and regulated?

*What regulatory changes at EU or global level might impact on the governance of public service media in the period ahead?*

With fairness and low/no bias – even perception of bias. At the moment it appears a bit like a vanity project of those few king/queen-pins in charge. This is probably tricky though in a small country like Ireland, and even more tricky when that country is essentially a city-state (Dublin-centric). I would strongly argue against the current drift toward the ‘non-platforming’ and the ‘cancel-culture’. Voltaire’s view on right to speak and be heard, however displeasing to some, needs to be central. Purposeful offense though cannot be dressed up as satire though. Otherwise such ‘thought police’ risk driving dissent and subversion.

What challenges are posed to a vibrant, independent public service media by increasing consolidation / declining plurality of ownership in the Irish market?

I would argue that the premise of this question may not be correct. I do not see a ‘vibrant, independent public service media’ currently in Ireland, but rather a rather clonal, narrow-viewed monolith, with sometimes sanctimonious actors. Diversity of thought appears to be allowed if only within increasingly narrow goalposts of groupthink.

Are current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media adequate?

No, but I am not a particular fan of a state media. If we have to have a state media service, then bias and fairness should however have a regulatory framework, and when found wanting there needs to be real consequences. I find myself sometimes embarrassed by RTE reporters’ questioning style that appears to be vainglorious and hubristic, but in the end sadly gombeenish (case in point [REDACTED] [REDACTED] poor questioning style that reduced engagement of both an EU guest and the minister).



Record #795

Bryan Mullen



I feel that the programming put forward by RTE is biased against Christianity. It became very apparent to me during the last referendum on the removal of the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment.

This could be due to the pool of journalists you have employed. Which raises a question on why there isn't a better split of views. But that isn't the question. The question is why aren't your journalists able to give both sides of the story on the likes of the News or to both sides in an audience participation debate?

I lived in Australia for a period and got some amusing looks when I went looking for a TV licence. I rarely watch RTE and wonder why the Government insists I pay for it. If the Government want a National Broadcaster then let that be debated. At present I would vote against.

Bryan Mullen

██████████  
██████████

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #796

[REDACTED]



In my opinion the media in Ireland does not reflect the lived reality of a lot of citizens. Historically, print media has been geared towards certain audiences, mainly broken down along an outdated class system.

As citizens are forced to pay a t.v. licence, at the very least the money should be distributed to other broadcasters, other than RTE. Their reporting of current affairs is very one sided. Their programming is poor to mediocre. For example, The Late Late show, although revered by many, promotes and reinforces the status quo in Ireland. On the RTE online news site, one will often find articles about Ryan Tubridy. Whilst there is nothing wrong with Ryan Tubridy, why is his opinion on anything newsworthy in itself? He is a t.v. presenter working for RTE, being promoted by RTE and citizens are paying for his salary and the promotion of his opinions.

Apparently this week, Ryan Tubridy was going to have a small number of people being vaccinated on The Late Late show. This is an example of the state agenda i.e. mass vaccination being promoted on state owned t.v. I am not anti vaccinations but I do not appreciate the fact that RTE, the HSE and the government think that if Ryan Tubridy promotes vaccination on a t.v. show that somehow that will allay the fears of Irish citizens around vaccinations. The people who are fearful of vaccinations and who are anti government are those on the periphery of society who probably do not watch RTE or The Late Late show. They are people who want to be informed in a non biased way and make their own choices. They are people who are largely used to being ignored by successive governments and absolutely do not feel like we are #all in this together. Just because some marketing or communication person puts a hash tag in front of a statement does not make that statement true or palatable to everyone. It is not good to have state owned t.v. promoting government policies in any democracy. At the very least, those with alternative views should be given as much air time.

The RTE online news site will often have articles promoting the profile of some politicians. Why are some politicians promoted over others? Along with raising the profile of certain politicians, there is also a cancel culture narrative creeping in to mainstream media in Ireland. This was very apparent during the last referendum. The Abortion referendum has divided this country. While everyone is entitled to their own opinion and can choose to use their vote how they see fit, those who voted no were underrepresented at each stage. The legacy of the Abortion referendum is one of intolerance. People who voted no are seen as religious nuts or conservative people who haven't moved with the times, irrelevant, outdated and soon to be consigned to the dustbin of history. Their voice is not represented.

The recent reference in a new years eve programme on RTE that completely insulted those of faith in this country as well as making little of the serious nature of rape is unbelievable. Can Irish citizens have a say as to where their money is spent? I understand that RTE eventually removed the offending clip from their player but it should never have been broadcast in the first place. It is becoming clear that if you are an Irish Catholic at the moment, you are not respected by the national broadcaster. Ireland prides itself on being the land of a thousand welcomes. RTE would not dream of insulting anyone based on skin colour, sexual orientation etc because it is illegal. RTE would not promote any anti Islamic content and quite rightly so as it is also illegal to discriminate on grounds of religious beliefs.

The national broadcaster, RTE, supports the agenda of those in power. The media in Ireland is alienating a significant portion of the population and is helping to silence those with alternative views. RTE and other media outlets need to be less biased and more inclusive. There are hundreds of thousands of people in this country who for generations have not been represented politically and they have been ignored by the media. There is systemic violence towards people from lower class backgrounds who do not possess any social capital. There is systemic violence towards people who have alternative perspectives and views on life in Ireland. It is time for a change.



