

Question for written answer E-000146/2022/rev.1
to the Commission
Rule 138
Tom Vandendriessche (ID)

Subject: Reform of the Board of Directors of the public broadcasting service (VRT) in Flanders

The VRT (Flemish radio and television broadcasting body) has a market share of over 40% for television and over 55% for radio. In accordance with the Culture Pact, all ideological trends must be represented equally in cultural institutions. Pursuant to Article 8 of the Culture Pact Act:

‘the public authorities must involve user groups, as well as ideological and philosophical trends, in the management of cultural institutions in a deliberative or consultative capacity, with fair and effective democratic representation’.

However, a recent government decree replaces four democratic representatives with four independent experts appointed by the government itself. As a result, votes from the democratic opposition are now heavily weighted in favour of appointed experts.

The Culture Pact Act is not only legislation in its own right, it is also based on Articles 11 and 131 of the Belgian Constitution.

Through this amendment to the decree and in view of the strong concentration of the media in one place, the independence and pluralism of the media is at risk.

1. Is it permissible for a government to weaken democratic representation in media institutions?
2. Does the size of the market share put media pluralism at risk?
3. Is it permissible for a government to weaken the representation of certain ideological trends?