Record #798



"Hi,

*I'm not happy about the freedom of speech being cut from any means possible.*

*Freedom of expressing any point of view have to respected.*

*If you don't agree with what other people say, it ok, but censor that person and don't allow that person to say and put a label of fake on what they are saying is bullying, slithery and low because the counter argument should be with other facts, not with name calling.*

*A free society is build strong with freedom of speech and NO CENSORSHIP.*

*The people is smart enough to decide what is real and what is not real. The people do not need a third party to think for them.*

*Freedom has to be the Centre of a society. Otherwise everybody will live in fear of what to say or what not to say. And fear is crippling.*

*Free speech, freedom, liberty.*

*Those are pillars. Everything else is on the top of those pillars and those pillars should not be destroyed by anybody, or the entire society will crumble.*

*And YOU are part of the society, whether you like it or not.*

*So, start acting like a civil reasonable person and forget about censoring anybody that does not agree with*

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

Record #799

[REDACTED]



## Question 2. How should public service media be financed sustainably?

- What is the best model for future funding of public service media in Ireland? What approach best supports independent editorial oversight while achieving value for money and delivering on public service aims?
- What opportunities exist to develop and implement business model and organisational changes within the public service broadcasters (RTÉ and TG4)?
- How might content commissioning, including by RTÉ, TG4 and the BAI Sound and Vision scheme, be adjusted/improved/reformed to better achieve public service aims?
- How should public funding or tax reliefs be apportioned to Public Service Content providers?
- What does the shift in advertising revenues towards big tech firms mean for the future of print, online and broadcast media?
- What role is there for alternative funding models for Public Service Content providers – voluntary, cooperative, crowdsourcing, subscription?

With regard to your questions above I believe it doesn't address the fundamental question around funding and in my view the *raison d'être* of your consultation.

Should we make people who don't have a television set pay for the content of the state broadcaster?

I believe that ultimately, your consultation is simply an exercise to move from funding via the licence fee to a broadcasting tax which will be non-voluntary. This is fundamentally unjust and I believe it should not be done.

I consider it worse if the State should mandate that we pay for the output of private newspapers and other media that we do not agree with (or are openly hostile to the interests of Irish people) via a compulsory household charge.

This direction is most unfortunate as you will be forcing individuals on very moderate incomes to pay for services that they not only do not use but feel is unfair and biased in their output.

In my case I got rid of my tv many years ago as I believe the state broadcaster is not an honest broker and aims to be a vehicle for guided social change (which I do not agree with) via propaganda and psychological methods and produces output that denigrates my historic ethnic and religious identity.

There is a place for a charge but the individual should be able to control how his money is spent on the content that is desired or at least it should be related to the nation's history and culture that would be in the common good to preserve or other educational

content related to our cultural legacy and heritage (which might not be feasible privately).



Record #800

Maidhc Ó Féinneadha



A Chara,

Ní chreidim gur cheart comparáid a dhéanamh idir Raidió na Gaeltachta agus staisiúin raidió naisiúnta ná áitiúla eile mar nach bhfuil aon chomparáid idir an tsheirbhís a chuirean sé ar fáil.

Cuireann Raidió na Gaeltachta seirbhís Ghaeilge ar fáil do phobal labhartha na Gaeilge agus na Gaeltachta go naisiúnta agus go hidirnaisiúnta a bhfuil blas an chultúir, agus an dúchais ghaelaigh air.

Is cinnte gur spreag Raidió na Gaeltachta an meas a bhí ag daoine go leor ar a gcultúr agus ar a ndúchas san am a caitheadh agus fós sa lá atá inniu ann thríd an tseirbhís a chuireann said ar fáil.

Teastaíonn an spreagadh sin anois níos mó ná riamh mar gheall ar an mbrú atá ag teacht ó na meáin shoisialta agus formhór acu i mBéarla.

Ta infheistíocht dá dhéanamh ag an rialtas ar bhealaigh go leor faoi lathair inár dteanga dúchais ó thaobh cursaí pléanála teanga de chomh maith le infheistíocht i gcúrsaí oideachais don óige agus don aosóg.

Teastaíonn ardán ón óige ina mbeidh said in ann a gcuid tallanna a chur os comhair an phobail.

Tá laghdú de idir 30 agus 40% tagtha ar an bhfoireann oibre atá sa raidió le roinnt blianta, cé nár tháinig aon laghdú ar na huaireanta craolachán.

Tá laghdú ollmhór déanta ar an méid cláracha fáisnéise atáthar a dhéanamh, rud a mbeidh an-droch thionchar aige ar na glúnta atá le teach mar go mbeidh an saibhreas béaloidis agus seanchais atá ag an bpobal atá ansin faoi láthair ag dul faoin bhfód leo, muna ndéanfaidh Raidió na Gaeltachta taifead agus caomhnú air.

Le go dtarlóidh sé seo teastaíonn ardú suantasach a chur ar bhuiséad Raidió na Gaeltachta le go mbeidhfear in ann an t-eolas atá fairsing fós i measc an phobail a bhailiú agus a chaomhnú.

Nach truabhéalach an scéal a bheidh le n-insint againn do na glúnta atá le teacht, muna gcuirfidh rialtas na tíre an maoiniú cuí ar fáil le go dtarlóidh sé seo.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #801  
[REDACTED]



Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you regarding the future funding of media in Ireland. As it stands Ireland and RTE will extend the tax that is the TV license to an effective household tax in the proposed forthcoming broadcast tax designed to cover RTE's losses. It's been suggested also that failing print media should be supported with tax payers money.

I do not believe either that the argument that fake news exists, can be a rationale for tax payer funding media outlets that cannot support themselves and do not adequately or in a balanced way, portray the views of many people in Ireland. We are being forced to pay taxes towards programs that openly mock our beliefs and undermine our values as Christians / conservatives.

- RTE make every effort to distance, dismiss or lampoon those with Christian beliefs and in particular catholic beliefs, but not other faith based groups. The failure by RTE to cover the persecution of Christians worldwide, who are the most persecuted faith based group internationally and especially in Nigeria is another case in point.
- The controversy continues over the NYE skit on God raping and impregnating Mary due in part to the refusal by the station to take down the clip on the grounds that it's satire and freedom of speech. This despite everyone knowing that there is no earthly way they would attempt this with another religion [REDACTED]
- The mechanisms in place to deal with unresolved complaints appear meaningless as it now clear that the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, is so biased against catholic beliefs as to make confidence in the system impossible or any comment they may make in the future on the NYE skit for or against, meaningless.
- The BAI, as you know has been funding 'Fantasy Island' which is supposed to be a funny adult cartoon. At the start of each episode, it's stated that an evil priest, Fr Murphy, is trying to drag Ireland back to its God fearing days. He is portrayed as the devil or a vampire, curses, blasphemes, tries to extort money; "All sinners welcome for a fee" and uses black magic in every episode "to drag people back to Church".
- In one episode the trio sent to fight him, see a host / Eucharist suspended in mid air with heavenly music and quip that it's Jesus and that the hosts are being used by the priest to make and sell crisps with a black magic catholic guilt trip spell. In one closing scene the priest is cleaning a mountain of excrement. In another, the heroine Ciara says: "your cheating days are done, priest". Pitched as a project and funded by the BAI.
- The Late Late show has openly mocked the sacrament of confession or had guests on referring to the Eucharist as magic bread.
- While a large number of young adults may have left the Church and do not practice, this does not exempt RTE or the BAI from their oft reported adherence to equality values and their own guidelines to not deliberately provoke offence. It's questionable as to whether this exclusive targeting of one religion to the exclusion of any others would come under the new hate speech legislation.

So we propose defunding of the biased individual media outlets rather than subsidizing them through a national tax. Stop funding the BAI and review its membership. Provide new oversight of the BAI to not engage in discrimination against one faith based group. It cannot be expected to adjudicate on matters as sensitive as the NYE skit, having funded deeply offensive skits of its own.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]



Record #802

Pat Keating



In view of the “comedy” sketch broadcast by RET on New Year’s Eve which was outrageously offensive to Catholics, the requirement on public service broadcasting to be respectful of different views and beliefs needs to be strengthened.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Record #803  
[REDACTED]



Future of Media Commission  
RTE – Defund and Reform

1. RTE describes itself as Ireland's public service broadcaster. However, simply calling yourself 'Ireland's public service broadcaster' does not necessarily mean that you fulfil the criteria to do so. RTE should be not allowed to use the title 'Ireland's public service broadcaster' until it has been assessed and verified as such by an independent body separate to RTE. Such an assessment should be based on how well the organisation fulfils its public service broadcasting remit rather than what the RTE organisation says about itself and its activities.
2. My opinion (and the opinion of a growing number of licence fee payers) is that RTE does not meet the criteria that merit it calling itself Ireland's public service broadcaster. The recent New Year's Eve 'comedy' sketch in which the organisation ridiculed the religious beliefs of Christians is further evidence of how the organisation's institutional culture is contemptuous of a large section of the Irish people. Equally, the mealy mouthed apology whereby the offending piece was retained on the RTE player is evidence of this. If RTE would not behave in such a disrespectful manner towards the beliefs of the followers of other faith groups then why should they feel entitled to behave in that way towards Christians?
3. There is an ingrained cultural bias within RTE which displays a contempt for the values of a large section of the Irish people. RTE is now a media organisation which largely reflects the cultural values of south Dublin where it is based and operates from. As such, the RTE media organisation is part of Ireland's establishment culture.
4. When RTE's television service was set up in 1960, it was a relevant service given the technological realities of that time. However, the world of technology has changed beyond all recognition in the intervening years. The model of a centralized media organisation may have been relevant then but it is not now.
5. On the basis of an outdated public service model, RTE receives about €190m per year in public funding. Even with this massive public funding, RTE is still facing severe financial difficulties. In 2018, the station recorded a loss of €13m – its seventh annual deficit in a decade. Despite this, the organisation continues to pay its celebrity 'talent' Celtic tiger era financial retainers. These

celebrity 'talent' payments have no basis in a labour market given that RTE is in financial difficulties and losing audience share. This is possible only because RTE is a legacy broadcasting organisation which, amongst other things, uses the cover of public service broadcasting to justify its own existence.

6. The public service broadcasting model needs urgent reform. Rather than attempting to devise ways of boosting its income through means such as a mandatory broadcasting levy, serious consideration must now be given to the reform and breakup of RTE. The broadcasting model used by RTE may have been relevant to the Ireland of half a century ago but it has no place in the Ireland of today. Consideration should now be given to a model whereby funding follows public service programming rather than one whereby €190m is handed over in trust to a south Dublin based media organisation in the hope that it will deliver 'public service broadcasting'.



Record #805

Máire-Rós O'Rahilly



It is a fundamental right for people to hold opinions, to have the freedom to receive information and ideas and the freedom to impart information and ideas without interference by public authority. This is stipulated in our constitution (article 10). If any speech is removed, then it is an infringement of this right.

Freedom of speech is one of our fundamental rights. One doesn't have to agree with what another says, but not allowing a person to express themselves and labelling what they are saying as fake or lies is nothing short of an act of tyranny. In a civilised society, any point of view can be counter argued by another with good debating skills allowing all to make up their own minds.

Why suddenly is it not alright to do so? Why should the people be told what to think (or not to think at all)? This reeks of marxism.

The heroes of 1916, of whom I am a proud granddaughter, fought for a free society, not for dystopian regime reminiscent of George Orwell's 1984 or Aldous Huxley's Brave New World.

Where is the Irish backbone? Or is it more, who is funding this agenda?

Just to be clear, I am totally against any kind of censorship concerning freedom of speech



Record #806

Anonymous



2020 has proven itself to be financially brutal for the the media industry, both in Ireland and around the world.

Small to medium-sized media businesses in particular have taken the biggest hit, with State-backed and foreign-owned media organisations taking a much lighter punch.

## **STATE AID**

The argument for state aid for privately-owned media organisations needs to be thoroughly examined before being implemented.

How would the model work? €X per publication, €X per radio station, €X per media organisation etc?

Certainly, funding for the hiring of journalists at local level would be of enormous benefit.

Separately, we must ask if all privately-owned media organisations genuinely require state aid.

Media organisations such as Mediahuis Ireland, Iconic Newspapers, News Group Newspapers and Reach PLC are all foreign-owned publishing companies operating in Ireland. Should the Irish tax-payer be funding these large private enterprises?

## **OWNERSHIP**

Unfortunately, successive Governments and regulatory bodies have failed to ensure that Irish media remains under dedicated ownership.

At present, our biggest-selling Daily and Sunday Newspapers are under foreign ownership (Mediahuis, News Group Newspapers, Reach PLC), with the majority of our local newspapers also under foreign ownership (Iconic Media, Mediahuis).

If we are to have a truly independent press, a halt or break-up will have to be enforced on these.

In May of last year, News Corp shut over one hundred newspapers across Australia with the stroke of a pen. The results of this are yet to be seen, but the consequences will be felt for decades to come.

We don't want to see a similar situation from Australia replicated here. Do we?

## **RTÉ**

The behemoth of Irish broadcasting for more than half a century, RTÉ served the Irish

people well, up until the aggressive growth in streaming services over the past five years.

They have failed to keep up with the technological advances taking place around the world, while continuing to seek state aid.

If the broadcaster is to have any kind of future, a redundancy and restructuring programme should begin immediately.



Record #807



The problem as I see it is that independent journalism has ceased to be a feature of the mainstream media and as a result, the main stream media outlets are the true source of fake news in the western world. One side of any story is presented and counter arguments are simply ignored. There is an absence of intelligent analysis in favour of the party line and political correctness. As a result, I seek my real daily news from well resourced and fair internet media outlets who offer both sides in any argument, who write professionally and have clearly done their homework.

The answer would be to break up the small number of media empires who provide our news, set minimum rates for journalists salaries and reward investigative journalism.



Record #808

Declan O'Loughlin



### **Question 3: How should media be governed and regulated?**

Current legislative and regulatory controls for public service media are not adequate in two specific ways:

- 1) for content not classified as current affairs such as general science, there is no regulation or independent complaints mechanisms (for a topical example, basic science content regarding vaccines);
- 2) complaints mechanisms mainly deal with the good name of an individual and require the consent of the individual. However, this leaves a gap where content quoting an individual cannot be complained as the consent of the individual is required.

A number of concrete issues arise from these gaps, all related to factual content which is not current affairs:

- 1) there is no obligation or accountability for public service media regarding the accuracy of general science/information content which is not current affairs. Whereas accuracy is a key principle of current affairs broadcasting, no such standard applies to “expert” contributions to public service media, errors may go uncorrected and no independent complaints mechanism exists.
- 2) there is no obligation or accountability for public service media to clearly identify the area of expertise of contributors, where contributors are contributing as an “expert”. Contributors can often be introduced simply as “Professor” or “expert” with no title, area of expertise or, in some cases, any foundation for that expertise.
- 3) there is no obligation on public service media to distinguish between comment made in the area of expertise of the contributor and opinion outside the area of expertise of the contributor. This was very evident during the Covid-19 pandemic where Professors of Infectious Diseases, Tropical Medicine, Immunology, Biochemistry and many others commented routinely on public policy and public health matters which lies outside of their area of expertise which is not made clear.
- 4) where an “expert” is misrepresented (title or expertise inflation), there is no complaints mechanism without the consent of the individual. This leaves reporting of “expert” opinion unaccountable, as no complaint can be made about the expert.

In summary, general science and information content is a key part of public service media, and particularly evident during the Covid-19 pandemic, however, this type of broadcast is unregulated and unaccountable with no independent oversight.



[REDACTED]

Record #812

Liam Mac Mathuna

[REDACTED]



**45 Greenfields**

**Rosbrien**

**Limerick**

**V94 XONT**

**Email: bealmill@hotmail.com**

**Tel: (086) 311 4571**

6 January 2021

**The Secretary**

Future of Media Commission

Birmingham Tower West

Dublin Castle

Dublin 2

D02 R866

Dear Sir/Madam

I enclose copies of correspondence, which I submitted to the Board and senior management of RTE, government ministers and TDs during the period from 24 September to 15 November 2019, concerning the future of RTE – the Irish public service broadcaster – and the role of Lyric FM, as part of the 'stable' of RTE radio stations, for consideration by the Commission.

Best regards



Liam Mac Mathuna

*Retired Research & Information Officer (HSE)*

*Encl. / 4*

45 Greenfields  
Rosbrien  
Limerick  
V94 XONT  
Tel: (086) 311 4571  
Email: [bealmill@hotmail.com](mailto:bealmill@hotmail.com)

24 September 2019

Ms. Dee Forbes  
Director-General  
RTE  
Donnybrook  
Dublin 4

**Subject: Threatened Axing of 'RTE Lyric FM' Radio Station**

Dear Ms. Forbes

I refer to RTE's current financial crisis, as outlined by you in an email to RTE staff on 6 September 2019. In the email you indicated that senior management would be conducting a review of all current services, including the viability of retaining all current capital assets. The RTE 1 Prime Time programme of 12 September further indicated that RTE was currently engaged in talks about "cutting deeply into areas it is legally obliged to deliver" and is "considering the future of RTE Lyric FM." (as reported in The Irish Mail on Sunday of 15 September).

I would like to remind you of the response of the former Head of Radio, Helen Shaw, in her 'Twitter' statement of 13 September, that, "As the former Head of Radio, who launched RTE Lyric FM exactly 20 years ago, I can tell you it is a tiny, tiny budget that runs that station and compared to everything else in RTE it boxes way above its weight in output and ambition."

'The Irish Mail on Sunday' further reports that, according to RTE's Annual Reports, the financial amount of the €160 'licence fee' allocated to Lyric FM was just €4.31 in 2018 and €4.47 in 2017. As this is only the 'licence-fee' proportion of the overall RTE annual budget, Helen Shaw appears to be correct in referring to the money allocated annually by RTE to Lyric FM as a "tiny, tiny budget."

RTE Lyric FM provides valued music and arts programming to its dedicated cohort of listeners. The station further provides a highly valued platform for current and upcoming musical and artistic talent in the State. When the station was officially opened exactly 20 years ago the Minister for Arts and the Gaeltacht, Síle de Valera proudly announced that with the development of Lyric FM "RTE had now completed its stable of radio stations." That RTE Lyric FM has twice won the award of 'Best Radio Station' at the World Radio Awards in New York is surely testimony to the high broadcasting standards the station operates on a minimal budget.

**Cont'd./ 2**

The 'Mail on Sunday' further reports statements from 'insiders' within RTE, who indicate that, in their opinion, "the organisation is 'top-heavy' with middle and senior management." They further stated to the newspaper that an undue number of middle managers, who are responsible for the commissioning of independent productions at the station, are superfluous to the needs of the station, especially at a time when it is in a financial crisis.

Instead of axing a valuable programming station, such as 'RTE Lyric FM', why not give serious consideration to an appropriate cut in pay for all senior and middle management at RTE, as well as the pay-cut mooted for RTE's 'top ten' broadcasters? As well, in addition to offering a voluntary redundancy package to staff in order to attempt to reduce staff numbers by the 200-300 indicated in the RTE report of 2019, active consideration may have to be given to engaging deeply with the RTE unions in order to seek agreement to targeted compulsory redundancies among middle management, whose roles are now superfluous to the organisation.

When RTE last engaged in a major cost-cutting exercise senior management axed the five posts in the news division of 'RTE Lyric FM.' It would now, indeed, be a cruel and badly advised irony to axe 'RTE Lyric FM' in the same year that the station's committed and hard-working staff recently celebrated 20 years of valued and commendable broadcasting.

Kind regards

Liam Mac Mathuna

cc. Ms. Moya Doherty, Chairperson, RTE Authority.

Mr. Richard Bruton, Minister for Communications, Climate Change and the Environment.

Ms. Josefa Madigan, Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Director, RTE Lyric FM

45 Greenfields  
Rosbrien  
Limerick  
V94 X0NT  
Tel: (086) 311 4571  
Email: [bealmill@hotmail.com](mailto:bealmill@hotmail.com)

1 November 2019

Ms. Moya Doherty  
Chair  
RTE Board  
Donnybrook  
Dublin 4

**Subject: Proposal re. Sale of RTE Dublin HQ & Relocation of HQ to Galway**

Dear Ms. Doherty

I refer to my letter of 24 September 2019, addressed to Ms. Dee Forbes, concerning RTE's current financial crisis (*see attached copy*).

In today's edition of the *'Irish Independent'* the journalist, Ed Power, penned an article on *'The Future of Television'*. The author cites a study on the future of international media - including the broadcast media - compiled earlier this year by the world-wide accounting firm, *'Deloitte'*. The following are a number of salient extracts from the article:

- (1) "Traditional media concepts are a thing of the past –the entire industry is undergoing fundamental change...The study outlined four plausible scenarios in broadcasting by the end of 2030."
- (2) "The first possible outcome is the advent of a *'Universal Supermarket'*, where streaming services are dominant and we watch our television on demand. There would still be 'local content' – but this would be provided by streaming companies, which will have the technology to cater to every niche and viewing whim."
- (3) "But there is another possible future; where 'content providers', such as the big Hollywood studios and networks, like 'HBO', are calling the shots. Again, it's difficult to see where relative pygmies, such as 'RTE', fit and it is likely the company (RTE) will have to go further than flogging off some extraneous artwork to remain solvent."

Cont'd / 2

- (4) "Could national broadcasters strike back? 'Revenge of the Broadcasters' would be a scenario in which national broadcasters 'developed excellent digital capabilities' and take on 'Netflix', 'Amazon', etc., - head to head. Might 'RTE' stand toe-to-toe with 'Netflix' and 'Amazon', in terms of quality and digital innovation? Possibly – though it's hard to imagine any non-dystopian scenario where this proves the case.
- (5) "However the future plays out, it is clear that big upheavals are on the way. (Current spats)...over the possibility that viewers might soon be able to watch their favourite show at 1.5 times the regular speed... **are merely the tip of the existential iceberg**".

In my previous letter of 24 September I proposed a number of options to assist in resolving, what I understood to be, RTE's short – medium term financial crisis. However, my analysis of the facts, analysis and scenarios outlined in the Deloitte study clearly indicate that, rather than merely facing a short-medium term financial crisis, RTE – as a small media broadcaster on the world stage – the 'National Broadcaster' - **is facing into a strategic existential crisis that in 10 years will threaten its very existence.**

Earlier this year RTE management submitted proposals to government, seeking government approval to an appreciable increase in the TV licence fee, together with an immediate cash injection of €30m. Apart from resolving RTE's financial crisis, in the short-term, it seems that a purpose of these proposals was to enable RTE to strategically develop a secure digital capability, into the future of broadcasting. However, the current government has declined to accede to these proposals. Most political commentators agree presently that a general election in this State will not occur until either the spring or early summer of next year, 2020. Even if there is a change of government after next year's election it is likely that it will be at the next budget, in the Autumn of 2020, before there is the possibility of RTE succeeding in securing an immediate cash injection and an increase in the licence fee.

The RTE Board is currently constricted in its decision-making process by the circumstances of a possible year-long inaction by government. The obvious conclusion for the RTE Board to consider, in my opinion, is that arriving merely at selecting a range of cost-cutting measures – such as, selling the RTE studio in Cork, securing agreement with the RTE group of unions to a salary cut for most or all senior/middle management and the top 10 broadcasters or (foolishly) axing RTE Lyric FM – **alone**, from the range of cost-cutting options available, **will not be adequate to enable RTE to create 'excellent digital capabilities' into the future.**

3.

Recently, on the RTE Radio 1 show, *'Today with Sean O'Rourke'*, John Moran, former Director-General of the Department of Finance and, the recently appointed, CEO of the Land Development Agency, **proposed that RTE should sell off its HQ and all its property at Montrose in Donnybrook, Dublin 4, and relocate its HQ to Galway. There are a number of strategic advantages to implementing such a proposal, such as:**

- TG4 and RTE Radio na Gaeltachta are already in situ in Co. Galway;
- NUIG offers creative university-level courses in film, and other media;
- Galway city, which has been designated as the *'European City of Culture, 2020'* has a long history of cultural events and activities. (Galwegians proudly designate their city as, *'The Barcelona of Ireland'*). A strong cultural infrastructure already exists in Galway city and areas of Co. Galway;
- With the recent rapid telecommunications and media technology advances, together with the planned rollout of the *'National Broadband Plan'* in the coming years, it is **no means** essential for RTE to base its HQ in Dublin 4;
- **The main advantage for RTE of selling all its property in Donnybrook would be the many millions of guaranteed income that would accrue to the organisation, in a relatively short time frame.** I don't have the benefit of the data on current property values for the Dublin 4 area. However, with the current market demand for houses and apartments in Dublin and, in particular for a prime property site, such as Dublin 4, the obvious implication is that sale of a property the size of RTE's site at Donnybrook- **in the near future** - should prove to be quite lucrative.

Such a strategic decision to sell its HQ in Donnybrook would present the challenge to the RTE Board and senior RTE management of securing the agreement of the RTE unions to such a sale – involving agreement on adequate early retirement packages for a certain cohort of staff, who would choose not to relocate to Galway. **Nonetheless, I would recommend that the RTE Board give serious consideration to John Moran's proposal to sell its HQ in Donnybrook and relocate the HQ to Galway.**

Kind regards

Liam Mac Mathuna  
Retired HSE Research & Information Officer

cc. Ms. Dee Forbes, Director-General, RTE

**COPY FOR INFORMATION OF: MINISTER RICHARD BRUTON, T.D.**

*45 Greenfields  
Rosbrien  
Limerick  
V94 X0NT  
Tel: (086) 311 4571  
Email: [bealmill@hotmail.com](mailto:bealmill@hotmail.com)*

10 November 2019

Dr. Leo Varadkar  
An Taoiseach  
Department of the Taoiseach  
Government Buildings  
Merrion St. Upper  
Dublin 2  
D02 R583

**Subject: RTE's Current Financial Crisis/Cuts  
& Existence facing Existential Future Global TV Challenges**

Dear Dr. Varadkar

I'm enclosing copies of recent letters I forwarded to Ms. Moya Doherty, Chair, RTE Board; Ms. Dee Forbes, RTE Director-General and local TDs in the East Limerick constituency, concerning RTE's current financial crisis, its recent cost-cutting plan and the issue of the very existence of RTE, as a smaller national broadcaster, in the context of the existential future of such broadcasters facing future global TV challenges, for your information.

All commentators agree that the main – though not only – reason for RTE's current financial crisis is that its current *'funding model'* is no longer financially viable nor *'fit-for-purpose'*. For many years now, all Irish media, - both print and broadcast (including RTE) – have been steadily losing advertising and commercial revenue to a host of global broadcast TV providers and online social, print and broadcast media corporations.

In reference to RTE's recently proposed cost-cutting plan, Matt Cooper, in an article in today's *'Sunday Business Post'*, comments that, "RTE has a cost base and work practices, which would not be tolerated elsewhere; the numbers consuming RTE's services are almost certain to fall further. All of which means that what RTE announced last week about reducing its cost base is merely a tinkering at the edges...RTE needs a radical restructuring – and probably a major downsizing."

He further comments that, "(in 2013), Dee Forbe's predecessor, Noel Curran tried, **unsuccessfully**, to initiate a serious policy conversation about the place of RTE, as a provider of public service (broadcasting) in Irish society amid changing national and international circumstances, and to look at different models of financing the organisation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This has to happen now, and it needs to be completed quickly: but, in the meantime, RTE has to offer plans for real change far more significant than it is proposing." – including, the possible re-location of its HQ to Galway (*see my accompanying letter of 1 November*). Noel Curran tried at the time to engage with government – in particular – and other key stakeholders on these linked, essential issues but was unsuccessful in his efforts.

- (4) "Could national broadcasters strike back? 'Revenge of the Broadcasters' would be a scenario in which national broadcasters 'developed excellent digital capabilities' and take on 'Netflix', 'Amazon', etc., - head to head. Might 'RTE' stand toe-to-toe with 'Netflix' and 'Amazon', in terms of quality and digital innovation? Possibly – though it's hard to imagine any non-dystopian scenario where this proves the case.
- (5) "However the future plays out, it is clear that big upheavals are on the way. (Current spats)...over the possibility that viewers might soon be able to watch their favourite show at 1.5 times the regular speed... **are merely the tip of the existential iceberg**".

In my previous letter of 24 September I proposed a number of options to assist in resolving, what I understood to be, RTE's short – medium term financial crisis. However, my analysis of the facts, analysis and scenarios outlined in the Deloitte study clearly indicate that, rather than merely facing a short-medium term financial crisis, RTE – as a small media broadcaster on the world stage – the 'National Broadcaster' - **is facing into a strategic existential crisis that in 10 years will threaten its very existence.**

Earlier this year RTE management submitted proposals to government, seeking government approval to an appreciable increase in the TV licence fee, together with an immediate cash injection of €30m. Apart from resolving RTE's financial crisis, in the short-term, it seems that a purpose of these proposals was to enable RTE to strategically develop a secure digital capability, into the future of broadcasting. However, the current government has declined to accede to these proposals. Most political commentators agree presently that a general election in this State will not occur until either the spring or early summer of next year, 2020. Even if there is a change of government after next year's election it is likely that it will be at the next budget, in the Autumn of 2020, before there is the possibility of RTE succeeding in securing an immediate cash injection and an increase in the licence fee.

The RTE Board is currently constricted in its decision-making process by the circumstances of a possible year-long inaction by government. The obvious conclusion for the RTE Board to consider, in my opinion, is that arriving merely at selecting a range of cost-cutting measures – such as, selling the RTE studio in Cork, securing agreement with the RTE group of unions to a salary cut for most or all senior/middle management and the top 10 broadcasters or (foolishly) axing RTE Lyric FM – **alone**, from the range of cost-cutting options available, **will not be adequate to enable RTE to create 'excellent digital capabilities' into the future.**

*Cont'd/3.*

The economist, Colm Mc Carthy, in an article in today's, *'Sunday Independent'*, agrees that RTE's *'funding model'* is no longer viable and proposes that government consider scrapping the current TV licence system and replacing it with a system of direct funding of RTE from government exchequer funding.

He argues that the advantage of direct exchequer funding revolves around the fact that most of the Irish public now regard the licence fee as falling in the same category as the strongly disliked failed water charges – another form of government indirect taxes. This dislike arises in the context that most of the younger generation rarely watch RTE TV and, instead, obtain their TV experiences either online or from subscription content providers such as *'Netflix'*, *'Amazon TV'*, *'Now TV'*, *'SKY Sports'* etc. At the same time RTE must now compete for the older generation's attention with a vast array of foreign channels – including globally transmitted 24-hour news channels, sports channels, entertainment and arts channels. The implication is that, under these circumstances, the general public are much less likely to object – or even direct their attention to – the funding of RTE from general taxation than the continued payment of an imposed form of indirect taxation.

Eilish O'Hanlon, in an article in today's *'Irish Independent'*, emphasises that RTE needs to strategically review its purpose and remit, as a public service broadcaster. Matt Cooper agrees that, "RTE's Board must know there is an existential crisis rarely seen before; that RTE is trying to do too many things in its effort to fulfil a public service remit...."

Clearly, RTE's Board and senior management also urgently need to review and reflect on its strategic purpose and specific future remit as the Irish public service broadcaster, in the face of, what the recent review of *'The Future of Television'*, conducted by the international accounting corporation, *'Deloitte'*, referred to as the **"tsunami of change"** facing the future of broadcasting (see my accompanying letter of 1 November for an outline of the key points in the *Deloitte* report).

Kind regards

Liam Mac Mathuna  
Retired HSE Research & Information Officer

Encl. / 3

cc. Mr. Richard Bruton, T.D., Minister for Communications, Climate Action & Environment  
Ms. Heather Humphreys, T.D., Minister for Business, Enterprise & Innovation  
Mr. Shane Ross, T.D., Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport  
Mr. Micheál Martin, T.D., Leader of Fianna Fáil & Spokesperson on Northern Ireland  
Ms. Mary Lou Mac Donald, T.D., President, Sinn Féin  
Mr. Brendan Howlin, T.D., Leader, Labour Party  
Ms. Róisín Shortall, Co-Leader, Social Democrats  
Ms Catherine Murphy, Co-Leader, Social Democrats  
Mr. Willie O'Dea, T.D., Spokesperson on Social Protection  
Ms. Jan O'Sullivan, T.D., Spokesperson on Housing, Planning & Local Gvt. and Business & Enterprise  
Mr. Maurice Quinlivan, T.D., Spokesperson on Jobs, Worker's Rights and Pay Equality

**COPY FOR INFORMATION OF: CLLR. EDDIE RYAN, FF.**

*45 Greenfields  
Rosbrien  
Limerick  
V94 X0NT  
Tel: (086) 311 4571  
Email: bealmill@hotmail.com*

15 November 2019

Senator Maria Byrne  
Henry St.  
Limerick

**Subject: Proposed Closure of RTE Lyric FM Studios in Limerick**

Dear Senator Byrne

I'm enclosing copies of recent correspondence of mine concerning RTE's current financial crisis & cost-cutting plan, including its planned closure of the RTE Lyric FM studios in Limerick in 2020, for your information.

The Limerick Post newspaper edition of 16 November 2019 devotes two internal pages to the proposed closure of the Lyric FM studios in Limerick by RTE. The following are a few of the salient facts reported by the newspaper:

- (1) "Last May Limerick's (Lyric FM) staff outwardly maintained a positive outlook, despite their inner concerns about the studio's future, after RTE announced it would hold Lyric FM's 20-year (anniversary) celebrations in Dublin."
- (2) After meeting with Lyric FM staff in Limerick, Senator Maria Byrne stated that, "The fact that, since being appointed, the Head of Arts & Culture at RTE, Ann-Marie Power, hasn't (yet) visited the Limerick studio, certainly speaks volumes about RTE's commitment to Lyric FM and the Mid-West."

**Reflecting on the above two linked facts, begs the question:- just how long have RTE senior executives been considering closing down the RTE Lyric FM studios in Limerick?**

Perhaps at the back of their minds were the facts that:

- (i) RTE Lyric FM commands only about 4% of the total radio listenership, nationally;
- (ii) Because of the nature of its programming, the station generates little to RTE, in terms of advertising revenue;
- (iii) Some executives in RTE consider RTE Lyric FM to be 'an elitist station'. However, one can counter that view by quoting the late RTE broadcaster, Seán Mac Réamoinn – a radio broadcaster of long experience and recognised status – who stated that, "specialist programming is the 'stuff' of radio broadcasting."

- (3)"Many in RTE have questioned whether any significant savings could be made by closing Lyric's studios in Limerick."

*Cont'd/2.*

- (4) "...a spokesperson for (RTE) could not confirm or release specific costs in response to claims that it will cost RTE between €700,00 a €1 million to "dismantle" Lyric's headquarters at Cornmarket Square."
- (5) "RTE has successfully relocated a number of studio bases outside Dublin, including: Galway – the Hynes Building to GMIT; Athlone – (Athlone IT); Dundalk – (Dundalk IT); and, Waterford – (Waterford IT)."
- (6) "University of Limerick President, Professor Des Fitzgerald, told RTE two months ago that UL could provide a location for the (RTE) Lyric FM studios."
- (7) However, a spokesperson for (RTE) stated that "Ultimately, the cost of the move....meant that, from RTE's perspective, the solution wasn't viable."
- (8) "A UL spokesperson said that, "No cost analysis carried out by RTE was ever shared with the University of Limerick so as to allow the plans to progress. While initial commercial costs were identified, UL was not given the opportunity to consider any ways to mitigate RTE's potential relocation costs."
- (9) "A spokesperson for RTE responded that the figures in its analysis of costs for a proposed move to UL were "**commercially sensitive**" and are not available."

*Considering that no other media organisation operating in the State is considering the establishment of an arts and culture radio station in Limerick, the response of RTE smacks of 'spin' and an unwillingness to reveal the true facts of their cost analysis.*

**Reflecting on points 4, 8 and 9 above – all of which relate to RTE refusing to disclose their internal financial data, related to the decision to close RTE Lyric FM's studios in Limerick – clearly begs the question as to what RTE are trying to hide in this regard.**

Mr. Willie O'Dea, T.D. has submitted a P.Q. to the Minister for Communications, Climate Action & Environment, Richard Bruton, T.D., requesting him to direct RTE to make publicly available a cost/benefit analysis of the closure of the RTE Lyric FM studios in Limerick. However, in summary response to the 90-minute Dáil debate on Wednesday, this week, concerning RTE's cost-cutting plans, the Minister stated that the decision by RTE to close the Lyric FM studios did not specifically come within his ministerial remit. It remains to be seen whether he will continue to adopt the same 'hands-off' approach when responding to the P.Q.

**Securing the public release of the internal RTE financial data – the data relating to the offer by UL and the cost/benefit analysis - may prove to be the 'trojan horse' that would fully undermine RTE's decision to close the Lyric FM studios in Limerick.**

In mid-September 2019 the national press reported that, due to its current financial crisis, RTE was considering a range of cost-cutting measures, including closing the RTE studios in Cork – with a potential saving of around €3 million – and the complete closure of RTE Lyric FM. Following the outcry against the potential closure of Lyric FM, the RTE Board decided to retain the production of Lyric but to transfer part of its production to Dublin and Cork, while deciding against any closure of the Cork studios.

Considering the current heavyweight Cork political actors in the State and their influence on national politics, together with the representation of Cork-born senior executives within RTE, how likely ever was it that the option of closing the RTE Cork studios would be implemented? However, as the editor of the Limerick Leader, writing in this weekend's edition of the newspaper, points out, the lack of Limerick representation at senior cabinet level militates against the retention of the RTE Lyric FM studios in Limerick.

**Under the circumstances of such an unjust and unjustifiable decision by RTE to close the Lyric FM studios in Limerick in 2020, it is essential that all Limerick politicians - T.D.s, Senators and Councillors, from all parties – and the arts and culture leaders of the city and county unite together to wage a persistent campaign, at political level and through the media to oblige the RTE Board and senior executives to reverse their decision.**

**The organizing of a protest march on an early upcoming Saturday, along O'Connell St. to a rally at City Hall, addressed by motivating speakers, would prove a valuable part of such a campaign.**

Kind regards

Liam Mac Mathuna

Retired HSE Research & Information Officer

cc. Mr. Patrick O'Donovan, T.D., Minister of State

Mr. Willie O'Dea, T.D.

Ms. Jan O'Sullivan, T.D.

Mr. Maurice Quinlivan, T.D.

Mr. Niall Collins, T.D.

Mr. Tom Neville, T.D.

Senator Kieran O'Donnell

Professor Des Fitzgerald, President, UL.

Dr. Pat Daly, AI/Chief Executive

Cllr. Michael Sheahan, FG

Cllr. Adam Teskey, FG

Cllr. James Collins, FF

Cllr. Kieran O'Hanlon, FF

Cllr. Kevin Sheahan, FF

Cllr. Jerome Scanlan, FG

Cllr. Michael Donegan, FF

Cllr. Joe Leddin, Labour Party

Cllr. Sharon Benson, SF

Cllr. Elisa O'Donovan, SD

Cllr. Brian Leddin, Green Party

Cllr. Brigid Teehy, NP

Cllr. Daniel Butler, FG

Cllr. Michael Collins, FF

Cllr. Sean Hartigan, Green Party

Cllr. Dan Mc Sweeney, FG

Cllr. Abul Kalam Azad Talukder, FF

Cllr. Gerald Mitchell, FG

Cllr. Catherine Slattery, FF

Cllr. Emmett O'Brien, NP

Cllr. Jerry O'Dea, FF

Cllr. Elena Secas, Labour Party

Cllr. Conor Sheehan, Labour Party

Cllr. Sarah Kiely, FG

Cllr. Fergus Kilcoyne, NP

Cllr. Eddie Ryan, FF

Cllr. John Sheahan, FF

Cllr. Francis Foley, FF

Cllr. Stephen Keary, FG

Cllr. John Egan, FG

Cllr. PJ Carey, NP

Cllr. Bridie Collins, FF

Cllr. John Costelloe, SF

Cllr. Frankie Daly, NP

Cllr. Liam Galvin, FG

Cllr. Sarah Kiely, FG

Cllr. Michael Murphy, FG

Cllr. Olivia O'Sullivan, FG

Cllr. Richard O'Donoghue, NP

Cllr. Tom Ruddle, FG